DRESSING WOUNDS AND HEALING JUSTICE: A JOURNEY OF INDIVIDUAL

AND NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract

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Chair: Richard King

What can clothes cover and shield? What do they announce and proclaim? The cloth is not alone in this communication; there are bodies attached. The interpretation becomes a collective process in public view, but this does not negate the very personal connection every body has with its own representation. Wounds of signification are often displayed simultaneously as a sense of empowerment and recognition of injustice; as a critique of policy and as a cry for change; as an individual display of beliefs and as a challenge to national boundaries. This project explores the power of clothed bodies and exposes the individual and national wounds through their processes of healing justice. What I am intrigued by is the process of selection, punishment for violations and subversion that occurs on the national stage as a result of local and individual acts. I am interested in the meanings behind the "look policies" as Abercrombie & Fitch likes to call them and how similar types of policies are implemented to (re)define national identity.

Identifying the body as a potent example of visual culture (Fuery 53), I focus on clothing and the body and the ways in which the visual (perceived or actual) impacts and transforms notions of belonging over time. In analyzing multiple case studies from the

19th to the 21st century, the pattern of how the body negotiates its visual displacement reveals the space where visual culture, social (dis)order and public policy meet. With an emphasis on contemporary examples, this project examines the rhetoric used to protect the nation and identifies places of resistance which influence the future of social justice activism.

I
Why the U.S. is like Abercrombie & Fitch:
Concealing Chronic Wounds and Selecting Virtues of the Ideal Brand Representative

The prospects for a brand that sells whiteness as eagerly as it does postage-stamp-sized shorts -- in a time when its target clientele overwhelmingly supported a black president -- are dicey at best (Angelo 6-26-09).

While I am not convinced that Abercrombie & Fitch's *target* clientele are supporters of Barack Obama (despite the media attention paid to "Obama's Abercrombie boys," which I'll revisit in a future chapter), Megan Angelo's assertion in "Is it Time for Abercrombie & Fitch to Close Abercrombie & Fitch?" that the times are a-changing (or in need of a change) is correct. What Angelo is alluding to is the shift the U.S. is headed into given the recent change of regime (and I'll also get to that later). But first before I can talk about the possibilities for the future, I will make connections to the past and present. The unifying theme of the chapters to come centers around the way in which building a concept of a national identity is much like the process that Abercrombie & Fitch follows to achieve an ideal brand representative. This chapter serves as an introduction to how A&F creates and upholds this ideal and begins to question how the ideal brand representative functions in other institutions within the United States. What I am intrigued by is the process of selection, punishment for violations and subversion that occurs on the national stage as a result of local and individual acts. I am interested in the meanings behind the "look policies" as A&F likes to call them and how these similar types of policies are implemented to define national identity.

What is U. S. style? In his book, *Why I Hate Abercrombie & Fitch: Essays on Race and Sexuality*, Dwight A. McBride examines Abercrombie & Fitch's self-described look and how it is simultaneously representative of what is "American" style.

> In the approximately seventeen pages of text in the [A&F Look] book, the word "natural," for example, appears as a descriptor no fewer than fourteen times. In this regard, it is closely followed by its companion terms: "American" and "classic" to account for what the book identifies alternately as the "A&F look" and the "A&F style." Such words in the context not only of Abercrombie, but in the context of U.S. culture more broadly, are often understood for the coded ways of delineating the whiteness that they represent. Indeed, most of us carry in our imagination a very specific image that we readily access when such monikers as "natural, classic, American" are used. That image is not likely of the Native American, who has far more historic claim to such signifiers than those whom we have learned to associate with them. This fact, I think speaks volumes about the incredible and abiding ideological feat that we encounter in the whiteness of the idea of "America" and of "the American" (McBride 68).

McBride points to the rhetoric that A&F uses to conjure a particular image, but who is left out of this image? Picking at the chronic wound that A&F has tried to ignore, in her article, "Is it Time for Abercrombie & Fitch to Close Abercrombie & Fitch?," Angelo lists the:

> very long line of people who have felt targeted by A&F. Remember the t-shirts emblazoned with racist caricatures of Asians? How about the $40 million lawsuit the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission brought against A&F on behalf of African-Americans, Latinos and Asians who felt they were kept behind Employees Only doors because their features didn't jibe with the store's infamous "look policy?" (6-26-09).

The "Two Wongs Can Make It White" line of "Asian" themed T-shirts was released by A&F in April 2003 (McBride 72). "When asked to respond to the controversy raised by the T-shirts, a spokesperson for A&F said, 'We thought it would add humor.' The line was pulled by the company soon after they were released" (McBride 72). The class action suit that Angelo references above was filed a few months later on June 17, 2003, against Abercrombie & Fitch in the United States District Court of San Francisco, California, claiming discrimination in its hiring practices (McBride 77). McBride notes: "Specifically, the complaint alleges that A&F discriminates against people of color, including Latinos, Asian Americans, and African Americans, in the hiring, job assignment, compensation, termination, and other terms and conditions of employment" (77). The suit was later settled for $40 million in December of 2005.

The A&F clothing controversy resurfaced in 2005 with the "attitude t-shirt" scandal that brought on the "girlcott." According to Monica Haynes of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (November 3, 2005):

> The two dozen or so girls, participants in the Allegheny County Girls as Grantmakers program, are calling for a "girlcott" of Abercrombie & Fitch stores until the targeted shirts are no longer sold. Girls as Grantmakers is a two-year program in which girls discuss and explore ways to make a difference in the community by reviewing and funding grant proposals designed by peers.

The girlcott protest landed the group's co-chairwoman, Emma Blackman-Mathis, on NBC's "Today" show, Fox's "Hannity & Colmes," and CNN. Despite the t-shirts with phrases that read: Who needs brains when you have these?; Blondes Are Adored, Brunettes Are Ignored; I'm too pretty to do math; No Money, No Car, No Chance; Available for Parties; Freshman 15 (with 15 boy's names written below); and I Had a Nightmare I Was a Brunette, A&F responded: "Our clothing appeals to a wide variety of customers. *These particular T-shirts have been very popular among adult women to whom they are marketed*" (Haynes, 2005 emphasis added). *Why?*

> *Is Abercrombie selling belonging?* Lauren Goldstein says yes:

> The company's [Abercrombie & Fitch's] success depends on the teenager's basic psychological yearning to belong. (Remember, the Columbine shootings happened at a school some reportedly called "Abercrombie High"?) And that means more than just selling the right kinds of clothes" (Goldstein in McBride 59).

In her article, "Bawdy T-shirts Set Off 'Girlcott' by Teens: Say Slogans are Demeaning to Young Women," Haynes notes another t-shirt scandal in 2005 where "parents and anti-drug and alcohol advocates pressured the retailer into removing shirts they said glorified drinking. Some of the shirts read: 'Sotally Tober' and 'Rum Forest Rum'." Angelo recalls a former A&F employee who once told her "that the reason the stores keep the music so loud is that the company wants customers to feel slightly intimidated

approaching the floor attendants, who are told to carry themselves like the most popular kids at a party" (6-26-09). *What does it mean to act like "the most popular kids"?*

Most recently, in June of 2009, A&F made headlines for sending an employee with a prosthetic arm from the store floor to the stockroom because her body was considered in violation of the company's look policy. After being hired to work at A&F's London store, Riam Dean, a 22 year old law student, was asked to purchase a cardigan to cover her arm while she was in the store. After failing inspection by A&F's "visual team," Dean was asked whether she was willing to work in the stockroom until the winter uniform arrived (Hortense 6-13-09). Dean is quoted saying, "That was the final straw. I just couldn't go back" (Hortense 6-13-09).

A&F is like high school (according to Angelo). Where in both:

> . . . social hierarchies rule; boobs and biceps are prized; imperfections are dug up and called out; thinking -- and dressing -- outside the norm is considered socially perilous . . . [and according to her] the beautiful thing about high school -- and A&F's preeminence – is they both turned out to be just a phase (Angelo 6-26-09).

Are there elements of high school and A&F policies in other everyday life situations? Institutions? Laws? Practices? What makes A&F marketable despite (or because of) its "look policy"?

McBride and Angelo both argue that A&F upholds the "whiteness of capital" (McBride 26, 69). Pointing to A&F's mission statement from the 2008 annual report which states, *Rooted in East Coast tradition and Ivy League heritage, A&F is the essence of privilege and casual luxury*, Angelo remarks, "This very well may be the most unabashedly white mission statement ever written" (6-26-09). Similarly, McBride recognizes that A&F has "devised a very clear marketing and advertising strategy that celebrates whiteness—a particularly privileged and leisure-class whiteness—and makes

use of it as a 'lifestyle' that it commodifies to sell otherwise extremely dull, uninspiring and ordinary clothing" (66). Given, the assessment of A&F clothing which "have zero durability and fail, season after season, to evolve beyond A&F's bland aesthetic" (Angelo 6-26-09), their marketing strategy that privileges a white aesthetic, and the on-going discrimination suits, the question remains *what makes it possible for A&F to survive?*

Angelo questions precisely that: A&F's staying power. She insists that behind A&F's vulnerability is a "woefully underdeveloped identity" (Angelo 6-26-09). "You have to ask yourself: If the recession doesn't weed out a retail brand like this, what *will* it cut down?" (Angelo 6-26-09). Angelo argues that Dean's story regarding her banishment to the stockroom because of her prosthetic arm, "gets to the heart of why A&F is no longer viable in the long term: it has battered itself into irrelevance" (6-26-09). *Or has it?*

Alternately, McBride views A&F's identity as strongly delineated. In fact, he compares it to "a variety of ethnic cleansing" (86). He suggests that the danger of A&F's marketing strategies is that it "depends upon the racist thinking of its consumer population in order to thrive" (McBride 66). In other words, it is the very point that A&F can continue to be "successful" in the same way that certain norms of behavior, oppression, and exploitation are unquestioned that deserves a more thorough examination. McBride argues:

> . . . to brazenly evolve a way of playing on consumers' worst racially based fears and inadequacies born of a racist structure that defines everything from standards of beauty to access to having the house on Martha's Vineyard goes beyond mere "lifestyle marketing." In my judgment, that crosses the line into a kind of racism whose desire—played out to logical conclusion—is not unlike a variety of ethnic cleansing. Its desire to produce and play on the consumer's desire for a white, "good-looking" world where one can "get away from it all," and to sell that idea as the "good life" in the context of a racist society, only redeploys and reinscribes the fundamental logic of white supremacy which, at bottom, makes such a marketing strategy possible and even appealing in the first place. This says a great deal, perhaps, about the deep and abiding contradictions that can be accommodated in our public thinking about race today . . . (86-

87).

Because of A&F's long history of discrimination and their rationalizations to the

contrary, Angelo acknowledges the need for increasing awareness to dismantle

oppressive practices; yet, McBride understands ". . . the same reasoning that makes

Abercrombie palatable to a U.S. public, is the same reasoning that makes claims of

'reverse discrimination' palatable and possible in our society" (McBride 86-87).

This brings me back to the list of complaints from the 2005 discrimination suit as

outlined by McBride (77):

- Defendant Abercrombie & Fitch . . . is a national retail clothing seller that discriminates against minority individuals, including Latinos, Asian Americans, and African Americans . . . on the basis of race, color, and/or national origin, with respect to hiring, firing, job assignment, compensation and other terms and conditions of employment by enforcing a nationwide corporate policy of preferring white employees for sales positions, desirable job assignments, and favorable work scheduled in its stores throughout the United States.

- Abercrombie implements its discriminatory employment policies and practices in part through a detailed and rigorous "Appearance Policy," which requires that all Brand Representatives must exhibit the "A&F Look." The "A&F Look" is a virtually all-white image that Abercrombie uses not only to market its clothing but also to implement its discriminatory employment policies and practices.

- When people who do not fit the "A&F look" inquire about employment, managers sometimes tell them that the store is not hiring, or may provide them with applications even though they have no intention of considering them for employment. If applicants who do not fit the "A&F Look" submit applications, managers and/or Brand Representatives acting at their direction sometimes throw them away without reviewing them.

- Abercrombie publishes and distributes to its employees a "Look Book" that explains the importance of the Appearance Policy and the "A&F Look," and that closely regulates the Brand Representatives' appearance. The Company requires its managers to hire and continue to employ only Brand Representatives who fit within the narrow confines of the "Look Book," resulting in a disproportionately white brand Representative workforce.

- . . . Each store prominently posts large photographs of models—virtually all of whom are white. In addition, the Company publishes and sells *A&F Quarterly*, a magazine/catalog featuring almost exclusively white models . . .

- The Company rigorously maintains the "A&F Look" by careful scrutiny and monitoring of its stores by regional and district managers and corporate representatives. These managers and corporate representatives visit stores frequently to ensure, among other

things, that the store is properly implementing the Company's discriminatory employment policies and practices. These visits are referred to as "blitzes." When managers or corporate representatives discover that minority Brand Representatives have been hired, they have directed that these Brand Representatives be fired, moved to the stock room or overnight shift, or have their hours "zeroed out," which is the equivalent of termination.

- The Company also scrutinizes and enforces compliance with the "A&F Look" by requiring all stores to submit a picture of roughly 10 of their Brand Representatives who "fit the 'Look' to headquarters each quarter. The corporate officials then select roughly 15 stores' pictures as exemplary models that perpetuate the Company's discriminatory employment practices. They then disseminate these pictures to the over 600 A&F stores. The Brand Representatives in the pictures are almost invariably white. This practice and policy, like the others described above, constitutes an official directive to give preference to white Brand Representatives and applicants, and to discriminate against minority Brand Representatives and applicants.

- The A&F image is not limited to appearance; the Company accomplishes its discriminatory employment policies or practices by defining its desired "classic" and "cool" workforce as exclusively white . . . Abercrombie also encourages the recruitment and hiring of members of specified overwhelmingly white intercollegiate sports. However, the Company does not encourage recruitment from fraternities, sororities, or sports teams with significant minority populations.

Adding to the 2005 list is the August 13, 2009 lawsuit by Riam Dean where a London tribunal ruled that Dean suffered *unlawful harassment* when she was an employee at Abercrombie & Fitch (Angelo 8-13-09, emphasis added). In the article, "Abercrombie & Fitch Must Pay for Harassing Former Employee" (posted August 17, 2009), Erin Donnelly reports the tribunal awarded Dean £9,014 (approximately $14,696) after ruling that A&F had harassed her about her prosthetic arm. Although Dean filed a discrimination lawsuit, the tribunal acknowledged that "Abercrombie & Fitch created an 'adversely humiliating environment' for Dean -- who quit after just five shifts – [but] they did not find evidence of *direct discrimination*, due to the fact that all store employees must adhere to the in-house looks policy dictating appearance" (Donnelly 8-17-09, emphasis added). *What are the parameters of direct discrimination? Is this*

related to overt discrimination as opposed to covert? What if the in-house look policy itself is discriminatory?

A&F says that they value diversity and inclusion. A&F's "Diversity and Inclusion" policy states: "Diversity and inclusion are key to our organization's success. We are determined to have a diverse culture, throughout our organization, that benefits from the perspectives of each individual" (Abercrombie & Fitch 9-12-09). Furthermore, A&F's "internal initiatives" are said to reflect "reality-based learning" which they describe as "unique" because they "base the learning on real-life issues that may take place in our store environment and reflects our work culture. The training scene is enacted by actors/inclusion experts during the training program, so that we can generate an interactive dialogue about how to solve relevant management issues" (Abercrombie & Fitch 9-12-09). A&F's focus is on their work culture which they have devised and continue to maintain; and their premise for solving *relevant* management issues is from a business perspective, not from a perspective that examines institutional oppression. This is where the division between theory and practice of diversity and inclusion becomes ever wider, a theme I'll return to in a future chapter. If anything, A&F is getting a healthy does of "reality-based" learning in responding to lawsuits and protests regarding its policies and products. Viewing the description of complaints from the 2005 lawsuit in more general terms, they might sound like this:

1) discriminates against minority individuals

2) implements discriminatory policies and practices in part through a detailed and rigorous "Appearance Policy," which requires that all must exhibit a certain look

3) there are consequences for not fitting the look

4) rigorously maintains the look by careful scrutiny, monitoring, and enforces compliance

5) the look is not limited to appearance; it accomplishes its discriminatory policies or practices by defining its desired look

Other than A&F, where might these complaints be applicable?

If "people buy 'Abercrombie' to purchase membership into a lifestyle; and according to Lisa March, the fashion business writer for the *New York Post*, Abercrombie's 'aggressive lifestyle marketing makes you feel like you're buying a polo shirt and getting the horse and summer house on Martha's Vineyard with it'"(Mc Bride 86), *what does being a citizen of the United States make you feel like? What is the U. S. selling? Are people buying? And what happens when your membership is in question?*

If say the United States is selling freedom and the American Dream, does it also hold true that "the very sense-making, the deciphering of the codes that allow one to appreciate what it is that "Abercrombie" [substitute U. S.] stands for and means in our culture, can only be accomplished when we bring a variety of racialist thinking to the experience" (Mcbride 86)?

According to McBride, yes:

> Abercrombie, through its strategy of marketing "the good white life" in what is already a deeply racist society, has convinced a U.S. public—whites (some young and some not so young), some people of color, and gay men—that if we buy their label, we are really buying membership into a privileged fraternity that has eluded us all for so long, even if for such vastly different reasons. In order for such a marketing strategy to work, in all of the diverse ways that this one clearly does, *the consumer must necessarily bring to his or her understanding of A&F, and what association with the brand offers him or her*, a fundamentally racist belief that this lifestyle—this young, white, natural, all-American, upper-class lifestyle—being offered by the label is what we all either are, aspire to be, or are hopelessly alienated from ever being (85-86, emphasis added).

Substitute "consumer" and "A&F" with any association you'd like. For example, the "citizen" must necessarily bring to his or her understanding of national security and identity and what association with the U.S. offers. Or the United States must necessarily

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bring to its understanding people, and what association with a certain view of national

identity offers it. McBride reminds his reader of the master narrative that has informed

U.S. citizenship:

> . . . commitment to masculine whiteness, with its emphasis on territoriality, exploitation of
> resources, and the perception of other non-whites as dependent and lacking in political and mental
> capacity, is part of the master narrative that formed an important foundation for our ideas of
> American citizenship. Indeed, we have come to a point in our history where any real variation on
> what we might mean when we say "American" or "America" is scarcely thinkable. The
> ideological work of equating American with whites and America with whiteness has been
> thoroughly achieved (69).

For the United States, the "visual team" includes individual actors, the national

government, the state, and local governing boards as well as other institutional structures

such as education, religion, family, and economics; this project reflects on their reactions,

responses, and asks how are they informed? "The A&F Look" (with subsections titled

"Discipline," "Personal Appearance," and "Exceptions") (McBride 67) reads like a

manual for maintaining the look of national identity.

> Indeed, citizenship in the United States touches upon matters of social identity, including race and
> gender. While the dominant rhetoric of our national identity presents a color-blind, "united-we-
> stand," Horatio Alger narrative of upward mobility, in reality, citizenship is raced, gendered, and
> classed, and the original texts that define citizenship and national identity in the United States
> reflect this reality (McBride 67-68).

If "the A&F dress code delineates its commitment to whiteness even in terms of what it

deems acceptable in the way of appearance," (McBride 69), *what does the United States*

commit to when it responds to "appearance violations"?

What can clothes cover and shield? What do they announce and proclaim? The

cloth is not alone in this communication; there are bodies attached. The interpretation

becomes a collective process in public view, but this does not negate the very personal

connection every body has with its own representation. Wounds of signification are often

displayed simultaneously as a sense of empowerment and recognition of injustice; as a

critique of policy and as a cry for change; as an individual display of beliefs and as a challenge to national boundaries. This project explores the power of clothed bodies and exposes the individual and national wounds through their processes of healing justice. What I am intrigued by is the process of selection, punishment for violations and subversion that occurs on the national stage as a result of local and individual acts. I am interested in the meanings behind the "look policies" as Abercrombie & Fitch likes to call them and how similar types of policies are implemented to (re)define national identity. *Who is the ideal brand representative of the United States? How do you know?*

Identifying the body as a potent example of visual culture (Fuery 53), I focus on clothing and the body and the ways in which the visual (perceived or actual) impacts and transforms notions of belonging over time. In analyzing multiple case studies from the 19th to the 21st century, the pattern of how the body negotiates its visual displacement reveals the space where visual culture, social (dis)order and public policy meet. With an emphasis on contemporary examples, this project examines the rhetoric used to protect the nation and identifies places of resistance which influence the future of social justice activism.

Chapter 2 examines the theories and methods for Dressing Wounds. Beginning with a background of what visual culture is and where it came from is an important starting point. Visual culture's connection to art history, cultural studies, American studies and critical theory puts into context the extent of this project and gives insight into present and future debates in the field. With this project's substantial focus on clothing, the following chapter also takes into account the emergence of the dress studies field and its connection to visual culture and cultural studies. While Chapter 2 examines

the cross-over (or lack thereof) between disciplines and explores the messy contradictions of interdisciplinarity, it argues for an increasing emphasis on critical approaches that allow for greater acceptance of the study of dress in visual culture and the integration of theories of visual culture in dress studies.

In Chapter 3, Persuasive Acts: Nineteenth-Century Women Public Speakers and the Visuality of Strategic Resistance, I examine how appearance for black and white women orators became a strategy of resistance in the newly emerging public sphere in the nineteenth century. Connecting the nineteenth century to twenty-first, I look at how the representation of Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama reinforce the importance of visuality in politics.

Chapter 4 examines Clarissa Sligh's photography exhibit, *Jake in Transition* where Sligh documents Deb's surgical transformation to Jake and chronicles her own subjectivity. In TransDressing: Clothing Identities in Clarissa Sligh's Exhibit Jake in Transition, I focus on how she juxtaposes her own brown skin as a black woman in the United States, with Jake's new passing white male body, and Ellen Craft's journey as a slave passing as white and male. Sligh does not explicitly mention how clothes are functioning in her work, but they remain an unexamined aspect of her exhibit and do figure prominently on many levels.

In Chapter 5, Crimes of Fashion: Regulating and Resisting Appearances from Sumptuary Laws to Sartorial Offenses, I ask, in the twenty-first century, how do the discourses of social order and dress convene in law in the analysis of Virginia's proposed "Ban on Low-Riding Pants"? I examine how dress, racial theory and law converge and explore how the language of the law, cultural citizenship, and increased legal

privatization of expression and the disciplining of public space remain important points for analyses in (un)dressing crimes of fashion.

In Chapter 6, Discourses of Hyperreal "Diversity": Identifying Gaps between Principles and Practices of University Education Inclusiveness Policies, I examine ways in which social reality and patterns of dominance are constructed; problems masked by umbrella terms such as diversity and multiculturalism; and ways to achieve a diversity paradigm shift in an analysis of public research universities.

In Chapter 7, (Not) Abercrombie and Looking (Un)Patriotic?: The National Allegiance Dress Code Survival Guide, I examine multiple examples involving the ways in which the United States formulates a national identity through its reinforcement of a national allegiance dress code concentrating specifically on dress and appearance in airports and on the ways in which Barack Obama has been represented in the media for his lack of adherence to patriotic dress and the consequences for such a deviation.

Chapter 8 Social Justice Philanthropy as a State-led Strategy?: Processes of Funding Dissent, asks what are some of the difficulties in funding radical social change and the factors inhibiting increased philanthropic funding for these types of organizations? I identify the shifts in approach, rhetoric, patterns of assistance and recommendations for sustaining social justice philanthropy and ultimately how this has an impact on Barack Obama's grassroots campaign.

Chapter 9 Why Obama Can't Punt: Reclaiming the American Dream, Re-imagining National Identity and Healing Justice, identifies Obama's Nobel Peace Prize as representative of the national identity shift he has been engaged in and creates a path to

dressing wounds and healing justice, as part of a journey of individual and national transformation.

II
Dressing Wounds

Visual Culture

Critical theory and American Studies underline the different way people read, receive, and interpret cultural texts not only examining production but also consumption and the ways in which "texts," meaning, and issues of identity are intricately linked. Concerned with meanings and practices of everyday life, cultural practices and their relation to power, social and political context in which culture manifests itself, and political action, American Studies and critical theory influenced the *cultural turn*, the shift toward meaning which also has a crucial visual component.

According to Margaret Dikovitskaya in *Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual after the Cultural Turn* (2005), as "an interdisciplinary field, visual studies came together in the late 1980s after disciplines of art history, anthropology, film studies, linguistics, and comparative literature encountered poststructuralist theory and cultural studies" (1). Accordingly, cultural studies played an important role in the development of visual culture: "as a result of the *cultural turn*, the status of culture has been revised in the humanities; it is currently seen as a cause of—rather than merely a reflection of or response to—social, political, and economic processes" (Dikovitskaya 1). Focusing on the theoretical underpinnings of visual studies and the institutional implications of establishing a new area of inquiry, Dikovitskaya examines the interdisciplinary nature of visual studies as a discipline and its pedagogic practices developed from the intersection of art history and cultural studies.

Art History

According to Dikovitskaya, "Art studies in the form of art history began to take shape as a discipline in the late eighteenth century, when it became fashionable to study ideas, objects, and events from a historical perspective and new generations were encouraged to learn about art with the use of a historical methodology" (66). However, she reminds her readers that it was in the 1970s that the social history of art opposed the widespread tendency of scholars to isolate works of art from broader cultural circumstances of their production and reception, which redirected the viewer's attention to political and ideological contexts of image creation. Yet, notwithstanding the 1970s commitment to the personal is political, Dikovitskaya is adamant that "despite its desire to add to the standard canon, social history has failed to revise the category of art—the foundation of the entire enterprise of art history" (67).

Dikovitskaya directs her readers to a key essay entitled, "Visual Representation and Cultural Politics," by Nicolas Green and Frank Mort who criticize art history: '[it] is not only discreetly organized around a set of aesthetically defined objects, but also operates within an internal, object-based focus which serves to reproduce categories of aesthetic pleasure, spiritual value and a particular notion of sensuous enjoyment' (1996, p. 227; first published 1982). "What the authors offer instead is a concept of visual culture—or a 'materialist analysis' of art—that could account for particular societal practices in relation to specific forms of production and reception within different historical circumstances and regimes of power" (Dikovitskaya 19-20). It is this on-going debate over "object-based" approaches to the visual which strictly address the object as a form, in contrast with what Green and Mort are calling a "materialist analysis" that

employs an examination of social, cultural, historical, and political factors surrounding the object's use(s), that continues to drive various academic disciplines dedicated to the realm of visuality at present.

Art History >< Cultural Studies

Art history's encounter with cultural studies in the late 1980s was not a matter of chance (Dikovitskaya 119).

      I agree with Dikovitskaya's assessment of the monopolization of the study of images by art history departments. She argues that those working outside of these departments have rarely engaged in this exclusive discourse for a number of reasons: "On the one hand, in the wake of cultural studies, the approaches deployed by traditional art history were seen to be inadequate. But on the other hand, cultural studies scholars felt [wrongly in my opinion] that they did not have a mandate (or sufficient expertise) and could not compete in the analysis of the arts with graduates of, for example, the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, and other such universities" (27). She notes that some of art historians and scholars of the visual chose to work in the territory of cultural studies—(she names: Irit Rogoff, Victor Burgin, John Tagg, and Peter Wollen). Yet she emphatically states, "almost no conversation existed between art historians and cultural studies researchers in the professional magazines or at disciplinary conventions, even between those under the roof of the same institution of higher learning" (Dikovitskaya 27). It is this lack of communication, collaboration and exchange that I aim to bridge not only between cultural studies and traditional fine arts disciplines but also within visual culture itself – establishing a cross-pollination of dress studies (highly visual) with cultural studies and visual culture (coming out of cultural studies) with dress studies.

Dikovitskaya says it best, when she reiterates the lack of conversations taking place between art historians and cultural studies researchers. And while "with an increased interest in the visual came the need for something more sustainable than an unstable ensemble of interactions—namely, a new academic field [visual culture] and adequate training for it" (27), today there remains an illegitimacy associated with cultural studies scholars doing art history or fine art work which is reinforced by the institutional practices of keeping the art departments very separate with nothing less than an MFA required for employment, inhibiting conversations.

Citing W.J.T. Mitchell (1995b) for his insight into a new interdiscipline of visual studies which surfaced around the pictorial turn that runs through critical theory and philosophy, Dikovitskaya argues "that if we are to accept Mitchell's thesis that visual studies was born to the marriage of art history (a discipline organized around a theoretical object) and cultural studies (an academic movement echoing social movements), we should recognize that it is the 'cultural turn' that made visual studies possible in the first place" (47). So, what constituted the cultural turn?

Dikovitskaya suggests that from the early 1980s the study of culture has become increasingly prolific in the sciences. She argues that we can distinguish between two research paradigms: "one that organizes the study of society on the model of natural sciences, and another whose approach belongs to the interpretive and hermeneutic tradition that emphasizes human subjectivity and contextual meaning" (47). Dikovitskaya notes that before the cultural turn, researchers did not question the meaning or operation of social categories or pay attention to individual motivation within social formations (48). Dikovitskaya similarly points to a "cultural turn" which accounted for

the increased emphasis on discursive formations. "The cultural turn brought to the study of images a reflection on the complex relationships between power and knowledge. Representation began to be studied as a structure and process of ideology that produces subject positions" (Dikovitskaya 49). Dikovitskaya credits Althusser's (1971) notion of ideology—covering all aspects of societal life analogous to systems of signs—in the transformation of "autonomy of art" to the idea of "intertextuality." She believes, "Art is now treated as a specific discursive system that during the modern period created the category of 'artwork' as a repository for values (noninstrumentality, creative labor, etc.) that had been suppressed within the dominant culture of mass production" (Dikovitskaya 49), giving rise to the discipline of visual studies. In other words, "the scholarship that rejects the primacy of art in relation to other discursive practices and yet focuses on the sensuous and semiotic peculiarity of the visual can no longer be called art history—it deserves the name of visual studies" (Dikovitskaya 49).

Visual Studies/Visual Culture >< Cultural Studies >< Critical Theory

Returning to the on-going debate between the discipline of art history which remains structured around the categorization of individual objects and visual studies which is more interested in systems of visuality than in singular objects, Dikovitskaya notes that visual studies makes use of the same social theories as cultural studies, social theories that hold meaning embedded in human relations—poststructuralism, Marxist theory, semiotics, psychoanalysis, rather than objects (68).

> Although both cultural studies and visual studies question the firm stance art history takes with regard to the authenticity of artistic expression at the level of high art, cultural studies begins from the assumption that cultural expression at the level of popular culture is an authentic expression of class or national identity, thus reversing the formula "high art versus mass culture." Visual studies, rather than making this reversal, historicizes the visual by promoting the view that the discipline of art history begs the fundamental question, What is art? This question could not have been asked within art history because the discipline itself—as its name presupposes—depends on

the assumption that what is worthwhile, "art" is already known (Dikovitskaya 69).

Just as Stanley Fish asked in *Is There a Text in This Class?* (1980) in relation to literary texts, "the field of visual studies [also] enables us to ask [questions that are not asked in art history:] What does art *do*?" (Dikovitskaya 70, emphasis added).

Employing ideas from critical theory, visual studies examines the settings for spectatorship and works against the theory of the universal response, dispels the illusion that art corresponds to some eternal standard of beauty, and critiques what has been historically valorized as art (Dikovitskaya 70,75). Stephen Melville of Ohio State University agrees that the new field of visual culture draws upon critical theory and cultural studies (Dikovitskaya 50, 52). As such, Mitchell makes sure his students have the understanding that visual culture has a history, that the way in which humans look and represent the world changes over time, and that this history can be documented (Dikovitskays 87,88). As an interdisciplinary field, visual studies is not a simplified comparative study, but rather methodology of various fields are applied to the study of visual culture (Dikovitskaya 77). *The Block Reader in Visual Culture* (1996) edited by Jon Bird et al. bridges the questions posed by critical theorists with the emerging field of visual culture as it relates to representation and the relationship between an individual subject (the artist, the art historian) and social and power relations: (1) ideology (2) subjectivity; and (3) the relationship between subjectivity and interpretation, specifically in reexamining the notions of artistic authority, uniqueness of the individual work, and priority of painting (Dikovitskaya 20).

> As Irit Rogoff points out in "Studying Visual Culture" (chapter 2 of the reader), what is being analyzed by the reader is a "field of vision version of Derrida's concept of *differance*" organized around the following set of queries: "Whom we see and whom we do not see, who is privileged within the regime of specularity, which aspects of the historical past actually have circulating visual representations and which do not, whose fantasies of what are fed by which visual images?" (Rogoff 1999, p. 15; see also Rogoff 2000, p. 29) (Dikovitskaya 22).

What's in a name? Many scholars have asked and explored this question in regard to American Studies, but what about the visual? Are Visual Studies and Visual Culture one in the same? Dikovitskaya's bibliographic survey tackles this question with contradictory responses. She notes that "for James D. Herbert of the University of California at Irvine, visual culture is a term encompassing all 'human products with a pronounced visual aspect including those that do not, as a matter of social practice, carry the imprimatur of art,' whereas visual studies is a name for the academic discipline that takes visual culture as its object of study" (Herbert 2003, Dikovitskaya 53). However, Mitchell believes the focus of visual culture analysis has shifted away from things viewed toward a process of seeing, which is why he chose the title 'Visual Culture' instead of 'Visual Studies' for his course at the University of Chicago because he was interested in the constructedness of vision:

> The name "Visual Studies" seemed to me too vague, since it could mean anything at all to do with vision, while "Visual Culture" . . . suggests something more like an anthropological concept of vision as artifactual, conventional, and artificial—just like languages, in fact which we called "natural languages," in the same breath we admit that they are constructed systems on the borderlines between nature and culture. By calling the field visual culture, I was trying to call attention to vision as itself prior to consideration of works of art or images, and to foreground the dialectics of what Donna Haraway called "nature/culture" in the formation of the visual field. Vision itself is a cultural construction (Interview with W.J.T. Mitchell) (Dikovitskaya 56-57).

Yet, Nicholas Mirzoeff emphasizes the global culture of visuality (Dikovitskaya 59). Dikovitskaya concludes "visual culture is a field on the study of both the social construction of the visual (visual images, visual experience) and the visual construction of the social, which apprehends the visual as a place for examining the social mechanisms of differentiation" (58).

Visual Studies/Visual Culture >< Academia

The history of visual studies as a university subject can be linked to the "culture wars" of the 1980s, when there was a great deal being published on the question of the relationship between art and the humanities and mainstream American culture (Dikovitskaya 85).

Dikovitskaya investigates the United State's first degree-granting programs to take on visual imagery and materials. She begins with the University of Rochester, Visual and Cultural Studies Program (1989) which "introduced visual culture to American academia, thereby creating an opportunity for its study in a way that has not been equaled elsewhere" (Dikovitskaya 95). In 1998, the graduate program in Visual Studies at the University of California, Irvine was approved. According to Dikovitskaya, they chose the name Visual Studies rather than Visual Culture, being aware of the backlash promoted by *October* magazine via the responses to the "Questionnaire on Visual Culture." Anne Friedberg states:

> We wanted to be certain that our definition of the study of vision and visuality and its cultural effects would not be "tarred by," i.e. too directly associated with, cultural studies. One of the criticisms in the *October* "Questionnaire" was that the study of visual culture represents an inferior version of cultural studies, in the sense of no longer being about form itself, so much as social meaning. . . . The name Visual Studies was chosen for our Ph.D. program to emphasize that it is concerned more with the study of vision and visuality than with the cultural study of these, although the latter forms an important component (Interview with Anne Friedberg) (Dikovitskaya 95-96).

The two programs while pioneers in launching visual culture studies onto the academic map, are formulated around differing emphases. According to Dikovitskaya:

> The Rochester program is nine years older, and its inception was due to newly found interest of scholars in "theory" (in particular, poststructuralism). The UCI program is a result of the recognition of a larger national and international trend toward broadening the artifactual base and expanding the professional territory of art history. The program at Rochester was initiated by professors of art history and comparative literature and has been housed in an art history department; there, "visual studies" is understood as a connection between "certain approaches to contemporary art [history] employing methodologies from other disciplines, and the traditions established earlier in sociological studies and in British cultural studies as transported to the U.S." (interview with Brain Goldfarb). The program in California is administered jointly by the Art History Department and the Film Studies Program, and its name calls attention more to the study of visuality than cultural studies. At UCI, *visual culture* is treated as a term that includes all human products that are distinctly visual, whereas *visual studies* refers to the academic discipline

that studies visual culture. Rochester faculty members do not distinguish between these two terms and apply them interchangeably. They comprehend visual studies as a research field for interdisciplinary studies rather than a new discipline (97).

As one might expect the curricula of these two programs also reflect their differences. Dikovitskaya notes that Visual Studies at UCI does not have a strong critical theory – cultural studies component to it, it stresses the visual over the cultural, and it concentrates on "Visual Studies," "Art History," and "Film Studies," while Rochester organizes its curriculum around two main areas: "Visual Studies" and "Critical Theory." She concludes, "contrary to expectations generated by the names of the two programs, that the focus of the theory-driven Rochester VCS Program is visual studies while the main investment of the Irvine VS Program is visual culture" (Dikovitskaya 107). Of course, once again, this depends on your definition of each. Contrary to Dikovitskaya, I have seen visual studies applied broadly to visual production and analysis whereas visual culture tends to remain connected to social justice, institutional analysis, critical theory, production and consumption, power and representation and resistance. Visual culture embodies a link to cultural studies and/or American Studies disciplines whereas visual studies need not imply that link.

Although Dikovitskaya is concerned with departments that have expanded to include visual culture/studies concentrating on the theoretical, I would have also liked to see her incorporate the ways in which art studio departments have (or have not) incorporated visual literacy and critical theory as MFA objectives. I see more and more of a separation between "fine arts" and cultural theory, as the Art Departments generally do not hire anyone who does not have an MFA, as they often look down upon a cultural studies approach to art/art history; as the proficiency of technical abilities takes precedence, a steadfast adherence to discipline continues to structure the core of many art

programs. As Dikovitskaya herself notes, "one of the weaknesses was that practicing artists admitted into the program could not incorporate their art into scholarly studies" (112). And she admits, although the creation of interdisciplinary programs seems to strengthen humanities departments by allowing them to offer more to students, it also weakens them by forcing faculty members into double appointments—they teach courses scheduled through their departments as well as those in the new programs. Under such circumstances, then, interdisciplinarity works to transfer power within the university away from individual divisions to the administration, who are looking for excuses not to hire new faculty (Dikovitskaya 98).

Problems & Futures

Visual culture should study not objects, but "subjects caught in the congeries of cultural meanings" (Michael Ann Holly 1996b, p. 40, Dikovitskaya 11).

Along with Michael Ann Holly, Keith Moxey also suggests that aesthetic criteria do not exist outside of a specific historical context, and according to Dikovitskaya it is "this consciousness [which] helped to undermine the theory of universal response that animated art history; indeed, it is the absence of this universal epistemological basis for art historical activity that makes the new academic field of visual studies possible" (14). If according to Dikovitskaya, "visual studies allows for an expanded notion of the 'object,' so that fields of study draw from popular culture such as posters, record album covers, and folk art are included" (102), where do studies of dress and clothing fit in? What about under the material culture rubric? Like the name game, it depends on who you ask.

James D. Herbert shared with Dikovitskaya his desire for the expanded territory of visual studies [that] also echoes somewhat the concept of material culture introduced to art history some twenty years ago by Jules David Prown, an art historian from Yale University where Herbert studied for his Ph.D. According to Dikovitskaya:

> the object-based theory of material culture posits that artifacts are primary data for the study of culture and that they should be used as evidence rather than illustrations; it thus deals with objects such as pieces of furniture because they have symbolic meaning or symbolic capital in the antebellum United States. Through its attendance to both art objects and artifacts, visual culture in Herbert's formulation forges an important bridge with material culture studies and thus escapes the danger of being reduced to mere semiology of the visual sign. Additionally, visual culture pays special attention to the study of modern manufactured goods (thus distinguishing itself from art history) (55).

Once again, we are faced with bridging the material object with its cultural significance. Janet Wolff, former director of the Rochester Visual and Cultural Studies Program and now associate dean of the School of the Arts at Columbia University addresses my exact sentiments when she admits her frustration with two modes of analysis--what she describes as a

> Parallel experience and parallel dissatisfaction with two traditions: first, a sociological tradition that looks at cultural institutions and cultural processes but never pays attention to the text . . . and which is agnostic about aesthetic questions; and second, textual analysis mainly in the humanities, which for the most part pays no attention to institutions and social processes, but concentrates on readings—however interesting but nonetheless just readings—of texts and images. My argument has been that the best kind of work in visual studies manages to do both of those things and to integrate them (Interview with Janet Wolff) (Dikovitskaya 52-53).

In short, visual studies—the study of representations—pays close attention to the image but uses theories developed in the humanities and the social sciences to address the complex ways in which meanings are produced and circulated in specific social contexts (Dikovitskays 53). Unfortunately artists are in disagreement as to how (and if) integration of a visual culture approach should be applied within canonical work of art history (Dikovitskaya 121).

Dress Studies

Janet Wolff's dissatisfaction with two traditions – one which never pays attention to the text and aesthetic questions and the other which pays no attention to institutions and social processes (Dikovitskaya 52-53) – echoes my concern with the ways in which dress studies has (and has not) integrated visual culture/cultural studies and the way visual culture has relegated dress studies to the apparel discipline. These on-going questions resurface again in dress studies.

According to Lou Taylor in her book, *The Study of Dress History* (2002), dress studies continues to straddle a "great divide" between an "object-based" or "button and bow" approach which focuses almost exclusively on the clothing-as-object and methods more commonly employed by fields of social and economic history which rarely address the dress itself, but rather examine the social, cultural, and historical factors surrounding its use, consumption and production (64).

Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) influenced the cultural turn with their explanation of how the sociology of knowledge, "understands human reality as socially constructed reality" (189). They argue that we are socially controlled to stay within our boundaries in society so as not to be seen as deviant. Thus, the social structure perpetuates an institutionalized society of role-playing individuals who spend their lives legitimizing their practices through knowledge, language, attitude, and dress. While acknowledging dress, Berger and Luckmann fail to account for the role of visual media in perpetuating the social construction of reality, or at least they choose to ignore its impact in examples. Yet, in *Is There a Text in this Class?* (1980) Stanley Fish expands on the cultural turn's focus on

meaning and replaces *what does this sentence mean* with *what does this sentence do*; he

states that the sentence as an utterance is no longer an object, a thing-in-itself, but an

event, something that *happens* to, and with the participation of, the reader. And it is this

event, this happening that is the *meaning* of the sentence (Fish 25). He asks what the

sentence does and analyzes responses of the reader in relation to the words. Fish argues

the case for a method of analysis which focuses on the reader rather than on the artifact

(42). On the other hand, within the precepts of American Studies, the idea of a text

includes not only written language, but also visual images, including fashion –

comprising all the meaningful artifacts of culture. While dress studies, seems at first

glance that it does not belong within this web of questions of power, privilege, resistance

and identity, it has recently begun to integrate these areas. The history of dress studies is

quite long and what I am interested in here is the intersection of dress studies with visual

culture, critical theory, and American Studies.

Taylor argues that dress/textile historians often feel that their methods are

continually rejected by academia as non-professional because they choose to focus on

dress as a material object whereas social and economic historians usually ignore analyses

of actual fabrics. Examining academic dress/textile journals, *Costume* (1967-present),

Textile History (1968-present), and later *Fashion Theory* (1997-present), Taylor

explicates the on-going tension and overlap between these two seemingly distinct

approaches.

Academic dress studies journals magnify the continuing debate over legitimacy

within the dress studies field itself. In *Costume*, according to Taylor, emphasis is always

on "object-based" research and considers clothing to lie within social history, but rarely

includes room for theoretical debate or in-depth social history research (66). In 1983, Negley B. Harte, Senior Lecturer in Economic History at University College, London took over for Stanley D. Chapman, as Director of the Pasold Fund, direct sponsor of the journal of *Textile History* in its early years. Significantly, Taylor marks the insertion of Harte as the turning point in the debate, as "the 'old' and 'new' economic/social histories blew apart in 1976 when Harte launched his first attack on fellow economic historians" (67). Taylor quotes Harte, "The production, the distribution, and the consumption of textiles cannot therefore be ignored by any serious economic and social historian of Europe" (67). In 1981, Taylor notes that Harte questioned why social historians were still not looking at clothing (67). However, he was equally unforgiving in his criticism of the dress history field which he described in 1977 as "being inadequately related to wide matters of concern to the historian of social change and movements . . ." (67) and in 1991 as "a prolonged picnic attended by hordes of school children and enthusiastic girls on textile or design courses undertaking 'projects'" (68). Striving to bring the 'old' and 'new' approaches together, Harte organized two interdisciplinary conferences: The Pasold Conference on the Economic and Social History of Dress (1985) in London and Social Aspects of Clothing in the Netherlands in 1992. According to Taylor, these two conferences "threw 'old' and 'new' university and museum curators from Europe together for the very first time" (68). Similarly, in 1984, Jane Tozer (then joint Costume Curator at the Gallery of English Costume at Platt Hall, Manchester) asked Costume Society members "to relate dress to its historical, artistic, social and economic context; it is unfortunate if these disciplines seem at times to be opposing camps. The standard texts of the future will come from a synthesis of theses views" (Taylor 68).

Taylor suggests that in the late 1980s and early 1990s changes in methodological approaches shifted with an emphasis on material culture and consumption. Taylor points to the U.S. debut of *Consuming Visions – Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920* (1989), edited by Simon J. Brosner as "one key contribution with contributors drawn from history, folklore, museology, sociology, psychology, art, anthropology, semiotics, literature and American Studies departments" (69). And she also points to the *Consumption and the World of Goods* (1993), a "groundbreaking" study out of Britain by John Brewer and Roy Porter. Taylor announces that "the barriers were broken. From the early 1990s, new interdisciplinary methodologies were developed by both male and female researchers using ethnographic, material culture and consumption-based approaches" (70).

However, Taylor's agreement with the argument put forth by Ben Fine and Ellen Leopold that "analysis of the processes of consumption through which specific artifacts are designed, produced, retailed, distributed, purchased and used can 'explain the mores and practices of society' is now widely accepted"(70), seems a bit presumptuous. Nevertheless, Taylor also acknowledges that "what has been fascinating for many dress historians who have long understood the connections between consumption and the 'mores and practices of society' as manifested through fashion, has been to watch as these newly converted investigators finally deal with the issues of fashion and style change (in its broadest sense)" (71). But what remains troubling is many of dress scholars' unwillingness to deal with aspects of American Studies/cultural studies and visual culture studies. Although Taylor makes note of D.E. Allen, an economic historian who in 1991 was struggling to understand "fashion as a social process," the way in which

dress scholars analyze material culture and consumption is often lacking a critical

theoretical approach.

Consumption History >< Material Culture Approaches

Consumption history and material culture approaches are becoming part of "new"

dress history approaches (Taylor 73).

> [John] Styles identifies the one embracing factor in all these approaches as 'the postmodern turn in the human sciences – a downplaying of long historical trajectories and deep causes, a focus on surface phenomena and on diversity, a concern with the personal, with the subjective and with identity.' Styles sums up the excitement for the dress historian of these developments. 'They render important the very characteristics of dress that previously made it intellectually suspect [to the academy] – it's ephemerality, its superficiality, its variety.' Styles made these points at the turning point, the international conference *Dress in History: Studies and Approaches* held in 1997 at the Gallery of Costume, Manchester. In September 2000 over one hundred museum dress history curators, collectors and teachers from Sweden, Norway and Denmark met at a conference titled, Dress, Body and Identity to discuss future directions for the subject. The conference sought to debate 'modern approaches' and in particular to debate how museum curators might enfold new theoretical approaches within their gallery displays" (Taylor 73-74).

Taylor makes a distinction between 'new' and 'old' approaches within dress history, but

also addresses her ideal of incorporating both approaches in analyses. Taylor argues for

the blending interdisciplinary approach, yet acknowledges "the blending of object-based

and material culture approaches may not have yet reached the point when material culture

historians actually discuss examples of clothing in any depth, but we are getting very,

very close" (77-78). Although there continues to be a small movement in dress studies

toward cultural studies/visual culture approaches, it is in the minority. Looking at

feminist anthologies, visual culture anthologies, American/cultural studies anthologies,

and dress studies anthologies, it is a rare occurrence to see dress studied in visual culture;

yet books like, *Appearance and Power*, *Body Dressing*, *Through the Wardrobe*, *Dressed

to Impress*, remain relegated to the "fashion world" by visual culture and relegated to

cultural studies by dress studies. So, something is missing. Even new books like

Fashion as Communication and *Fashion-ology* which attempt to fuse critical theory with

dress studies, consistently neglect the intricacies of critical analysis. "Dress exhibits" and fashion shows continue to feature clothes without contexts and programs at institutions which provide degrees in textiles relegate the context of clothing to one class—usually called the social psychology of clothing.

Cultural Studies Approaches

To give credit where credit is due, Christopher Breward, Reader in Historical and Cultural Studies at the London College of Fashion, debated *Cultures, Identities: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress* at the 1997 Manchester *Dress in History* conference. He outlined the sweep of dress research stemming from new approaches within the fields of cultural history and cultural and media studies, adding textual analysis (through semiotic use of film and magazines), sociology, the role of ideology (hegemony, subcultures and pleasure) and the political question of identities (race, gender and sexuality). Similarly, Breward finding the study of dress and fashion still to be "marginal to wider design historical concerns," prefers to use the term "dress studies" over "dress history". Breward, like Styles, is convinced that assessment of "clothing and fashion have finally become a vehicle for debates that now lie at the heart of visual and material culture studies" (Taylor 78).

> Breward cites the theme of 'fashion and signification' as central to the way in which 'cultural studies offers a way of studying objects as systems rather than the simple product of authorship'. Furthermore, he cites semiology approaches by Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes as offering 'cultural signifying systems, allowing the scholar to examine the social specificity of representations and their meaning across different cultural practices'. These include dress, behaviour and the construction of appearance (Taylor 78).

Such use of clothing to examine "deviant" or "minority" subcultures originated, according to Taylor, from the now widely recognized and pioneering sociology approaches of Stuart Hall and Dick Hebdige at the University of Birmingham's Centre

for Contemporary Cultural Studies, founded by Richard Roggart in 1964. Angela McRobbie followed this through with specific assessment of the neglected place of young women within subcultures (Taylor 80-81).

Taylor takes note of the influence of the "cultural studies approach" which she argues leads to a new problem—that of a shift in interest away from garments to text and theory (Taylor 83). For those of us who have an interest in *critical* dress studies, I say it's about time. Taylor describes the shift as a possible "return of the old anti-artefact prejudices" and also suggests "this shift may indicate that within the field of cultural studies, critical theory is also seen as far more academically weighty than object-based study of garments" (83). While I agree that Cultural Studies does put heavy emphasis on theoretical analysis, many cultural studies programs hire scholars whose interest is material culture. But it is not material culture as dress studies scholars seem to know it (see Clothing as Material Culture 2005) which "puts the material back into clothing"; it is material culture as analyses of not only particular objects but the culture surrounding those objects or as visual culture scholars see it: "Visual culture should study not objects, but 'subjects caught in the congeries of cultural meanings'" (Michael Ann Holly 1996b, p. 40, Dikovitskaya 11).

Taylor cites Malcolm Barnard's *Clothing as Communication* for its failure to make "one detailed or specific reference to object-based approaches" (Taylor 83). Yet, I think his analysis of the cultural studies approach also remains inadequate. Taylor notes "Whilst useful as a compendium of Cultural Studies approaches to 'fashion and clothing as ways of communicating class, gender, sexual and social identities,' this lack of inclusion of any research on the actuality of clothing is a glaring omission" (83). But I

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must add, is it such a glaring omission, when the majority of dress studies texts detail all types of clothing but refuse to examine their significance? And when an examination of significance is attempted, it is criticized for not being enough like every other dress text! I think dress studies scholars need to push their theoretical analyses even further in the cultural studies approach direction before Taylor's utopian ideal of merging object based and critical theory can ever be attained at a high level of scholarship. Taylor writes that such cultural studies approaches such as those employed by Crane, Fine, Leopold, Vickery, Breward and others show that they are "*convinced* that clothing is 'a strategic site for studying changes in the meanings of cultural goods in relation to changes in social structures, in the character of cultural organizations and in other forms of culture'" (Taylor 84). Thus, it seems as though Taylor finds this approach a little difficult to swallow.

In 1997 the innovative transatlantic dress history/dress studies journal *Fashion Theory* was launched in London and New York, produced four times a year, and edited by the American dress historian, Valerie Steele; the journal's editorial aims and scope aim to bring fashion and cultural studies together:

> The study of fashion has, until recently, suffered from a lack of critical analysis … *Fashion Theory* takes as its starting point a definition of 'fashion' as the cultural construction of the embodied identity. It aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum for the rigorous analysis of cultural phenomena ranging from footbinding to fashion advertising.

Taylor concludes, with the *Journal of Fashion Theory* serving as exemplar, "the most dynamic research in dress history has indeed now fused artifact-based and theoretical approaches" and suggests, "now, as the last remaining subject and gender-based prejudices are being mopped up, dress history/dress studies is being propelled into its new future by the high levels of interdisciplinary good practice emerging from both sides

of the great dress history divide" (Taylor 85). Although Taylor may be a little premature

in stating the last remaining subject and gender-based prejudices are being mopped up,

the *Journal of Fashion Theory* is a testament to bridging the liminal spaces between

American Studies, Critical Theory and Visual Culture; American Studies, Critical Theory

and Dress Studies; and Visual Culture and Dress Studies, in an effort to express the

increased need for dress studies to incorporate an American Studies/critical theory

approach and for visual culture to see dress studies as a legitimate part of visual concerns.

Key Concepts

- Wounds

What can clothes cover and shield? What do they announce and proclaim? The cloth is

not alone in this communication; there are bodies attached. The interpretation becomes a

collective process in public view, but this does not negate the very personal connection

every body has with its own representation. Wounds of signification are often displayed

simultaneously as a sense of empowerment and recognition of injustice; as a critique of

policy and as a cry for change; as an individual display of beliefs and as a challenge to

national boundaries. This project explores the power of clothed bodies and exposes the

individual and national wounds through their processes of healing justice. What I am

intrigued by is the process of selection, punishment for violations and subversion that

occurs on the national stage as a result of local and individual acts. I am interested in the

meanings behind the "look policies" as Abercrombie & Fitch likes to call them and how

similar types of policies are implemented to (re)define national identity. *Who is the ideal*

brand representative of the United States? How do you know?

- Dress/look

Identifying the body as a potent example of visual culture (Fuery 53), I focus on clothing and the body and the ways in which the visual (perceived or actual) impacts and transforms notions of belonging over time. In analyzing multiple case studies from the 19th to the 21st century, the pattern of how the body negotiates its visual displacement reveals the space where visual culture, social (dis)order and public policy meet. With an emphasis on contemporary examples, this project examines the rhetoric used to protect the nation and identifies places of resistance which influence the future of social justice activism.

- Nation/brand

The unifying theme of the chapters to come centers around the way in which building a concept of a national identity is much like the process that Abercrombie & Fitch follows to achieve an ideal brand representative. A&F creates and upholds this ideal and reflects how the ideal brand representative functions in other institutions within the United States. What I am intrigued by is the process of selection, punishment for violations and subversion that occurs on the national stage as a result of local and individual acts. I am interested in the meanings behind the "look policies" as A&F likes to call them and how these similar types of policies are implemented to define national identity.

III
Persuasive Acts: Nineteenth-Century Women Public Speakers and the Visuality of Strategic Resistance

According to Dwight McBride the label Abercrombie & Fitch dates back to 1892 and became one of the largest sporting goods stores in the world by 1917 (62, 63).

> It is evident that even in its earliest incarnation, Abercrombie was closely allied with white men (and to a lesser extent white women) of means, the life of the leisure classes, and a Norman Rockwell-like image in the United States, for which they were famous even then. It is not surprising that the clothier we know today developed from a company with early roots in exploration, adventure, and cultural tourism, which catered to the white upper classes. So A&F's legacy of an unabashed consumer celebration of whiteness, and of an elite class of whiteness at that, in the face of a nation whose past and present are riddled with racist ideas, politics, and ideology, is not entirely new (McBride 64).

So who gets to be an American citizen? And even if you are one, what kind of rights do you possess? Examining the women's suffrage movement illustrates McBride's argument of the perpetuation of the master narrative in the very need for its existence; yet, it is also more complex than just identifying the master narrative. The navigation of the ideal brand representative was markedly different for white women than it was for black women. In essence, they utilized different strategies to achieve the same agenda and were perceived differently as a result.

I argue that the U. S. continues to shape its national identity informed by an unchanging ideal brand representative from the 19th century and into the 21st. I examine this premise with respect to the women's suffrage movement and the ways in which bodily difference, expression, dress, and appearance are central components of both political expression and resistance, and how the presentation of self and politics collide as black and white women public speakers in the nineteenth century negotiated visuality in distinct ways and dress became not only a means of control, but also a site of resistance.

Because analyses of dress, appearance, and "rhetorical style" remain significantly underrepresented within a cultural framework that also addresses race, class, gender, and sexuality, I would like to begin to re-map this history to include an emphasis on visual appearance. Beginning in the nineteenth century, I will examine how appearance for black and white women orators, became a strategy of resistance in the newly emerging public sphere. More specifically, I will consider one of the few books that explicitly addresses the significance of clothing and appearance of politically active women, entitled, *Appropriate[ing] Dress: Women's Rhetorical Style in Nineteenth-Century America* by Carol Mattingly. Exposing its limitations, but also highlighting the importance of this text's discussion of visuality, I will go beyond the boundaries of Mattingly's analysis and look at the juxtaposition of black and white female bodies as they inform and construct one another. Discussing such white women public speakers as Dr. Mary Walker and Frances Wright, who were, according to Mattingly, too extreme, as well as black women orators like Sojourner Truth and Frances E. W. Harper, I will ask, *how does the audience receive appearance?; how does visuality impact the exchange between audience and orator and allow or inhibit communication?; who remains in control of appearances?; and does making oneself appear palatable constitute a strategy for resistance?* Connecting the nineteenth century to the twentieth and twenty-first, I will also examine the representation of Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama in the context of Aimee Ball's article, "Is There A Winning Look for Women in Politics?," which argues that the importance of visuality in politics still remains clear: appearances are persuasive.

Women are different; this was the argument both for and against women's

suffrage (Keck & Sikkink 53). Looking at the women's suffrage movement in the

context of advocacy networks in international politics, in *Activists Beyond Borders*,

Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink note:

> . . . instead of asserting that women were entitled to equal rights and citizenship by virtue of being human, framed their argument in terms of women's difference from men, and the unique qualities such as morality and nurturing that they could bring to the public realm. Opponents of woman suffrage also believed that women were different, claiming that if given the vote women would be too conservative, too tied to the church, or too supportive of banning alcoholic beverages (53).

So the focus is still on the unequal role of women and the premise that they need to stay

in that role to earn the right to vote and not be allowed the right to vote by virtue of that

role. With a focus on transnational advocacy networks and their impact on domestic

policy, Keck and Sikkink draw from their political science backgrounds to discuss the

complexities of the changing nature of sovereignty, human rights, and the boomerang

effect between International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and states. The

part of their argument that I find particularly compelling centers on how advocacy

campaigns articulate with nationalist discourse (Keck & Sikkink 73). Examining the

"relationship between the ideas advocacy networks help to diffuse and the domestic

contexts in which these ideas do or do not take hold," (72) Keck and Sikkink expose the

ways in which "international rights pressures can lead to changes in human rights

practices, helping to transform understandings about the nature of a state's sovereign

authority over its citizens" (116). Although Keck and Sikkink focus on the international

arena and on what they term "networks," their observations about the effect of advocacy

on state sovereignty (or how states implement policies) deserves another look within the

context of women public speakers in the nineteenth century, and women in politics and

the role of the state in upholding a view of national identity today.

Introduction to the Bloomer

In the 1850s, Mattingly maintains that the Bloomer costume, otherwise known as the reform dress, made a dramatic impact in the way women speakers were perceived. This knee length dress worn over loosely fitting trousers, "fixed in the national consciousness, the idea of woman as celebrity and spokesperson on political issues and established a visual image of woman as public speaker" (Mattingly 37). At the same time that dress reform became an increasingly hot topic in women's public speeches and in women's magazine and newspapers, like *Sybil* and *Godey's*, controversy brewed over the new dress's pantaloons which remained a "symbol of men's authority and women's changing ideas about place and freedom" (Mattingly 67).

In-depth Look at Four Women Activists of the 19th Century

Complexities of dress for black women were coded differently from those of white women. While white women reform leaders were adopting the Bloomer, black reform leaders, such as Sojourner Truth and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, retained more customary dress. As Shirley Logan notes in *We Are Coming*, while black women wanted to assist "personal and racial uplift," they also wanted to "argue black women into the cult of true womanhood" (112). Thus, "while white women were *reclaiming* an ethos, that of the 'lady,' black women were trying to *attain* that ethos" (Mattingly 125).

Sojourner Truth (1795-1883)

Born into slavery, and most famous for her speech, "Arn't I A Woman," Sojourner Truth dismissed the Bloomer as too closely resembling clothing she had been forced to wear during her years of slavery. For Truth, the Bloomer represented a form of bondage (Mattingly 110). "Truth was also conscious of the correlation between her dress and

appearance and her acceptance as a 'lady'" (Mattingly 128). Her 'African' dress was the turban she wore at all public appearances, a piece of apparel that would also conceal the textured hair that distanced her from features identified with a lady (Mattingly 126). If descriptions of her presentations are accurate, Truth often used her body as an explicit representation of the history of slavery in this country. Her scars became the dress/text that she wished her audience to read, her platform resembling the auction block upon which so many Africans had been sold (Mattingly 127).

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911)

Frances E. W. Harper, born of free parents, was a writer of poems, letters, and speeches, and was the first black woman to publish a novel. She similarly used her body as a representation of the horrors of slavery, yet at the same time struggled to embody the nineteenth-century white middle-class feminine ideal in order to become more acceptable to white audiences. When Frances Harper spoke, she was generally identified by her skin tone (by the white audiences and press).

As Shirley Wilson Logan notes in "Black Women on the Speaker's Platform," many who heard her found it difficult to believe that she was of African descent. Grace Greenwood, a journalist, labeled her, "the bronze muse" and could not believe that a woman of such stature could possibly have been a slave, as if to suggest that slavery was more acceptable for some human beings than for others (Logan 156 in *Listening to Their Voices*). As did Truth, Harper called attention to her body only to create a textured fabric of history as a black woman and her relationship to American slavery. Her physical layered dress often served to symbolically represent the layers of historical violence and slavery on her body (Mattingly 131).

Frances Wright (1795- 1852)

Frances Wright, a white Scottish-American reformer who advocated equal rights for women, emancipation of slaves, universal education, religious freedom, and birth control, was often called "masculine" and "unsexed" by critics who nearly always focused on her dress or general appearance when attacking her. Wright wore her curly hair cropped short, challenging a major cultural norm that separated women from men according to length and style of hair (Mattingly 18). "At times her dress consisted of Turkish trousers beneath a long-sleeved, knee-length tunic of fine material, bound at the waist by a flowing sash" (Mattingly 20). The radical departure from traditional dress focused additional attention on Wright's body, which was already a spectacle because of her abandoning woman's assigned sphere (Mattingly 20).

Although Mattingly argues that Frances Wright successfully thrust a new image of woman upon a public deeply committed to standardized binary gender roles, Mattingly also asserts that Frances Wright's radical appearance and public disdain for religion contributed to the further normalizing of the gendered culture; and her refusal to negotiate any of the expected gender roles, according to Mattingly, made identification with her too frightening for most women (Mattingly 24).

Dr. Mary Walker (1832–1919)

Dr. Mary Walker was a white American surgeon who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for her service, and the only woman ever to have held this honor. She adopted male attire, which she wore to the end of her life, and was active in the struggle for women's suffrage among other reforms. She alternated between a type of coat-dress modeled loosely on the Bloomer costume and traditional men's dress which

consisted of a man's coat and pants with silk top hat, along with a man's shirt, collar and tie (Mattingly 92, 97). Yet, she sported men's clothing while simultaneously making a show of her long, dark ringlets (Mattingly 93). Reporters continued to find Walker engaging as long as she retained explicit features that marked her femininity. Later, when she cut her long hair and removed all features of traditional feminine dress, she was met with more resistance (Mattingly 93).

Even though she wore the Congressional Medal of Honor each time she lectured, adding another striking feature to her appearance, she was often faced with comments like, "You must know that it is yourself that is the attraction and not the lecture" (A. Courtney, quoted in Synder 72) (Mattingly 95). For Walker, the purpose of masculine dress was not in passing unrecognized into another place. A supporter of women's rights and dress reform, she insisted upon a woman's right to wear whatever she wished (Mattingly 96).

Palatable Reform

According to Mattingly, a successful woman public speaker strikes a precarious balance between codes of femininity and challenges to traditional conventions. *Appropriat[ing] Dress* is a thought-provoking analysis of largely white, middle-class women's dress amidst a time period when women challenged their roles in the private sphere. Yet, what remains troubling is Mattingly's complicity in the implication that it is a woman's duty to make reform palatable, and that women can not be too masculine and therefore too alienating, if they wish to make progress. Nevertheless, Mattingly delves into a component of visual culture that is rarely analyzed: the significance of clothing and appearance of politically active women.

Contemporary Parallels

Although we may be uncomfortable with the focus on women's bodies and dress today, at the turn of the nineteenth century such concern contributed to women speakers' success, signifying their importance and acceptability. Dress has become a defining feature, often promoting celebrity and providing a measure by which audiences might be reassured that if women were claiming a new place, they at least maintained their appropriate "feminine" and class stations (Mattingly 133).

Similarly in the late twentieth and early 21st century the emphasis on appearance for women and in particular for women in politics, still remains a topic of much discussion. In the article, " Is There A Winning Look for Women in Politics?" published in *McCall's Magazine*, Amiee Ball examines visual style and appearance for women in politics within the context of the 1992 campaign also known as "The Year of the Woman" (or as some might say the year of the white woman). Ball begins by claiming that "[I]n this Year of the Woman, female candidates—as well as political wives—are being scrutinized as never before. It's open season on their choices about clothes, makeup, contact lenses and hairstyles" (126). Within the context of *McCall's Magazine* which according to its mission statement, "appeals to the mainstream American woman by discussing the issues that are important to them," Ball quotes Ruth Mandel, director of the Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University, who states, "We're not familiar with images of women who are responsible for the care of the nation" (128). Similarly, Jane Byrne, the former mayor of Chicago, contends, "I'm not so sure everybody is *prepared* to see a hardworking woman" (130).

But does the increased scrutinization of women also apply to men? Ball argues that style has also been important to male politicians, but not to the same degree as for women. Mandel states, "I like to remind myself of [the appearance pressures on] men. How many men do you know running for high-visibility elected office who have beards

and mustaches? Hair is so associated with sexuality, and the image of political people in this country is a bit desexed. You're supposed to look like a man or a woman, but you're not supposed to *reek* of it" (188). According to Ball, ultimately, "The bottom line in any discussion about a candidate's appearance is: Does it affect the way people vote?" (Ball 132). And Ball leaves us with a prescriptive list on *how to make the right impression*. She states, "Every good politician—in fact, anyone who wants to make an impression—senses the importance of looking 'right.' For women this means being strong yet non-threatening, attractive, but not *too*, approachable but not weak" (131).

    Appropriate[ing] Dress remains an important text for the purpose of regendering history and placing visual communication at the forefront of feminist studies. While Mattingly successfully argues that women's dress and appearance is important and under-researched, she undermines the relationship between the differing consequences for white women and black women that allowed white women to benefit at black women's expense. Moreover, Mattingly underestimates the power of women's outright refusal to negotiate any of the expected gender roles in transforming women's dress and place in the nineteenth-century, and she also fails to examine women's sexuality in relation to dress and identity. Mattingly implies that radical women somehow ruin the progress of women's movement toward equality.

    Addressing only white women in politics, Ball concludes that following prescriptive steps will get you results. *But will it change structures?* Even though we are no longer referring to women speakers as Amazons, brazen creatures, strange specimens of humanity or mistakes of nature, *are we still fashioning the cause for women in "acceptable" terms?*

Sojourner Truth finally made it to the white house with a little help from Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton. M. Obama and H. Clinton unveiled the statue of Truth in May of 2009; Truth now holds the title of first black woman in statue form to be represented at the nation's capitol (Grio 5-22-09). This is certainly progress. Yet, despite the significance of increased acceptance of women in politics and black women in the white house, H. Clinton and M. Obama are not immune to continual monitoring of their appearances.

Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton

Michelle Obama's role in policy reform is automatically associated with Hillary Clinton's failure, not only as a policy reformer but as a woman in politics. Their ability even as Ivy League-educated women attorneys in political policy often comes under public scrutiny. In the article "Michelle Obama Raises Fears Over Hillary Clinton-Style Debacle: Democrats Are Fretting as the First Lady Seeks a Wider Role in the White House," Tony Allen-Mills notes that M. Obama has "become perceptibly more vocal about healthcare and community issues," since hiring Susan Sher as her chief of staff (6-28-09). Sher "insisted Michelle Obama was not about to turn into Hillary Mark Two: 'My own perception of it is that she doesn't want to get involved in . . . wonky policy issues \ the kind of contentious legislative proposals that are going on at any given time,'" (Allen-Mills 6-28-09), but it looks like she was wrong. Michelle Obama's political involvement on the issue of healthcare reform is tied not only to Hillary's failure on the same policy issue previously, but to the fact that women should not attempt to be involved in certain types of policy reform. As a result, David Knowles acknowledges in the article "Michelle Obama Steps Up Policy Issue," what Myra Gutin, first lady

historian, has termed M. Obama's "political coming out" (Knowles 9-18-09), and how it has people worried that she is overstepping her role as a woman and acting outside the realm of acceptable interests for her gender by participating in healthcare reform, rather than staying with "safer" topics like promoting good nutrition and exercise, and helping military families, none of which has "drawn partisan ire. [Yet] Friday's event [speaking to women's groups at the White House about healthcare reform] signaled the start of what could prove a more contentious agenda" (Knowles 9-18-09). Allen-Mills notes:

> Despite [previous] denials from White House officials that Michelle Obama is suffering from "Hillary-itis" — a burning desire to help her husband run the country — her long-running interest in healthcare has raised painful memories of 1994, when Hillary Clinton presided over a political debacle as her health reform proposals collapsed in Congress (6-28-09).

The corollary between Hillary Clinton and Michelle Obama remains the amount of power that they should be allowed to have in politics; this is dependent on their ability to function successfully as a woman in the political realm, not just related to their success within a particular reform agenda. In other words, Knowles acknowledges: "Ironically, it was Clinton's stewardship of the eventually defeated health-care legislation that made some question whether an unelected presidential spouse [always a woman] should wield so much power" (Knowles 9-18-09). As a result, "Every first lady faces a certain amount of risk when they get involved. People ask, 'Who appointed her?'"(Gutin in Knowles 9-18-09). As women in politics negotiate the fine line between choosing what policy is important to them and what involvement is expected of them, their performance becomes deeply tied to the normative boundaries of gender roles. And should they step outside of those boundaries, they are soon reminded to go back in.

The media attention on Clinton's and Obama's fashion-sense puts the focus on clothing and accessories not ideas, a tradition reserved for women in politics. The

question mediated by CNN, and asked to Hillary Clinton, "Do you prefer diamonds or pearls?"(Ambinder 11-16-07), illustrates this point as it knocks Clinton back into the appropriate gender role, as the only female on the panel at the Las Vegas Democratic Presidential Candidate Debate (November 15, 2007). For additional evidence of this check out the *Us Weekly Magazine* (February 8, 2008) spread of the changing look of Hillary Clinton where she is noted to have "generally won points for style on the campaign trail, matching figure-flattering designer pantsuits with conservative jewelry" (AP 2-08-08). In addition, the *Michelle Obama Look Book*, (not to be confused with the *Abercrombie & Fitch Look Book*), 142 pages of her style, showcases "she has an affinity for sleeveless dresses and pointed flats, and she likes her cardigans on the fancier side. [Furthermore,] during her first trip to Europe as First Lady, she broke out everything from J.Crew to Junya Watanabe, with appearances by her regular favorites like Thakoon, Jason Wu, and Isabel Toledo" (Clott, 4-8-09); or you may want to look at the amount of press generated by Michelle's $540 Lanvin sneakers, when she wore them to volunteer at a Washington D. C. food bank.

M. Obama's focus is on "the woman's perspective" (Gutin in Knowles 9-18-09), and she argues that healthcare reform is "very much a women's issue," in order to use this platform of "women are different" to implicitly support social justice practices. She notes at least one way in which "the current system is preventing women from obtaining 'true equality'" that is, in many states insurance companies can still discriminate because of gender. And [M. Obama states] this is shocking to me"; it even "wakes her up at night" (Knowles 9-18-09).

IV
TransDressing: Clothing Identities in Clarissa Sligh's Exhibit Jake in Transition

I have included the image and words of Clarissa Sligh's "My Weight Training" below:
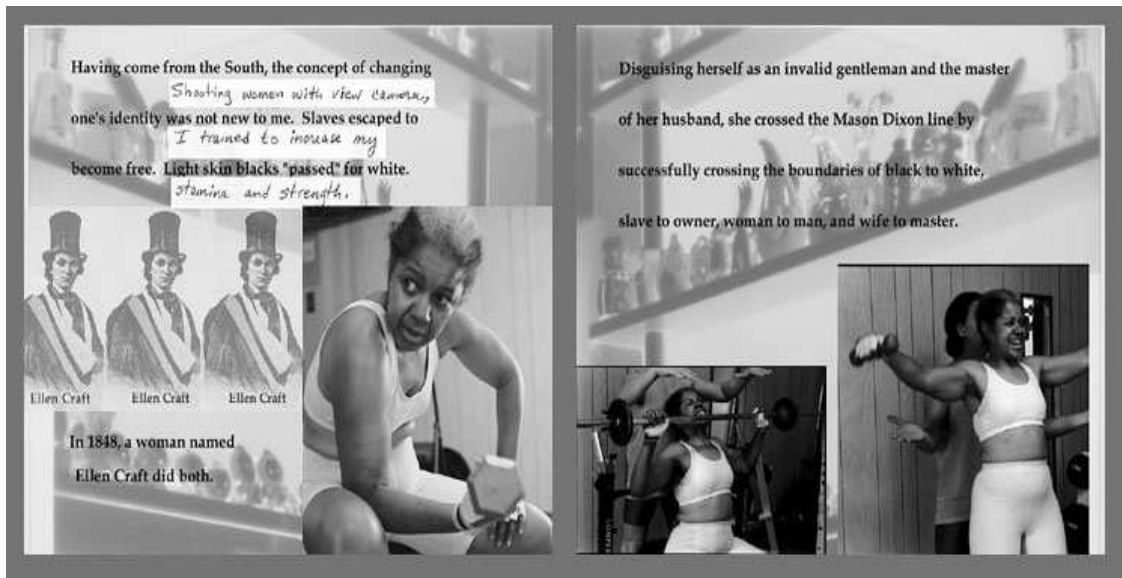
Having come from the South, the concept of changing
shooting women with a view camera
One's identity was not new to me. Slaves escaped to
I trained to increase my
Become free. Light skinned blacks "passed" for white,
Stamina and strength
In 1848, a woman named Ellen Craft did both.

Disguising herself as an invalid gentleman and the master of her husband, she crossed the Mason Dixon line by successfully crossing the boundaries of black to white, slave to owner, woman to man, and wife to master.

I have been locked up in jail by cops because I was wearing a suit and tie. Was my clothing really a crime? Is it a 'man's' suit if I am wearing it? At what point—from field to rack—is fiber assigned a sex? (Feinberg, TransLib. 10-11).

Dressing Discourses of Identities

"You are under arrest for dressing as the opposite sex!" wrote Ann Seiber in her

article, "Only 20 Years Ago: The Repeal of Houston's Law Against Cross-Dressing," in

the August 2000 issue of *OutSmart* magazine. This ordinance prohibited "a person from

appearing in public dressed with the intent to disguise his or her sex as that of the

opposite sex" (Seiber August 2000). Houston's ordinance is just one of many such

regulations prohibiting cross-dressing, dating back to as early as the 15th century. In his

book on sumptuary law, Alan Hunt reviews documented cross-dressing violations: " . . .

in Venice a measure in 1443 provided heavy fines for men wearing a woman's dress"

(233). The severity of the punishment associated with such a "crime" according to Hunt,

included "dressing offenders in the clothes of the opposite sex, sitting them backwards on

a horse, and parading them around town" (233-234). Others, like Joan of Arc, according

to Leslie Feinberg, were not as lucky; instead of being paraded around for public

humiliation, she was burned at the stake by the Inquisition of the Catholic Church at the

age of 19 because she refused to stop dressing as a man ("A New Look," 30).

Cross-dressing has also played a role in historical rebellions. According to

Feinberg, "transvestism was an emblem of class militancy, and many grass-roots leaders

of . . . class battles that raged in Europe during the feudal age, and into the epoch of

industrial capitalism . . . were people who today might be described as transvestite or

transsexual" ("A New Look," 30). Similarly, Hunt acknowledges that cross-dressing has

also been associated with "popular radicalism" (232). Both Feinberg and Hunt disclose

the significance of cross-dressing in such uprisings as the Porteous Riots of 1736 in

Edinburgh Scotland, Lady Skimmington in 1812, General Ludd's wives, and the Rebecca

Riots (Feinberg, "A New Look," 30; Hunt 232). And Feinberg also urges us to not forget

that in the twentieth century, transgendered people were at the forefront of the Stonewall

Rebellion in 1969 ("A New Look," 30).

Despite what would seem to be a rich cross-dressing history spanning many centuries, what people wear takes us beyond personal preference; it raises questions about the ways in which clothing and associated display operate as a mechanism for claiming an identity within a public arena and the ways in which appearance is central to the visibility and recognizability of gender. In her article, "Refashioning the Concept of Public/Private: Lessons from Dress Studies," Carole Turbin suggests "the cultural meanings of dress are even more complex and multilayered than other material objects because clothing and textiles almost uniquely combine production and consumption and private, bodily, intimate sensation, sexuality, and fantasy with public self-presentation" (3).

It is with a focus not only on the physical body but the clothed body that I wish to examine in Clarissa Sligh's 2005 exhibit, *Jake in Transition*. Sligh does not explicitly mention how clothes are functioning in her work, but they remain an unexamined aspect of her exhibit and do figure prominently on many levels. As Sligh documents Deb's surgical transformation to Jake and chronicles her own subjectivity and position as documenter, photographer, black, female, 50 something year old, heterosexual, feminist from the Southeast in relation to Deb (soon to be Jake), a white, 30-something year old, Midwestern lesbian working to become a heterosexual man, Sligh confides,

> As I observe and support Jake in his changes so that his body can pass as a white man, I cannot help but think about the fact that I will never be able to change my brown skin to escape the layer of oppression one experiences from being black in America. Working with and supporting someone whose values and beliefs differ radically from my own is forcing me to face some things about myself that I never wanted to look at. It is the experience that is grounded in my body, the Self-Other conflict that reverberates with the history of the Master-Slave relationship, and its strong resonance within our culture that I continue to explore (*Jake in Transition*).

It seems at first glance Sligh situates herself within a Self-Other, Master-Slave rhetoric that often does not allow room for a space of category crisis, a space of

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disruption, a "failure of definitional distinction, a borderline that becomes permeable, that permits of border crossings from one (apparently distinct) category to another: black/white, Jew/Christian, noble/bourgeois, master/servant, master/slave," as Marjorie Garber would have it (16). However, upon reexamination, Sligh complexly employs multiple category crises vis-à-vis cross-dressing in her image "My Weight Training," as she juxtaposes her own brown skin as a black woman in the United States, with Jake's new passing white male body, and Ellen Craft's journey as a slave passing as white and male. I will revisit her image through the lens of dress and question the ways in which dress provides a means by and through which the shifting discourses of identities and category crises may be read.

Ellen Craft: Running A Thousand Miles for Freedom

Sligh writes across her image:

> Having come from the South, the concept of changing
> shooting women with a view camera
>
> One's identity was not new to me. Slaves escaped to
> I trained to increase my
> Become free. Light skinned blacks "passed" for white,
> Stamina and strength
> In 1848, a woman named Ellen Craft did both.
>
> Disguising herself as an invalid gentleman and the master of her husband, she crossed the Mason Dixon line by successfully crossing the boundaries of black to white, slave to owner, woman to man, and wife to master ("My Weight Training").

Sligh's focus on Ellen Craft supports multiple categorical crises as Craft disrupts boundaries of race, class, and gender. Recounting in more detail the journey of Ellen Craft, originally put to paper in 1860 by her husband William Craft and titled, *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom*, I will pay particular attention to the ways in which dress was key in successfully making her way to the North. Born in 1826 in Clinton Georgia, a

product of her mother Maria, a slave, and her mother's owner Col. James Smith, Ellen was often mistaken as white. William was a slave whose family had been broken up and sold to pay its master's gambling debts. Ellen and William met and married in 1846, but they could not live together since they belonged to different owners. They endured this separation and eventually devised a plan to escape to the North. Ellen would pretend to be traveling, first-class, to Philadelphia for medical treatment, as a white male slave owner and William would go along as her slave.

Dress and appearance demarcates and secures gender. William writes,

> Just before the time arrived, in the morning, for us to leave, I cut off my wife's hair square at the back of the head, and got her to dress in the disguise and stand out on the floor. I found that she made a most respectable looking gentleman (Craft 35-36).

Ellen was complete with bandages around her chin and head so "that the smoothness of her face might not betray her" and also to hide her expression, beardless chin, and serve as a plausible excuse for avoiding general conversation; she was also accompanied by green spectacles for her eyes, "knowing that she would be thrown a good deal into the company of gentlemen;" her arm was wrapped in a sling, so she could "ask the officers to register her name for her" because she was illiterate; Ellen Craft who often "passed" as white was now prepared for her journey to escape slavery in Georgia in 1848 as the white master of her husband (now slave), William Craft (Craft 35).

Attention to not only the clothed but also the racialized bodies can tell us much about the tensions and anxieties of time and place. The historical time period of the mid 1800s remained one characterized by the division of states permitting and prohibiting slavery and increasing immigration. As William Craft reminds us, it was often difficult to detect African blood: "There are a large number of free negroes residing in the southern States; but in Georgia (and I believe in all the slave States,) every coloured

person's complexion is *primâ facie* evidence of his being a slave" (36). Craft recounts the

numerous measures refusing the protection of free blacks under law such as, a bill

introduced in the Tennessee Legislature to prevent free blacks from traveling on the

railroads in that state; a law passed in the state of Arkansas to banish all free blacks

which came into effect January 1, 1860 and states according to Craft that "every free

negro found there after that date will be liable to be sold into slavery, the crime of

freedom being unpardonable; the Missouri Senate has before it a bill providing that all

free negroes above the age of eighteen years who shall be found in the State after

September, 1860, shall be sold into slavery, and that all such negroes as shall enter the

State after September, 1861, and remain there twenty-four hours, shall also be sold into

slavery forever. Mississippi, Kentucky, and Georgia, and in fact, I believe, all the slave

States, are legislating in the same manner. Thus the slaveholders make it almost

impossible for free persons of colour to get out of the slave States, in order that they may

sell them into slavery . . . (Craft 37-38). The consequences for such statues include legal

power for any white man to arrest, and question, any person of color, male or female, that

he may find at large, particularly at night and on Sundays, without a written pass, signed

by the master or some one in authority, or stamped free papers, certifying that the person

is the rightful owner of himself. If the person of color refuses to answer questions put to

him, he may be beaten, and his defending himself against this attack makes him an

outlaw, and if he be killed on the spot, the murderer will be exempted from all blame; but

after the person of color has answered the questions put to him, in a most humble and

pointed manner, he may then be taken to prison; and should it turn out, after further

examination, that he was caught where he had no permission or legal right to be, and that

he has not given what they term a satisfactory account of himself, the master will have to pay a fine. On his refusing to do this, the poor slave may be legally and severely flogged by public officers. Should the prisoner prove to be a free man, he is most likely to be both whipped and fined (Craft 37). Ultimately, William cites the Dred Scott decision as the "crowning act of infamous Yankee legislation," because "the Supreme Court, has decided that no person of color, or persons of African extraction, can ever become a citizen of the United States, or have any rights which white men are bound to respect. That is to say, in the opinion of this Court, robbery, rape, and murder are not crimes when committed by a white upon a person of color" (Craft 38). And later the Fugitive Slave Act, passed in 1850 "required, under heavy penalties, that the inhabitants of the *free* States should not only refuse food and shelter to a starving, hunted human being, but also should assist, if called upon by the authorities, to seize the unhappy fugitive and send him back to slavery" (Craft 87).

While clothing plays a part in securing external manifestations of rank and status, race must not be disconnected from such a reading. On the train toward freedom, William Craft notes the attention his "master" was receiving:

> My master wore a fashionable cloth cloak, which they took and covered him comfortably on the couch. After he had been lying a little while the ladies, I suppose, thought he was asleep; so one of them gave a long sigh, and said, in a quiet fascinating tone, "Papa, he seems to be a very nice young gentleman." But before papa could speak, the other lady quickly said, "Oh! Dear me, I never felt so much for a gentleman in my life!" To use an American expression, "they fell in love with the wrong chap" (Craft 60).

Clothes alone would not have been able to secure Ellen's undetection without being coupled with her light skin. But for William, attention did not come so sweetly. Like for Ellen, clothes themselves did not secure William's status as a slave. His dark skin contrasting against his brimming white hat stood out to passengers, rather than serving as the disguise William thought it would. William's hat signaled multiple looks of disgust

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from white passengers who understood it as an attempt by a slave to dress white. William's choice of disguise on their journey, a "good second-hand white beaver," (which was a "fine hat") prompted passengers to comment to his master (Ellen Craft): "Just look at the quality on it; the President couldn't wear a better. I should just like to go and kick it overboard; it always makes me itch all over, from head to toe, to get hold of every d—d [damned] nigger I see dressed like a white man. Washington is run away with *spiled* [spoiled] and free niggers. If I had my way I would sell every d—d [damned] rascal of 'em way down South, where the devil would be whipped out on 'em." (Craft 67-68).

The Crafts' successful escape from slavery, and particularly Ellen's disguise, illustrates the interlocking nature of race, gender, and class, of a clothed body, but also the spaces for disruption, permeability and instability of such categories, for Ellen's passing had to be successful in all arenas simultaneously in order for them to travel undetected. What remains troubling about Ellen Craft's story and ultimately her voice is that it is entirely filtered through William's perspective. Furthermore, the Crafts were encouraged to tell the story of their escape in abolitionist circles after their arrival in the North, and for the next two years, the Crafts made public appearances where William told their story, and Ellen stood nearby so that audiences could see the woman who braved such an escape"("Ellen Craft, (c.1862 - c.1869"). Through her journey of racial passing, cross-dressing, and middle-class performance in a society where each of these boundaries were thought to be distinct and unwavering, Ellen Craft, became the subaltern.

Even though Ellen Craft remained a silent, but active contributor to the abolitionist movement, many women during the mid nineteenth century were also challenging norms about public and private spheres, mobility, justice, and dress. Many

prominent women spoke publicly, at a time when women's place was often thought to be in the home. As white women tried to deconstruct ideals of "true" womanhood, black women fought to overturn slavery and white-supremacist stereotypes imbedded in virtues of white womanhood (Feinberg, "Ain't I," 3-25-04). In particular, the Dress Reform movement challenged the law that only men could wear trousers; and many women were labeled cross-dressers. According to Feinberg, "everyone who advocated rights for women became targets of anti-gay, transphobic and anti-intersexual bigotry" ("Ain't I," 3-25-04).

Following in Their Footsteps

. . .clothing as a cultural signpost may be characterized as a potent zone of liminality across which the various knowledges of everyday life may be engraved, enforced and contested (Goodrum 88)..

Ultimately, appearance is powerful and Sligh's image, "My Weight Training" acknowledges this. Implicitly accounting for dress as a site of resistance and the importance of identity as categorical crises in her image, Sligh visually notes that "mind/body dualisms are functional parts of current social practices, reinforced by the social punishments lined up for those of us who make some effort to live our raced and sexed bodies reflectively in all their specificity" (McWhorter 157). Sligh bridges historical and contemporary manifestations of power and regulation and reexamines them in the context of her exhibit. Rather than having a man frame her story, as William did for Ellen, Sligh is rewriting history from a black female voice and reclaiming Ellen's power by filtering Jake's story through her own. Sligh, fully aware of Jake's power, photographs him and brands his words over his masculine image, "You tell me how it's going to be easier being a 5 foot 2 inch straight man. I don't have any rights" *(Jake in*

Transition). Jake says still not fully conscious of the power his new identity will bring.

Sligh explores voice and is "shooting women with a view camera" and "increasing her

stamina and strength" ("My Weight Training") to now position herself as the narrator,

documenter, and storyteller.

Categorical Crises

When you get right down to it, gender is performance, darling. As a performer
professionale, I'm taking it to a different level, beyond categorization . . . But I finally
realized, even though you need a pussy to be female, you sure as hell don't need one to be
woman (Hickman 111-112).

However, you may need to be wearing a skirt in order to be perceived as one.

Because analyses of dress and appearance remain significantly underrepresented within a

cultural framework that also addresses race, class, gender, and sexuality, I have chosen to

re-map this history to include an emphasis on visual appearance and address cross-

dressing as a category crisis. As Garber has noted, "category crises can and do mark

displacements from the axis of class as well as from race onto the axis of gender" (17). I

have examined the importance of the clothed body, questioned what identity is being

displayed, how is clothing being read by observers, and positioned clothing as a

mechanism for claiming an identity within a public arena, that remains fallible and

vulnerable (Hunt 138, 216).

While Leslie Feinberg has cautioned against "reducing the identities of drag

queens and drag kings to the clothing we wear" (Feinberg, *Trans Lib*, 58-59) and using

"the words cross-dresser, transvestite, and drag [because they] convey the sense that these

intricate expressions of self revolve solely around clothing,"(Feinberg, *Transgender*, xi) I

have acknowledged that the raced, classed, gendered, and sexualized bodies are most

often clothed bodies publicly negotiating identities and appearances. I am not however

reducing the essence of identity to clothes as some dress scholars do. I have chosen to use the term cross-dress instead of transgender in order so it may function as an umbrella term for the sake of the space limits of this chapter and inclusion of persons who have dressed in clothes that "belong" to their opposite sex. I have sought to show the ways in which dress "provides a mechanism that links both the self-individualization that operates alongside its capacity to carry quite complex messages about social roles, economic status and political power, while at the same time participating in the reproduction of beliefs and values" (Hunt 72). Perhaps phrases such as, "You are under arrest for dressing as the opposite sex!" will face a new set of unspoken punishments and a new generation of activists.

V
Crimes of Fashion: Regulating and Resisting Appearances from Sumptuary Laws to Sartorial Offenses

Introduction

Sumptuary legislation of the Middle Ages to the Early Modern period typically imposed restrictions on the type of clothing that people could wear, usually by prohibiting certain fabrics or styles for the purpose of maintaining class hierarchies. The existence of sumptuary laws established very early on a pattern of imposed regulation of appearance and self-presentation, and a link between law, culture, and subjectivity. Concerned with attempts to protect hierarchical conceptions of social relations and resist oppositional groups, sumptuary laws maintained a preoccupation with the regulation of social visibility and recognition embedded in claims to protect the "social order." In response to Alan Hunt's concluding question: "Is sumptuary law still alive?," I will examine how dress, racial theory and law converge. More specifically, I will explore how the language of the law, cultural citizenship, and increased legal privatization of expression and the disciplining of public space remain important points for analyses in (un)dressing crimes of fashion.

Rather than functioning only as deceased icons of past decrees, this paper will argue that sumptuary laws have shifted targets, tactics, and techniques in the twenty-first century. No longer overtly enforced laws centered on maintaining class distinctions, sumptuary legislation has become increasingly privatized, covert, and centered on visual displays of resistance.

Examining transgressions of fashion in terms of *sartorial crimes*, a phrase coined by William J. F. Keenan, editor of *Dressed to Impress: Looking the Part*, this chapter

looks at where human rights violations occur through violence (emotional and physical) against the person in which dress and body modification practices are involved. Paying particular attention to contemporary unspoken sumptuary laws and visible sartorial crimes, this chapter will examine ways in which power is represented, constituted, articulated, and contested through dress in the analysis of a current controversy over public display of clothing, Virginia's proposed "Ban on Low-Riding Pants" which highlights public regulation of material cultural.

Informing the ways in which governance acts upon everyday life and regulation is organized around the discourses of public health and social welfare while exposing contemporary social anxieties, this chapter argues that sartorial crimes and sumptuary laws remain significant in the twenty-first century.

Hovering around the margins of sumptuary discourses is the fear of social collapse if the [natural and] necessary social order is not preserved (Hunt 133).

In the twenty-first century, how do the discourses of social order and dress convene in law? First, I want to introduce contemporary racial theories in order to analyze how dress legislature may fit into this particular historical moment and then I will give a brief description of the case I will be analyzing. In *The New Politics of Race*, Howard Winant argues, "racial reform policies are under attack in many spheres of social policy and law, where the claim is forcefully made that the demands of the civil rights movement have largely been met, and that the United States has entered a 'postracial' stage of its history" (98). Given Winant's assertion of a "common sense" notion of a postracial nation, how does the law regulate socially [and racially] coded objects, signs, and meanings? In *The Racial State*, David Theo Goldberg suggests a shift in law from naturalism to historicism has occurred with the rise of modernity, and "with historicism

the law becomes the primary means of racial order, (the threat of) violence now the means to ensure legal enforcement" (142). Goldberg confirms, "The elevation of racial historicism was not simply coincidental but co-constitutive with the rule of law as the principle medium through which racial dominance was henceforth to be maintained" (142-143). In sum, Winant and Goldberg both commit to a change in racial legal policies, which at this particular moment supports a colorblind mentality and a historicist regime, where law becomes the primary means of racial order.

On Wednesday Feb. 9, 2005 the CNN headline read, "Bill Sets Fine for Low-Riding Pants." A day earlier, Virginia state's House of Delegates passed a bill 60-34 authorizing a $50 fine for anyone who displays his/her underpants in a "lewd or indecent manner." The bill's sponsor Delegate Algie T. Howell an African American who is Democrat and owner of a barbershop said he proposed the bill because his clients kept complaining about young men wearing low-riding pants to show off their underwear (Nuckols 2-5-05). The bill was terminated in the Senate two days later. So, what do racial state legalities have to do with clothing and the regulation of low-riding/baggy pants fashion in particular?

Law's Lexicon

It is the sense of race as there but not, to which we are blind but which we conveniently find always visible (Goldberg 234).

This sense of race as "there but not" that Goldberg asserts coincides with the capability of "contemporary states to [also] assert themselves racially without explicit invocation of racial terms" (Goldberg 119). In other words, the practices of laws are in fact quite racialized, while the language inherent in the law remains raceless. In his analysis of the *Abercrombie & Fitch Look Book*, Dwight McBride notes the significance

of the ban on gold chains and large hoop earrings that "demarcates potential employees of A&F in coded ways along race and class lines" without having to name it (71). I argue that Virginia's House passing legislation to fine those wearing low-rider pants functions in the same way. I will show how this is possible by focusing on what Goldberg calls the three senses in which the state molds a language, a grammar and a vocabulary, through which it rules: "exemplary personhood," homogeneity, and spoken and written word (151). First, Goldberg identifies that the language of the law itself suggests the "exemplary person" of the modern democratic state is white, suburban, middle class, and male, but also Western and modern, possessed of property and the capacity to speak rationally (151). I will build off of Goldberg's assertion that the language of law is often written by and for white, suburban, middle class, males, and focus more directly on his discussion of homogeneity, spoken and written word, and expand upon his idea of the "language of the law" in terms of cultural citizenship and visual displays of material culture as the function of sartorial crimes in the public arena.

Homogeneity

Racial thought and practices associate subordinated status almost irrevocably with distinct types of human bodies (Winant 96).

Not all bodies are legally deemed equal. Yet, modern law reinforces a national myth of homogeneity. The second sense in which the state molds a language reinforces this notion according to Goldberg: the state's administrative language seeks to fashion homogeneity in the face of differentiation. In other words, as the law fashions state identity and order over increasingly diffuse regions, people(s), and activities, "modern (liberal) legality's imposed uniformity, seeming neutrality, and supposed impartiality help to paper over these deep contrasts and divisions across space, place, people, and classes"

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(Goldberg 139-140). Therefore, "central to modern legal logic is not just to recognize but to create the very likenesses across difference that modern law claims to treat alike" (Goldberg 139-140). While Goldberg examines census classifications as an example, I ask, how might fashioning homogeneity be significant in relation to contemporary sumptuary laws/sartorial crimes? And what happens when you do not fit neatly within the face of homogeneity defined by the state and the law?

According to Winant, the argument is now made that the demands of the civil rights movement have largely been met, and that the United States has entered a "postracial" stage of its history. Advocates of such positions instruct racially defined minorities to "pull themselves up by their own boot straps," and to accept the "content of their character" (rather than "the color of their skin") as the basic social value of the country (Winant 100).

With an increased emphasis on character, rather than inherent traits of deviance that particular skin colors "used to" portray, the law negates the historical conceptions of such "characters of color." For example, in the *Journal Sentinel* in Milwaukee, Tannette Johnson-Elie, titles her article "Low Pants Can Make Prospects Droop," seemingly equating baggy pants with degeneration. Upon further inspection, Johnson-Elie, shares with her readers that she wanted the Virginia bill to pass, stating "And, just when I began to think that you could legislate decency and good taste and [I] had the ultimate weapon – the law – on my side . . . " (2-15-05). She quotes sponsor Algie T. Howell Jr. who believes, "To vote for this bill would be a vote for character, to uplift your community and to do something good not only for the state of Virginia, but for this entire community" (Johnson-Elie 2-15-05).

"Amen," Johnson-Elie responds. Linking "baggy pants" with (moral?) downfall, she suggests "baggy pants have a bottom-line impact if you're an African-American male: your chances of getting a job will be greatly reduced" (Johnson-Elie 2-15-05). Furthermore, she sites a study conducted by "a sociologist from Northwestern University" which "found that white male felons had an easier time getting hired in the Milwaukee job market than young black men with no criminal record" (Johnson-Elie 2-15-05). Therefore, "If you're a young black man, that should be reason enough to pull your pants up" (Johnson-Elie 2-15-05). In a short interview with Mavis Williams, a single mother of three sons, Johnson-Elie concludes that Williams knows that "appearance means everything" (2-15-05).

Retorting the same language which suggests that the law to cover underpants is really linked to moral order, in May of 2004, according to Bethany Thomas a reporter for NBC news, the Louisiana House Criminal Justice Committee approved a similar bill (1626) known as the "Baggy Pants Bill" which states, "It shall be unlawful for any person to appear in public wearing his pants below his waist and thereby exposing his skin or intimate clothing" (5-13-04). State Representative Derrick Shepherd's bill would make any violator subject to three 8-hour days of community service and up to a fine of $175. He thinks the waistline might even improve their behavior. He is quoted saying, "Hopefully if we pull up their pants, we can lift their minds while we're at it" (Thomas 5-13-04).

Bridging the notion of the "exemplary person" and homogeneity necessitates "reestablishing symbolically and categorically, through the cohering artifice of whiteness, the refashioning of who could belong and who does not. Whiteness became not just a

racial but national identity" (Goldberg 177). In this current fascination with

colorblindness and postraciality, "in the historical ambiguity of the failure of whiteness to

recognize itself as a racial color, the implication must be that colorblindness concern

itself exclusively with being blind to *people* of color" (Goldberg 222-223). Thus, by

imposing colorblind (il)logic, the "exemplaries" gain power through the erasure of race.

Refashioning whiteness through law reinforces the exemplary person's legacy. In

antidiscrimination law by adding a purpose or "intent to discriminate" requirement, the

Court makes it almost impossible to get relief from discrimination and results in creating

different equality rules for whites and nonwhites, because where whites allege "reverse

discrimination" the Court does not care about intent or purpose (Winant 100, 116). As a

result, as Winant has argued, racism must be understood in terms of its consequences, not

as a matter of intentions or beliefs. Because "today, racism has been largely detached

from its perpetrators and in its most advanced forms, indeed, it has no perpetrators, it is a

nearly invisible, taken-for-granted, 'commonsense' feature of everyday life and global

social structure" (Winant 135).

Exemplifying Winant's theory of racism today, in December of 2003, Monroe

County School Board in West Virginia declined to ban clothing bearing the Confederate

flag, leaving dress code decisions up to the county's principals. The flag emblems, worn

on shirts, jackets, caps and belt buckles, are interpreted by many blacks (and others) as

symbols of historical (and I would add ongoing) racial prejudice. Monroe County has

only 16 black students out of a total enrollment of over 2,000. Board members voted

unanimously to take no action. Board president Charlie Sams said, "I don't understand

what the big deal is over the Confederate flag. This flag is a part of our history"

(LexusNexis). Other members said principals already have the authority to deal with the issue under the county dress codes, which prohibits emblems that "may be considered *derogatory* toward a race, culture or religion" (LexusNexis, emphasis added). Similarly, creating different equality rules for whites and nonwhites, in January of 2003, just a year earlier, a North Carolina school district overturned a ban on Confederate flag apparel after a parent complained that the ban was *unconstitutional*, even though the school said it "prohibits clothing that *disrupts* the classroom" (Associated Press 1-30-03, emphasis added). As one barbershop customer proclaimed, when asked about Virginia's proposed ban on low-rider pants in 2005, "I'm not trying to infringe on their rights at all, but if they're *offending* me, then they're infringing upon my rights" (Israel). But who gets to determine what or who is offensive, derogatory, unconstitutional, or disruptive?

Spoken and Written Word

The third sense of the lexicon through which the state rules according to Goldberg is the broadest sense of language itself, the spoken and written word (152). While Goldberg exemplifies this lexicon through the newly implemented "English only" laws, *disruptive* was the word repeatedly named as the reason for the legislature that aimed to ban low-riders. However, this leaves the definition of disruption in the eye of the law or individual. In the 1969 case, *Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Community School District*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that students had the right to express their opinions as long as they did not create a substantial disruption of the school environment – and that this freedom of expression extended to clothing (Associated Press). But what are the consequences of this language in terms of cultural citizenship?

Cultural Citizenship

The law regulates the processes of social formation it reflects. Thus, even where racial signs and meanings are established outside of legal domains, seemingly beyond law's reach, the law undertakes to contain and constrain, refine and order those meanings within law's logic and definition (Goldberg 146).

Thus, even though the style of baggy pants, according to Johnson-Elie "evolved in prison, where inmates aren't allowed to wear belts for fear that they may hang themselves or harm others" and rap artists also helped popularize the look, she does not mention the number of disproportionate blacks in jail or the culture of black clothing as possible resistance to the dominant culture. Furthermore, in contrast, Delegate Lionell Spruill Sr. an African American Democrat who originally opposed the Virginia bill, said "the measure was an unconstitutional attack on young blacks," thus implicitly acknowledging the racial connection to the proposed law. Similarly, Reggie Moore, co-founder and director of Urban Underground, a leadership training program for central city youths in Milwaukee agrees.

> If you look at Harley riders in the way that they dress with tattoos and leather, nobody criticizes that or passes ordinances against it. It's a *culture* just like hip-hop is a culture, says Moore. A lot of young people dress in a way that's acceptable to their peers. But it doesn't need to be criminalized. We're not going after white kids with purple hair (Johnson-Elie, emphasis added).

Moore implicitly agrees with Carl Rux, the author of "Eminem: The New White Negro" who argues, "the black male identity is a commodifiable character open to all who would like to perform it," without the same consequences (23). Furthermore, Moore links low-rider pants to a celebration of hip-hop culture and thus sees black cultural rights being violated.

In the chapter, "The World We Enter When Claiming Rights" in *Latino Cultural Citizenship*, Blanca Silvestrini implicitly agrees with Goldberg that,

> First, the legal system assumes that in spite of profound cultural differences, American society can be identified as an homogeneous entity, with shared values and beliefs (Karst 1991: 188) [But she adds] Second, a recognition of *cultural rights* as such is absent from the American constitutional system (46).

Yet, Silvestrini asserts that the absence of formal legal treatment of cultural rights does not mean that the American legal system does not have an ingrained conception of culture. Rather, in the formation of the United States as a nation, agreement was reached on what we see again, this time called the "American civic culture"—a white, male-dominated ideal of individual formal equality (47). According to Renato Rosaldo, in "Cultural Citizenship, Inequality, and Multiculturalism,"

> cultural citizenship operates [similarly], in an uneven field of structural inequalities where the dominant claims of *universal* citizenship assume a propertied white male subject and usually blind themselves to their exclusions and marginalizations of people who differ in gender, race, sexuality, and age (37).

So, what are the consequences for not fitting in?

> The failure to fit (in) amounts to being a social outcast, named if at all as stranger or terrorist and racially as not white, the generic anomaly to whom in one's particularity and specificity the language fails to refer. To fail to be referenced by the lexicon is to fall outside the law, removed or at least removable in the state's name to a place beyond its borders or to institutionalized holding pens such as prisons (Goldberg 151-152).

Although diversity can work simultaneously as a strategic umbrella category and eraser of differences, according to Silvestrini, "people from different backgrounds have to erase these differences to enjoy full participation, because homogeneity is assumed to be the basis for political stability and economic growth" (46). Although she asserts that American identity remains consistent with expressing both a strong ethnic identification and a strong attachment to nation, and second that tolerance of other groups is itself proclaimed as a national ideal, the rhetoric of these values—diversity and tolerance—has been historically associated with the need to incorporate newcomers with the assumption that eventually people would assimilate to become part of the national citizenship (Silvestrini 51). Consequently,

> If citizenship, [as Karst says,] means personhood, then the American legal system requires one to give up full personhood to gain another—hence, to make a choice between national citizenship and cultural citizenship. Therefore, while Latinos, as well as other groups today, are saying cultural citizenship is critical to our sense of participation, Anglo society says that assimilation is a requirement of full participation. [As such,] culture is not constitutionally protected (Silvestrini 47-48, 51).

Therefore, the baggy pants law is a product of controlled assimilation to national citizenship negating rights to cultural citizenship.

Disciplining Public Spaces and Privatizing Racist Expression

The concerns over race increasingly become those about the nature and discipline, aesthetics and morality of public space, about who can be seen where and in what capacity (Goldberg 173-174).

According to Goldberg, a shift from exteriority to containability structures modern law (166). Examining the ban on low-rider pants in Virginia, it is evident that an increasing shift to privatization of racist expression facilitates the disciplining of public space (Goldberg 145). The law reinscribes the distinction between public and private spheres as

> everyday racisms in private spheres proliferate behind the veil of their public disavowal in the name of ethnic pluralism and multicultural decency, on one hand, and the substitution of racial reference by the coded terms of policy concerns over immigration, criminalization, and the integrity of national culture on the other (Goldberg 148, 218-219).

As racial law is viewed and accounted for on an individualized basis, its increasing privatization facilitates in the case of the low-rider pants, language coded as disruption. "Racist discrimination thus becomes privatized, and in terms of liberal legality state protected in its privacy and expressly committed to race-blindness, that is, to a standard of justice protective of individual rights and not group results" (Goldberg 229). Therefore, "racelessness renders individuals personally responsible – and so the agents of state-fashioned social structure literally irresponsible – for whatever racial distinctions linger" (Goldberg 233).

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Conclusion

Law accordingly assists in shaping identities, meanings, and so the social world (Goldberg 146).

As Goldberg argues with the imposition of racelessness, there remains the "silencing of public analysis or serious discussion of everyday racism in the respective societies." As I have shown with Virginia's proposed law against low-rider pants, the matter was discussed in terms of moral danger, lewd conduct, and disruption, erasing the connection of such law to racial identity and culture. When in 2003, a school board president can justify the confederate flag "because it is a part of our history," lost are the connections of historical configurations and contemporary racial formations. The privatization of race relations, suggesting that certain individuals remain the problem under the umbrella of colorblindness and postraciality, displaces "the tensions of contemporary racially charged relations to the relative invisibility of private spheres, seemingly out of reach of public policy intervention" (Goldberg 217). Thus, as the racial state remains dynamic, and the politics of race change pushing sartorial crimes to the forefront of legal news, low-rider pants legislation subsumes racial governance through the rule of law in racial silence.

VI
Discourses of Hyperreal "Diversity": Identifying Gaps between Principles and Practices of University Education Inclusiveness Policies

When I hear the word "diversity," I think of a group of white frat boys cruising around campus in their daddy's new SUV with "Gangsta's Paradise" blaring out the windows (LS, interviewee).

While many institutions of higher education focus on undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, experience-based learning, and research, the varying sizes, academic foci, and talents of each university allows for substantial complexities and variables in their effectiveness as organizations. The human resources information page found on every university website have the same basic tenants of labor relations, benefits, workers' compensation, training, new employee orientation, employee assistance and recognition programs, and work/life balance with links to business policy and procedure manuals. However, what is surprising is the lack of explicit attention given to diversity in human resource management in higher education organizations. In an analysis of three different public research universities, only one had a direct link to information about equal opportunity posted on the human resources site. Even the secretary of education's commission on the future of higher education (2006) imparts, "As a college diploma becomes more critical, higher education must be accessible to all Americans and meet the needs of America's diverse and changing student population." Yet, is this really possible, if human resource practices are not willing to adequately address the importance of diversity to new or future employees in higher education?

Although many people in the United States believe discrimination is no longer a major problem, dealing with discrimination in the workplace is a fact of life in institutions of higher education. As a result, imposing and privileging a hyperreal image

of diversity has unfortunately become more important than the reality. Drawing from Jean Baudrillard's *Simulara & Simulation*, this chapter applies his concept of hyperreality to diversity practices and argues that for institutions of higher education, the "image of diversity," a less complicated and more contained representation, has taken precedent over the experience of a highly dynamic, complex, and necessary paradigm shift of examining the realities of diversity through privilege and power relations. Through this lens and analyses of interview data, the following themes will be addressed: ways in which social reality and patterns of dominance are constructed; problems masked by umbrella terms such as diversity and multiculturalism; and ways to achieve a diversity paradigm shift.

This chapter analyzes data from three underrepresented instructors at three different public research universities in their respective Departments of Women's Studies. LS has been an employee of WSU for six years; LAS has been an employee of UC for 2 years; and TD has been an employee of UM for 3 years. WSU's motto is *World Class, Face to Face*. Its mission is to "enhance the intellectual, creative, and practical abilities of the individuals, institutions and communities that we serve by fostering learning and inquiry in all their forms." WSU is also "guided by a commitment to excellence embodied in a set of core values: inquiry and knowledge; application; leadership; character; stewardship; and diversity." In particular, WSU acknowledges: "Inherent in all of these values is a commitment to diversity. Exposure to and respect for diverse beliefs, epistemologies, experiences, genetic makeup, social roles and abilities are essential to achieving our mission." Similarly, UC addresses diversity in their mission:

> UC serves the people, the nation, and the world as a premier, public, urban research university dedicated to undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, experience-based learning, and research. We are committed to excellence and diversity in our students, faculty, staff, and all of

our activities. We provide an inclusive environment where innovation and freedom of intellectual inquiry flourish. Through scholarship, service, partnerships, and leadership, we create opportunity, develop educated and engaged citizens, enhance the economy and enrich our University, city, state and global community.

The UM motto is "Fatti Maschii, Parole Femine" which translates to "Manly deeds, womanly words." The UM mission and goals is a descriptive seven page document which will not be discussed at length here; however, part of this document highlights the component of diversity:

> The University counts among its greatest strength – and a major component of its excellence – the diversity of its faculty, students, and staff. UM is committed to equal educational opportunity and strives to hire a diverse faculty and staff of exceptional achievement through affirmative actions, to celebrate diversity in all of its programs and activities, and to recruit and retain qualified graduate and undergraduate minority students (UM 2006).

Thus, all three public research universities are committed to diversity in their missions, values, and goals. Yet, how does this commitment on paper or in principle translate to relational interactions and organization effectiveness in practice?

Because all three interviewees are from the same discipline, a brief description of each Women's Studies Department's mission at each university would allow for a more complete picture in understanding the analyses of interview data. At WSU, Women's Studies is:

> an interdisciplinary field of research and teaching that places gender and women at the center of inquiry. Central to our consideration of gender are the ways class, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, age and ability shape the female and male experience. Women's Studies raises important questions about gender as a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon that affects personal lives, artistic expression, work, social relationships, institutional structures, and the production of knowledge.

For UC:

> The Department of Women's Studies is the academic home for the study of women and gender. Through interdisciplinary teaching, research and community outreach, it seeks to create a more inclusive and transformative understanding of women and men. The department explores the intersections of race, nationality, class, gender and sexuality. Informed by feminist perspectives, it nurtures the development of leaders, scholars and activists and builds scholarly community among core and affiliate faculty across the university. The department serves as a catalyst for curricular, institutional, societal and global change.

And for UM: "Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary program of study of women and men in society within both historical and contemporary contexts and from multicultural and multiracial perspectives."

Social reality and patterns of dominance are constructed. Legitimation justifies the action of the institution (Berger and Luckmann 93); as a result, individuals in society, an institution formed by typifications of habitualized actions (Berger and Luckmann 33), contribute to the perpetuation of hegemony. Individuals reinforce hegemony, when they reproduce the objectivated social reality, a reality where human activities carry meaning (Berger and Luckmann 60). Similarly, in "The Social Construction of Grievances: Organizational Conflict as Multiple Perspectives," Paul Salipante and Rene Bouwen apply ideas from Berger and Luckmann to nonprofit organizations. Analyzing ethnographic data from instructors working in three distinct Women's Studies Departments in three separate universities, it is evident that acknowledgement of privilege, power, and oppression are reoccurring themes that according to the interviewees are socially constructed phenomena.

Race, class, gender, sexuality, and (dis)ability are interconnected in a context of institutional structures and power relations. Giving examples of how privilege operates in the classroom (and the university) as well as outside of it, all three interviewees make important connections to institutional systemic practices that reinforce hegemonic and ideological norms. In other words, understanding how power relations effect everyday life at work, home, school, in the media and how particular representations are part of a larger social struggle over how resources get allocated is strongly emphasized by all three interviewees. In particular, LS notes: " . . . the arrogance and sense of entitlement made

by many of these overly-privileged white wealthy kids is dumbfounding" as she describes

a classroom example:

> A group of white sorority women from Bellevue told me that classism doesn't exist because they have seen people on welfare driving Benz's and have huge rocks on their fingers. They even had the audacity for their group project to go down to the local welfare office and apply, because they wanted to show how easy it was to get on welfare. Of course they were turned away, but these kind of ideas take up the majority of my classroom time.

Not surprisingly, this is a common theme as Priya Kandaswamy argues in "Beyond

Colorblindness and Multiculturalism: Rethinking Anti-Racist Pedagogy in the University

Classroom":

> . . . in women's studies classes, when discussing the experiences of women of color, white students often either try to emphasize that they have had similar experiences to women of color or treat the experiences of women of color as separate from their own experiences and therefore as something about which they have nothing to say. Both of these positions allow white students to avoid questioning their white privilege by re-centering their own experience (9).

Thus, it is important for LS to "be[ing] political and controversial in the

classroom" in order to teach students to be cultural critics and challenge them to think

critically and politically about representation. Yet, LS is also aware, "if you rock the boat

too much here, you are pushed out." Retelling a story about a colleague who is Native

American and has four children, LS compares the privilege she sees inside the classroom

with a mostly white student body to the effect of this outside the classroom: There was

> . . . a recent incident where her daughter and 3 white kids were at a football game and were caught drinking. The white kids were sent home to their parents and scolded whereas my friend's daughter was put in juvie lockup. There are discrepancies like this all this time. Dark-skinned kids are targeted in the all-or mostly-white school systems or light-skinned kids are forced to assimilate into whiteness, white culture, at the expense of their own families, communities, and identities.

As LAS acknowledges, when I asked her what made her want to pursue her teaching

position:

> I loved watching students get that ah-ha look on their faces when they finally made the connections between systems of oppression. I loved helping students find the language to talk about their experiences of prejudice or discrimination. I loved being able to bring politics into the classroom and talk about events happening outside of our homes, in our neighborhoods, and in our communities.

Therefore, by making "problematic the process of knowledge production and conceptualizing it as an exercise of power where only some voices are heard and only some experience is counted as knowledge," all three interviewees take a poststructuralist perspective as conceptualized by Joyce K. Fletcher in "Relational Practice: A Feminist Reconstruction of Work" in order to "challenge the notion of transcendent or universalizing truth and assert that the very set of rules used to determine if something is true or false is ideologically determined and is itself an exercise of power intended to maintain the status quo and silence any serious challenge to it" (184).

Diversity and multiculturalism represent an "image" of inclusivity that is rarely enacted in action. In other words, all three interviewees conceptualize diversity as a term that functions only for appearance. In "Making Differences Matter: A New Paradigm for Managing Diversity," David A. Thomas and Robin J. Ely ask, "What will it take for organizations to reap the real and full benefits of a diverse workforce? A radically new understanding of the term, for starters" (79). As Thomas and Ely note, "Most people assume that workplace diversity is about increasing racial, national, gender, or class representation – in other words, recruiting and retaining more people from traditionally underrepresented 'identity groups'" (80). Unfortunately, this surface-numbers-based-approach does not allow for changing mindsets or structural policy. In other words, "increasing demographic variation does not in itself increase organizational effectiveness, but rather *how* a company defines diversity – and *what it does . . .*" has this impact (Thomas & Ely 80). Likewise, each interviewee argues for a new understanding of diversity. Significantly, LS views diversity as "a creative term that has been devised in order to not have to legally implement affirmative action policies. [She believes] [I]t

erases historical violence, structural oppression, and interconnecting systems of marginalization." Moreover, images of diversity and multiculturalism are used to market the university; according to LS: "It [diversity] is a pretty brochure, a multicultural handholding and kumbaya sing-along that says 'we need you to be in our ads so we can make more money and not be called racists, but we are not going to do a damn thing to help you if you do come to our university.'" Thus, "adding a few folks of color on a website and asking students of color to wear red on picture days so that they stand out more in photo ops" (LS) does not lead to racial integration and equality. LAS also agrees:

> There is a lot of lip service played toward 'diversity' and what usually ends up happening is that there is a lot of talk, but not a lot of action. The administration will talk about the need for increased racial, gendered, or sexual diversity or being sensitive to issues of class privilege, but little is done in terms of implementing those discussions, and the status quo remains unchallenged.

And for TD:

> Diversity policies rarely account for oppression. It is a label or phrase used to imply that race, class, gender, and sexuality are acknowledged, but in reality, they are glossed over and unaccounted for. Our department has very few faculty of color, very few students of color, and we are located in a city that has a large population of people of color.

Therefore, all three interviewees identified problems with diversity used in the *discrimination-and-fairness paradigm* and the *access-and-legitimacy paradigm* proposed by Thomas and Ely. For LS the limitations to the above paradigms promotes what critical race theorists call interest convergence, where whites will promote racial advances for blacks only when it benefits whites (Derrick Bell). Thus LS summarizes:

> diversity is a word that is used to detract from real problems and issues of structural racism, classism, sexism, and heterosexism. It is used by the administration to throw all marginalized and oppressed groups into one group, rate us, label us, number us, and then use us for statistical purposes in order to integrate as little possible change into the university structure so as not to challenge, disrupt, or threaten white, het, monied, men.

The one interviewee whom identified "quite a bit of racial and class diversity" with "the population at UC [being] fairly representative" of the city, also admitted that "there are very few resources available for students of color, poor students, or other marginalized populations. They are kind of just thrown in with little support systems in place. So although I think we have more 'diversity' than probably other universities in the region, I'm not sure I would say diversity is an important part of the administration's agenda" (LAS). LS gives a very compelling example to illustrate this point:

> I think the notion of diversity is simply a cloak for liberalism where students are constantly asserting, "but we are all human" and "I don't see color." And while this is being asserted, nooses are being hung above Black women's dorm rooms as a "joke" and eggs are being thrown at women at Take Back the Night while frats blare "Rape Me" by Nirvana out their windows. We are in a crisis and I think the mutterings of diversity are part of the problem.

The discrimination-and-fairness paradigm is built upon a color-blind ideal and the implicit assumption that 'we are all the same'; under this paradigm, it is not desirable for diversification of the workforce to influence the organization's work or culture which puts pressure on employees to make sure that important differences among them do not count (Thomas & Ely 81). Therefore, "colorblind discourse asserts that any consideration of race is itself racist. It protects racism by making it invisible" (Kandaswamy 80). In this moment, universities straddle the discrimination-fairness and the access-and-legitimacy paradigm which LAS recognizes as "diversity has become a buzz word – something that says we are trying to recognize there are differences in power and privilege, while at the same time trying to see everyone as equal. It is kind of a contradiction." And LS believes:

> There are tons of problems with diversity within our department and across the WSU campus. First I think these policies take on a colorblind and class-blind approach. Class and race privilege is not taken into account and affirmative action is literally non-existent at this point in time. So there are low percentages of students of color attending WSU and those that are tend to be first-generation college students who have not been given the tools, language, or resources like many of the other white, monied students and are therefore having to work 3 or 4 times harder to get by.

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They are working multiple jobs, trying to go back home to help their families during harvesting seasons, juggling community, children, and identity within a homogenous and violent climate.

This is also clear inside the classroom as "not only do many white students fail to see racial inequity even when it is right in front of their eyes, their ideas of what racial equality would look like are often informed by their investments in white privilege" (Kandaswamy 80). TD illustrates this point:

> In the classroom, many of my students are extremely resistant to discussing issues of racism or classism. It is interesting to me because sexism has become a much more palatable topic and there is little hesitation about the forces of patriarchy. However, we move to topic of race and class and hands go up and tensions flare. Like much of the recent news coverage on Obama, my students insist that we are in a post-racial moment, that race is no longer a factor, and that we are on equal footing now. Because overt forms of racism are generally not tolerated, many of my students claim that racism is a thing of the past – there is no segregation or Colored water fountains. This is extremely problematic because all of the other ways in which racism is embedded throughout American society is minimized or erased.

Therefore, "While for white students dealing with diversity means learning about other cultures, for students of color dealing with diversity often means learning strategies to negotiate institutional racism. The fact that these strategies are rarely the subject of diversity education says a great deal about whom diversity education is really for" (Kandaswamy 7).

So, how can actually delving into the "messy reality of interpersonal and group processes in organizations" as Katherine J. Klein and David A. Harrison call it in "On the Diversity of Diversity: Tidy Logic, Messier Realities," allow for improved organizational effectiveness (Herman & Renz)? As all three interviewees have articulated, there are immediate consequences with implementing hyperreal diversity in the university. In other words, as Edna B. Chun and Alvin Evans describe in "Demythologizing Diversity in Higher Education":

> While the sweeping forces of globalization and the growing demographic diversity of our student populations create a mandate for change, institutional mission statements, in fact, rarely reference the value of a work environment that supports diversity. Although a significant number of campus climate studies have been undertaken in higher education, the question remains as to how the

results of these findings will be used to drive change in institutional practices. Have they really been translated into inclusive practices or have they simply created the illusion of progress?

LAS, LS, and TD have given evidence for diversity as an illusion of progress. This illusion permeates the classroom curricula, student population, faculty and staff population, the university as a whole, and cannot be separated from larger societal institutions and practices beyond the university. In *Leaders of Color in Higher Education: Unrecognized Triumphs in Harsh Institutions*, Leonard A. Valverde examines aspects of tokenism as the incorporation of mannequins into university culture -- persons hired for show, with arms and legs arranged so as to depict a certain pose, used to appease racial and ethnic communities but with weak authority. As LS contends sarcastically: "We send the president of diversity issues, a black man, to deal with groups of angry students of color. Send him to ease their concerns. We even have a black president! Of course, there could be nothing wrong." Similarly, in *Are the Walls Really Down?: Behavioral and Organizational Barriers to Faculty and Staff Diversity*, additional research by Edna B. Chun and Alvin Evans indicate that few public research universities have moved beyond addressing structural representation through affirmative action efforts to adopting institutional strategies that promote the empowerment and inclusion of female and minority faculty and staff.

While "the 'business case' for diversity has never been more compelling, and, a number of universities have developed strategic diversity plans -- explicitly recognizing this as an important institutional goal -- the actual attainment of diversity outcomes is still extremely rare" (Chun & Evans). An analysis of the current "diversity policies" on each campus in comparison to the changes that each interviewee would like to implement

highlights the gap that Chun and Evans describe. WSU's Division of Student Affairs

Equity and Diversity sites *the* diversity core value:

> We are committed to a culture of learning that challenges, inspires, liberates, and ultimately
> transforms the hearts, minds, and actions of individuals, eliminating prejudice. Our differences are
> expressed in many ways, including race, sex, age, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation,
> religion, class, philosophy, and culture. Respect for all persons and their contributions is essential
> to achieving our mission.

Yet, in practice, LS sees:

> Our policies at WSU include blacks playing basketball and football in order for our teams to win;
> bringing in the latest hip hop artist to entertain 25,000 white kids; writing off deliberate,
> continuous acts of racism as juvenile behavior; paying off queer kids and black men who have
> been beaten up on our campus so we can still say it is "safe"; an Asian man having his jaw wired
> shut because he was beat up by a group of white frat boys for being "at the wrong place at the
> wrong time" – at a bar on a Friday night; hate speech written on buildings, bathrooms, desktops,
> and left on answering machines with nothing done. These are our policies and I could name about
> 100 more instances that I have come across, heard from my students, read in the papers and
> overwhelmingly, absolutely nothing is done. Students are forced to seek refuge in their one
> multicultural center on campus.

LS points to the lack of resources and lack of response as symptoms of hyperreal

diversity. In "Managing Employee Rights and Responsibilites," according to Paul

Salipante and Bruce Fortado, "to the degree that employees' expectations of their rights

are not respected by organizations, accumulation and metamorphosis will take place

(226). Ultimately, LS's experience flies in the face of the university's policy of "respect

for all persons and their contributions." In fact, in her view, the "instances" are evidence

of lack of respect for addressing and connecting the underlying structural causes. Thus,

for the university, preservation of an image takes precedence over the hard work required

to improve campus climate.

UM's Office of Human Relations Programs presents a diversity timeline dated

2001-present which does not include any information beyond 2004. As a prospective

student this would indeed concern me. Yet, they are astutely aware that:

> *Successful border crossing to build real community requires institutional change--significant*
> *transformation of the principles, policies, procedures, practices, and protocols which guide the*

way in which work is done, learning is accomplished, quality is evaluated, and community is defined. It is paramount that the university recognizes that excellence comes in every kind of employment role and function and at every level of employment. Inherent in this recognition is realization that positively transformative innovation in our day-to-day local and global life circumstances can derive from the idea of an individual employed within our campus ranks. *When any campus colleague has differential access to protection from harm, provision for well-being, as well as participation in campus life, we do not practice democracy* (UM, emphasis added).

This policy on paper is a fantastic start because UM understands the components of change necessary. However, the disconnect remains, when the timeline which is supposed to showcase projects, events, partnerships, collaborations, and what seems to be the "actions" of new diversity practices has not been updated for the last four years.

Finally, UC's strategy of direct questions and answers appear action-oriented, but is missing the elements of institutional change and structural connections that UM sees. UC asks: "What is diversity? Why is diversity important? How do we promote diversity? Who is responsible? What can you do?" An additional component of UC's diversity initiative is UC's Diversity Task Force which we will return to, as it emanates what I see as possessing all the correct components and should be a model for other universities. Answering, "How do we promote diversity?," UC states:

> The University is a place of opportunity where all dreams are welcome. Our policies clearly state our objectives for equal opportunity and affirmative action. Affirmative action is defined as any effort taken to expand opportunities for women or racial, ethnic, and national origin minorities by using membership in those groups that have been subject to discrimination as a consideration. Affirmative action is normally outreach such as: expanded recruitment and may include training programs, financial assistance programs, and other interventions to improve the opportunities for the above groups to participate fully. The university has established goals to increase the representation of minorities and women in areas of the workforce. In addition to affirmative action, the university has established several initiatives and programs that encourage valuing diversity. The valuing diversity initiatives aim to encourage awareness and respect for persons from different backgrounds, cultural, racial, and ethnic identities. The focus of some programs is to promote and enhance interpersonal relationships between individuals and to minimize stereotypical expressions, which may be considered offensive. Other valuing diversity initiatives seek to provide individuals knowledge, awareness, and an appreciation for differences and to avoid forming judgments exhibiting actions that are adverse to individuals based on a person's difference.

Questioning the effectiveness of diversity training in practice, in "Beyond Diversity Training," James Ewers recognizes it is:

the *doing* side of diversity training [that] is the most important part because it reaffirms the psychological change that you have made. You see, if people go to these workshops, get the training, yet see no visible difference in their organization, then they begin to wonder. Leaders who believe in their hearts that diversity is right will fight for it. Unfortunately, too many leaders will do a great deal of waxing on about the matter, but their organizations will remain virtually unchanged. *Being pro-diversity and gender-inclusive will get you* in *a lot of hot water in some circles as it sometimes requires systemic changes in practices and procedures. Leaders may find themselves alone, even though their organization's philosophy is to practice inclusiveness.* Without the practical application of the philosophy, you become just another person who "talks the talk" but doesn't "walk the walk." *If you do "walk the walk," then you run the risk of being shunned by the establishment.*

So what is missing here? Answer: The process by which each university implements structural changes to "think beyond colorblindness and multiculturalism and to instead develop an analysis of power" (Kandaswamy 10). Therefore:

> The challenge to higher education is, first and foremost, to make a solid and unwavering commitment to upholding affirmative action efforts in diversifying faculty and staff and to address lingering issues related to structural representation. The second challenge is to proactively address *institutional* culture, policies, practices and workplace behaviors, in an effort to eliminate the patterns of exclusion and marginalization (Chun & Evans).

In what ways can this be achieved? Examining the interviewee responses to what Thomas and Ely call a much-needed diversity paradigm shift to *learning-and-effectiveness* which connects diversity to work perspectives, I will map steps toward solutions within the classroom, curriculum, and university resources and policy to begin this transformation. Kandaswamy launches a series of exigent but necessary questions for educators that get to the heart of not only changing minds, but taking action, without waiting for the university to take the lead:

> Given these challenges, how can educators engage in effective anti-racist pedagogy despite the university's complicity with institutional racism and many students' investments in it? How do we counter the tendency of administrators, colleagues, and/or students to read our work as multicultural education that ought to promote tolerance and expose (white) students to 'diversity'? What should the goals of anti-racist pedagogy be? In classrooms that are organized around white privilege, how do we teach against that privilege rather than to it? Given the current hegemony of liberal thinking, how do we cultivate a critical analysis of power amongst our students and what do we hope our students will do with that analysis? (Kandaswamy 8).

With many universities, WSU and UC included, requiring only one "diversity" class for undergraduate students during their entire four years is further evidence that the topics

discussed in such Departments as Women's Studies and Cultural Studies need to be

widely disseminated and that the university "sees diversity as a superficial nod . . .

students think it is a joke . . . [to them] diversity class is like gym" (LS).

Yet, there are still discrepancies within departments. As LAS reminds us:

> I would like to see our department take on the feminist assertions that it makes. Some of us have
> started a mini-day care system in the department so that our students can drop their kids off for an
> hour or come by and get coloring books or other toys to occupy their kids while they are in the
> classroom. I think this helps in a small way. Ideally, there should be scholarships, resource
> centers, workshops, advisors, and other persons who can help students find financial aid, make
> connections to issues of education, housing, welfare, and racism. I think there should be more
> night, evening, or weekend classes for students who are working full time and who want to get a
> degree, but simply cannot take the time off work. I think we need to abide by and implement
> affirmative action policies – we need to make the starting line equal for people who do not have
> the privileges that the majority do. I think Women's Studies needs to ally itself with other
> departments, including African American Studies, Ethnic Studies, Jewish Studies, and other
> departments in order to pull resources, share ideas and help our students to succeed. Right now
> there is very little communication between departments and this does a disservice to students.

Thus, even within the Department of Women's Studies, the "bonding of social capital"

(Putnam, Salipante) is not always automatic. Similarly TD reflects:

> I think that race, class, gender and sexuality need to not just be acknowledged but validated and
> discussed more thoroughly. Even within Women's Studies we differ on what is racism or
> classism and what to do about it within the classroom. Having discussions and debating about
> these issues is a start. But ultimately, the entire collegiate system needs to be dismantled in order
> for actual change to occur.

Ultimately diversity should be about "implementing real structural change into

existing social systems" (LAS). Yet, LS knows "what is difficult about making and

implementing change is that it is not easy and there is no quick fix. It is systemic and

structural." She continues:

> First and foremost, we need strong and stringent Affirmative Action policies that the university is
> held accountable for. The university needs to listen to students of color and poor students – ask
> them what they need. Have resources and money that are put aside to help marginalized
> populations of students. I think there are a few professors who try to devote additional time and
> energy to helping students and offering assistance in any way that they can, but this should not just
> be individual. This help should come from the university structure itself. We need more faculty
> of color in positions of power. We need alliances made between departments who are dealing
> with issues of diversity and coalitions forged out of those alliances. There needs to be
> accountability from the administration to acts of violence, hate, and intimidation that occur on a
> daily basis and these need to be taken seriously. The Human Rights Center that is on campus
> does not cut it because they are funded and supported by the university, so of course, they

are not going to call out the administration on problems university-wide. There has to be oversight. There has to be appeal processes. Unfortunately, money talks and universities have money, so many of these problems are resolved with pay-offs, swept under the rug, and never reported on. It's difficult to create change when the problems are so multilayered, ingrained, systemic, pervasive, and ubiquitous (LS).

LS raises an important point that within the insulated academic system, it is difficult to achieve accountability, even if supposed changes have been implemented. Finding ways to "reshape the change-resisting mind-set of the classic bureaucratic model" (Thomas & Ely 87) and replace it with "shared values" (Fukuyama) is a start.

However, it remains difficult to find "leaders who appreciate difference [and] fight all forms of dominance . . ." (Thomas & Ely 87). This requires "a fundamental change in the attitudes and behaviors of an organization's leadership. And that will come only when senior managers abandon an underlying and flawed assumption about diversity and replace it with a broader understanding" (Thomas & Ely 80). So, if "racism, homophobia, sexism, and sexual harassment are the most obvious forms of dominance that decrease organizational effectiveness – and third-paradigm leaders have zero tolerance for them" (Thomas & Ely 89), one cannot expect to hire a few third-paradigm leaders to run a system that still operates in paradigm one or two. If this is the strategy, people will think that they must suggest and apply their ideas covertly, [and] the organization [will] miss opportunities to discuss, debate, refine, and build on those ideas fully. And individuals will continue to think that they must hide parts of themselves in order to fit in and they will find it difficult to engage fully not only in their work but also in their workplace relationships (Thomas & Ely 89). Therefore, what is necessary is to not only *incorporate* employees' perspectives into the main work of the organization, but make the additional connections to how power relations effect everyday life, as in Thomas and Ely's example which allowed "an organization to see a link between

English-only policies and employment issues for a large group of women—primarily recent immigrants—whom it had previously failed to serve adequately" (85). It is making these types of links that are paramount in creating new diversity practices and enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Of the policies and practices identified in the three universities, it is UC's Diversity Task Force that seems to be the most aligned with what the interviewees identified as desired institutional changes required to impact issues of diversity. I would like examine the taskforce's vision in detail as a potential model for other universities to follow. They have compiled a 92-page report dated March 15, 2007 which is an "action agenda for institutional change" at a time when they see the need to "reassess diversity and climate, and identify strengths and weaknesses." The focus of their effort is on "race and ethnicity among faculty, staff and students at UC." Their model is replicated below:

UC Diversity Task Force

Vision: A campus environment that embraces diversity as one of our core values, infusing every aspect of campus life and purpose, and every measure of success.

Themes as Identified by the Task Force:
▪ Institutional Structure and Framework (chaired by Ann Welsh).
▪ Student Recruitment and Retention (co-chaired by Mitchel Livingston and Jerry Tsai).
▪ Faculty Recruitment and Retention (chaired by John Brackett).
▪ Staff Recruitment and Retention (chaired by Alecia Trammer).
▪ Community and Climate: At UC and Throughout the city, (chaired by Mitchel Livingston).

Agenda and Activities: Members will engage in activities such as the following:

1. Discuss what kind of institution we want and how UC fits into the needs of the community. Is UC diverse enough? By what definition? Determine a focus for the work of this task force.

2. Review the AASCU/NASULGC publication, *Now is the Time: Meeting the Challenge for a Diverse Academy*. Determine whether this publication is the appropriate tool for a campus-wide conversation about racial/ethnic diversity at UC.

3. Study UC's demographics. How do we rate in all areas of diversity and climate? (Affirmative action, number of faculty of color, student data, attitudinal benchmarks, etc.)

4. Review the inventory of existing programs and diversity efforts at UC and assess progress toward racial and ethnic diversity. Use a reflective process to identify what we have at UC, our institutional strengths, weaknesses and potential remedial steps to foster personal and institutional change. Where are the gaps? What might we do about the gaps?

5. Review recommendations from the Just Community Task Force. How is the new student and freshmen experience carried through to other aspects of campus life? How might these recommendations be incorporated into the new action plan?

6. Review the draft University Mission Statement and suggest modifications.

7. Create awareness, leadership and support for a university-wide conversation about our progress on enhancing diversity through recruitment, retention, partnerships, campus climate, professional development and assessment.

Work Products to be Submitted to Executive Committee of President's Cabinet:

1. Framework and action plan that integrates ongoing efforts and existing institutional structures into goals and plans for promoting diversity at UC.

2. A plan for incorporating diversity into the university's performance measures and a set of performance indicators that should be monitored to insure that UC's commitment to diversity is measured; e.g., personnel demographics, enrollment demographics, support programs and activities, attitudinal benchmarks, and academic support services. How will we know if we are making progress?

3. Proposed revisions to University Mission Statement

While the Diversity Task Force's vision is still in-progress, it is a start to asking the kinds of questions that need to be asked in order to rework the university system to question what diversity means, ask if it is effective, reconsider how progress is made, and place institutional change at the center.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on identifying gaps between principles and practices of university education inclusiveness policies. Gaps between prescribed practices and reality practices in human resource management have also been studied by such researchers as P. De Prins & E. Henderickx. After analyzing interview data from three university Women's Studies instructors, the interviewees concur with Derrick Bell's assessment of diversity in "Diversity's Distractions," that "the concept of diversity, far from a viable means of ensuring affirmative action in the admissions policies of colleges and graduate schools, is a serious distraction in the ongoing efforts to achieve racial justice" (1622). While interviewees LS, LAS, and TD focused on themes of social construction of dominance; lip-service (hyperreal) diversity and colorblindness that glosses over issues of power and privilege; and the need for structural change in addressing diversity, Bell points to the following four reasons for his critique:

> 1) Diversity enables courts and policymakers to avoid addressing directly the barriers of race and class that adversely affect so many applicants; 2) Diversity invites further litigation by offering a distinction without a real difference between those uses of race approved in college admissions programs, and those in other far more important affirmative action policies that the Court has rejected; 3) Diversity serves to give underserved legitimacy to the heavy reliance on grades and test scores that privilege well-to-do, mainly white applicants; and 4) The tremendous attention directed at diversity programs diverts concern and resources from the serious barriers of poverty that exclude far more students from entering college than are likely to gain admission under an affirmative action program (1622).

Consequently, developing an analysis of power does not take place in one diversity training, one diversity course requirement, reading a statement on a piece of paper, or

being in a room of people different from you. It takes years, self-reflection, oftentimes

pain; it requires being a cultural critic and learning to make connections between the local

and the global, to think critically about everyday life, to deconstruct actions, images,

language, popular culture, history, government policy, law, and delve into deeply held

assumptions about race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, identity, access, privilege,

power, and resources. This takes a lifetime. Like Abercrombie & Fitch's diversity

policy, educational institutions also reflect the nation's look policy and often do not

bridge the theory and practice of inclusion. Ultimately, this is due to a failure to

implement a social justice lens. As a result, by promoting hyperreal diversity, both

continually reinforce an allegiance to a national identity that is colorblind. Is Obama able

to implement a "diversity paradigm shift"?

VII
(Not) Abercrombie and Looking (Un)Patriotic?: The National Allegiance Dress Code Survival Guide

You can wear Abercrombie & Fitch and still like Obama and you'll get plenty of media attention for it too; headlines like *Who are the Obama Abercrombie Guys?,* along with commentary on the Colbert Report, and an interview with CNN may surface. The April 22, 2008 concession speech was the cause of much controversy because of the three men sitting behind Obama all wearing A&F t-shirts (YouTube 5-25-08). This sparked a rumor that Obama and A&F were exchanging money; some said that it proved his niche market of younger people and others remarked that it was just a coincidence. But I argue that this is Obama's subtle but effective strategy to pursue a social justice agenda while placating white fear throughout his campaign.

I outlined in the chapter Why the U.S. is like Abercrombie & Fitch: Concealing Chronic Wounds and Selecting Virtues of the Ideal Brand Representative, A&F's long history of discriminatory practices that upholds a whiteness of capital. Then to see the shirts on a group of three males (perceived as not all white and not all heterosexual) as you're watching Obama give a speech in hopes of becoming the first half black (perceived as all black) president of the United States serves as a potent reminder of the inherent subtleties of visual cultural analysis. Regulating appearances is now under the rhetoric and interest of national security. What must be done to "protect our nation"? What happens when "in Foucauldian terms, the state not only invades the body of subjects, but goes a long way in making bodies what they are, and by extension who they are [?] [Because] It [the state] is thus instrumental in subject formation" (Goldberg 115), what happens when you are a visual threat to that formation? [Ultimately] "claims about

sovereignty are forceful, because they represent *shared* norms, understandings, and expectations that are constantly reinforced through the practices of states and by the practices of nonstate actors" (Keck & Sikkink 35-36). In a post-911 context, some have argued that "Bush's response has been to put the threat of terrorism within a state framework" (Kaldor 591); yet President Barack Obama is implementing a new strategy. The patriot act, formation of the department of homeland security, and the threat of domestic terrorism have impacted the response of activists and the state. I will examine multiple examples involving the ways in which the United States formulates a national identity through its reinforcement of a national allegiance dress code concentrating specifically on dress and appearance in airports and on the ways in which Obama has been represented in the media for his lack of adherence to patriotic dress and the consequences for such a deviation.

Often accused of "'palling around with terrorists' and questioning his patriotism," (McGinley 720), Obama has spent much of his run for presidency and time in office with the threat of representing un-American ideals. In "Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and Michelle Obama: Performing Gender, Race, and Class on the Campaign Trail," Ann C. McGinley argues that because Obama "comforts white citizens and distances himself from the idea of the 'dangerous' Bad Black Man, he was able to downplay white fear" (McGinley 709). In *Against Bipolar Masculinity: Intersectionality, Assimilation, Identity Performance, and Hierarchy*, Frank Rudy Cooper

> explains that in order to avoid the stereotype of the Bad Black Man, President Obama performs his identity as less masculine, more feminine and community-oriented. Obama learned early in life that in order to accomplish his goal of living within the white society, he had to give comfort to whites and allay their fears that he may be an aggressive black male (McGinley 712).

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McGinley argues that Barack Obama also struck a precarious balance between not only the "race card" but also gender. According to McGinley, "a silent pact between the electorate and the candidates required the candidates to perform their identities and to design their candidacies to *appear* 'beyond gender' and 'beyond race'" (718, emphasis added). While McGinley believes that Obama intentionally performs a feminine masculine identity in order to placate white fear, I argue that Obama oscillates between a type of placation and activism. In other words, Obama places himself in a liminal space between aligning with ideals of white privilege and choosing to step outside of such restrictions in order to implement social justice policy and undermine norms of the state. *So, what does it mean to appear beyond race?*

Obama walks this line through an intricate balance of admitting his race and learning to forget about it. He has even been quoted as acknowledging that regarding how people view his presidency, "race is not the main thing, telling CNN: 'Are there people out there who don't like me because of race? I'm sure there are. That's not the overriding issue here" (Obama in Corn 9-21-09). But according to David Corn, "the president is always a symbol of the nation, a representation of the country's self-identity" (Corn 9-21-09). Part of the reason why Obama may feel compelled to walk this line resides from his own biracial heritage; "as a self-identified black man from a non-traditional, multinational family, Obama represents a changing America" increasing the backlash in efforts to delegitimize him (Corn 9-21-09). This is the line that he may have been walking since the 1960s according to Corn. "The clash between the two visions of America that has been underway is between a culturally conservative view of a country made up mainly of traditional families – Christian and white – accepting of traditional

values and the perspective of the United States as the center of the universe; [while] the other is a secular, dynamic, tolerant society composed of different groups that is part of a changing world with shifting balances of power" (Corn 9-21-09).

When Obama supports decency, civility and says race is not the issue, what is he really doing? Using rhetoric of the dominant to further his agenda. How does he do this? As he reminds his audience of the importance of civility and decency in everyday life, Obama is shifting the balance of power from what Corn has described as white and Christian with the United States as the center to a "changing world." With an eye on popular media, Obama criticizes the way in which one is awarded 15 minutes of fame. He contends that television news makes stars out of people who are rude.

> If you're civil and polite and you're sensible, and you don't exaggerate the bad things about your opponent, and, you know, you might get on one of the Sunday shows but -- but you're not going to be in the loop. And, you know, part of what I'd like to see is, is all of us reward decency and civility in our political discourse (Sweet 9-20-09).

Yet, despite his emphasis on decency and civility, he is well aware of the environment that "makes it more difficult for us to solve the problems that the American people sent us here to solve" (Sweet 9-20-09).

Obama even walks this line in the debate over the prevalence of racial profiling. "'What I think we know separate and apart from this incident is that there's a long history in this country of African-Americans and Latinos being stopped by law enforcement disproportionately,' Obama said. 'That's just a fact'" (Obama in AP 7-22-09). Obama's response to the media attention of the white Cambridge police officer "acting stupidly" for arresting a black Harvard professor for attempting to break into his own home (Obama in AP 7-22-09) became the center of increasing discussion over "how far we've come." Questioning the conduct of police is viewed as a violation of state norms and

impacts the formation of national identity. In other words, Obama's criticism highlighted the gap between two visions of America one that upholds white privilege and one that questions it. By drawing attention to the high incidence of racial profiling, Obama is again pointing to the increasing need for social justice policy. By creating and correcting his initial responses in a "teachable moment" (Baker, et al., 7-30-09) and publicly announcing the beer summit, a reconciliation involving all parties, Obama reigns in his responses to stay within the boundaries of an acceptable presidential role which has previously been a long chain of white presidents who reaffirm their commitment to national identity and uphold the role of the state in pursuing justice. Helene Cooper believes that as a result of this incident "answering that question straight got him [Obama] into a heap of trouble. So I think what he's learned from this is that as president, he can't really say what he thinks" (Baker, et al., 7-30-09). Obama's initial statement "was the kind of answer, straightforward and from the gut, that you would expect during a discussion you had with your friends at a bar" (Baker, et al., 7-30-09), but he later qualified his remark to focus on decreasing white fear of emphasizing a social justice agenda, even returning to focus on himself as "a testament to the 'incredible progress' minorities have achieved as the nation's first black president" (Obama in AP, 7-22-09), to show that he represents one of the "good blacks."

Regardless of whether you can make it past the metal detector, how you look and what you wear to the airport and on a plane is important to how the U. S. constructs national identity. If talking about the safest seat on an airplane makes you a terrorist threat, does what you say and how you look impact national identity? *How do suspicious remarks define national identity? How do you know when what you're wearing is a*

matter of national security not a matter of what you took out of your closet? Does the

nation's, state's, or an individual's idea of decency change based on your dress and

appearance? Does what you wear define national identity?

On January 1, 2009, a Muslim family was "kicked off" an AirTrans flight for

discussing their opinion about where the safest seat on an airplane might be. Kashif Irfan

says:

> My concern is not really about flying with them again. My concern is that this sort of treatment
> should not happen to us again nor to any other families that might be profiled for their race, their
> religion, or any of the sort of things that probably don't have any significance what so ever with
> regards to whether or not they pose a threat to the passengers on board or themselves or anybody
> else (CNN 1-2-09).

So, what "things of significance" pose a threat? Is it race? Religion?

Atif Irfan says that: "We really felt disrespected. As Americans we felt that living in this

country we shouldn't have to deal with this kind of stuff. That unfortunately we were

lumped in with everybody else and treated like second-class citizens" (CNN 1-2-09).

The Muslim family is also negotiating the fine line between their own identity as

Muslims and the national identity ideal brand representative. However, their social

justice approach takes the issue of racial profiling and brings it into the national

consciousness, thereby scraping away at the normative prescriptions that dictate who has

the ability to change the social structure. Kashif says:

> And, you know, like my brother said, being Americans, being in this country, being productive
> members of this community, who have never had any sort of blemish upon our civil records, it is
> extremely insulting, very humiliating, and in fact at some point I know my wife was in near tears
> and my seven year old could certainly perceive he was being mistreated and made to feel guilty
> because of the way he looks and perhaps his faith (CNN 1-2-09).

Who is made to feel guilty because of the way they look? What does that say about

American citizenship and who is allowed to be subsumed under the category of national

identity?

Like Obama, they have learned:

> I think just watch our words. Generally, I think my wife and I are pretty careful about that kind of stuff anyway because we know when you step onto a plane most people are initially kind of looking at us with a different eye than they would other people because my wife wears a headscarf, I have a beard. We are obviously of darker complexion, so you know, I guess again just be careful about what we say so hopefully you know see what happens. (Atif in CNN 1-2-09).

Atif is aware of his nonconformance to the nation's look policy as "a racially diverse crowd looking Islamic in terms of their headscarves and clothing traveling together" and how this impacts his everyday life; yet "once again [he believes] that should not lead someone to draw the conclusion that we are posing a threat to the plane regardless of the kind of conversations we're having unless we're saying something extremely inflamed or perhaps something which would seriously indicate that we have something on our person that would cause harm" (Kashif in CNN 1-2-09). By airing their struggle on national television, they are able to highlight how "the kind of humiliation, the kind of treatment received is probably not warranted in any situation like that. After all, no one is guilty until proven guilty and this was the statements of simply I believe one or two teenage passengers. It certainly is not a conviction by any stretch of the imagination" (Kashif in CNN 1-2-09).

Another t-shirt was the site of controversy at the airport as a passenger complained about the disruption. Lorrie Heasley, of Portland, Ore., was thrown off a Southwest Airlines flight in Reno when she refused to cover or remove the shirt she was wearing. Heasley was wearing a shirt which says "Meet the Fuckers" surrounded by pictures of President George W. Bush, Vice-President Dick Cheney, Homeland Security secretary Michael Chertoff and former FEMA head Michael Brown (Hampton 10-06-05). The passengers felt uncomfortable with the disapproval of the Bush administration. Yet, the airport is also a site of negotiation where what someone is wearing, reading, or might

be saying can be viewed as a security threat (News 4, 10-10-05). As Beth Harbin of

Southwest Airlines notes "it's very much a judgment call. But when other customers

become concerned we do have to become involved in that and see what we can do to

make everyone as comfortable as we can" (News 4, 10-10-05). Yet, the offending

passenger Lorrie Heasley argued for the right to freedom of speech: "I didn't feel that I

should have to change my shirt, because we live in the United States, and it's freedom of

speech and it was based on the movie 'The Fockers,' and I didn't think it should have

offended anyone" (News 4, 10-10-05). The Southwest rules "allow the airline to deny

boarding to any passenger whose clothing is offensive;" yet, "American Civil Liberties

Union officials say Heasley's T-shirt is 'protected' political speech under the

Constitution" (News 4, 10-10-05). *What deems clothing offensive? Who is allowed to*

define what it means to be inside or outside of that category?

> One thing most Americans don't seem to realize is that the First Amendment prohibition on infringement of freedom of speech applies to the government. It does not apply to private corporations or individuals. If I don't like what you say in my house, I can most certainly ask you to leave. The same [supposedly] applies to Southwest Airlines. Southwest Airlines is now on Heasley's list of fuckers (Hampton 10-6-05).

The juxtaposition between the t-shirt with a negative representation of the Bush

administration within the confines of the airplane regulated by national authorities,

created a space of disruption. In other words, the t-shirt was outside the boundaries of the

ideal brand representative which was why it created a source of tension for passengers.

The disruption must be removed in order to restore the status quo. Yet, Heasley is

critiquing the "old social order" in favor of a new one.

Another t-shirt was banned from entering an airplane, this time it was worn by

Raed Jarrar, an Iraqi-born U.S. citizen. His t-shirt read "We Will Not Be Silent" in

Arabic and English.

On August 12, 2006, Jarrar was waiting to board a JetBlue flight from New York to his home in Oakland, California, when he was approached by two TSA officials. One of them told Jarrar that he needed to remove his shirt because other passengers were not comfortable with the Arabic script, telling him that wearing a shirt with Arabic writing on it to an airport was like "wearing a t-shirt at a bank stating, 'I am a robber'" (ACLU 8-9-07).

The airline officials are thus enacting the ideal brand representative of the nation as they implement rules pertaining to what is deemed (un)comfortable. Although Jarrar was not officially declared a security threat, according to the ACLU, the action taken suggests that TSA and JetBlue officials illegally discriminated against him based on his ethnicity and the Arabic writing on his t-shirt (ACLU 8-9-07). "Officials prevented Jarrar from boarding his August 2006 flight at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport until he agreed to cover his shirt, which read, 'We Will Not Be Silent' in English and Arabic, and then forced him to sit at the back of the plane" (ACLU 8-9-07). Jarrar won a lawsuit in the amount of $240,000 for discrimination.

"The outcome of this case is a victory for free speech and a blow to the discriminatory practice of racial profiling," said Aden Fine, senior staff attorney with the ACLU First Amendment Working Group and lead attorney on the case. "This settlement should send a clear message to all TSA officials and airlines that they cannot discriminate against passengers based on their race or the ethnic content of their speech" (ACLU 8-9-07).

While the writing on Jarrar's shirt is the primary concern, the statement made by TSA officials indicates that not only is Arabic writing inappropriate for the airport, but the body attached to such writing is also cause for concern. Jarrar remarks, "All people in this country have the right to be free of discrimination and to express their own opinions" (ACLU 8-9-07). Jarrar's case parallels the questioning the Muslim family's has undergone regarding their discussion over the safest seat on the airplane. Both the Muslim family and Jarrar were taken off the plane because their appearance placed them outside of the nation's look policy creating a security threat despite the official statement by each airline that no threat existed. The rhetoric used by each airline exemplifies their

commitment to keeping certain passengers comfortable, while not acknowledging the distinct connection between discrimination and national security polices. As an employee of American Friends Service Committee, an organization committed to peace and social justice, Jarrar is keenly aware of the discrepancies between the containment of safety and the freedom of civil liberties.

Obama has also learned how to navigate the nation's look policy. Part of this process includes following the patriotic dress code. This code represents the ideal brand representative of the nation. Any deviations from it has consequences. Criticism of Obama's unpatrioticness includes "an allegation that he doesn't put his hand over his heart during the Pledge of Allegiance and the fact that — until recently — he has refused to wear an American flag lapel pin" (Hong 6-30-08) has sparked Obama to redefine patriotism for the nation. Hong notes,

> Earlier in the campaign, when critics questioned why he [Obama] didn't wear the pin — as many male politicians do — he said he had stopped after the 2001 terrorist attacks because he felt it had replaced "true patriotism" for some public officials. Later, the pin on his lapel started showing up again (6-30-08).

Obama's definition of true patriotism resides outside of his dress and appearance; yet it is necessary to fulfill the requirements of the "look policy" of the nation. Part of this process includes visually depicting stories about

> his childhood to argue his born-in-USA bona fides: watching astronauts come to shore in Hawaii from his grandfather's shoulders, hearing his grandmother's stories from her work on a World War II-era bomber assembly line, handling his grandfather's Army dog tags and listening to his mother explain that the promises of the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution apply to every American of any color (Hong 6-30-08).

While dawning a flag pin, Obama is still cognizant of the need to pursue an agenda of questioning, not conforming; in other words, "Patriotism is supporting your country all the time, and your government when it deserves it," Obama said, repeating Twain; "We

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should never forget that, especially when we disagree with them, especially when they make us uncomfortable with their words" (Hong 6-30-08).

Like the Muslim family on the TransAir flight, the man wearing the "we cannot be silent" t-shirt, and the woman wearing the "meet the fuckers" t-shirt, Obama's allegiance to the nation was also questioned. Obama's dress and appearance signified a departure from the ideal brand representative which posed a national security threat, leading to a questioning of his citizenship and patriotism. The cover of the *New Yorker* depicted the Obama's as "terrorist enemies of the United States" (Mooney 7-14-08):

> The cover, published Sunday, shows Obama in the Oval Office dressed in traditional Muslim attire. His wife, Michelle, wears an Afro hairstyle and has a machine gun slung over her back. An American flag can be seen burning in the fireplace, and a picture of Osama bin Laden hangs on the wall (Mooney 7-14-08).

The controversy over *The New Yorker* cover depicting Barack and Michelle Obama also walks the line between drawing attention to the way Obama has been represented in the media for his lack of patriotism and using this depiction to dissolve fears about a changing face of America. Mike Allen argues that in the July 21, 2008 issue of *The New Yorker*, "The Politics of Fear," artist Barry Blitt "satirizes the use of scare tactics and misinformation in the presidential election to derail Barack Obama's campaign." (Allen 7-14-08). Yet, *The New Yorker* cover also serves to bolster his campaign, pointing to the use of the rhetoric of terrorism that creates a politics of fear, which means "we're not even satirizing the Obamas, we're satirizing these rumors, the lies that have fed into the politics of fear" (Mooney 7-14-08).

The question of Obama's citizenship parallels his display and discussion of patriotism. He is not easy to label and he must prove his allegiance in both cases. The visual display of such allegiances determines whether or not he is viewed as acceptable.

Barack Hussein Obama's heritage, as a man born in Hawaii, to a Muslim Kenyan native and white U.S. citizen from Kansas raises questions over his citizenship and qualifications to be president of the United States. As a result, Obama signifies a changing America and remains "a symbol of the nation, a representation of the country's self-identity" (Corn 9-21-09). The double-bind within the changing face of American citizenship is also characteristic of Obama's role as a representation of the United States, an "ideologically white-dominated nation fascinated, and yet concerned, by the 'coloring' of America" (Smith in Bloom 80).

Obama's use of patriotic dress helps assuage white fear. Yet, according to Dick Morris in "Plugging the Patriotism Gap":

> Obama made it worse by dealing *defensively* with patriotism - attacking those who questioned him and wondering aloud if wearing a flag in his lapel was a form of pandering. These musings left us in doubt that he really embraces the idea that America is exceptional. But his "patriotism offensive" shows that he's learning how to assuage the fears that he could be a sleeper agent sent to the US to destabilize our system (7-2-08).

Obama must walk the line between a patriotism offense and patriotism defense in order to work toward destabilizing the system. The process of destabilizing the system includes implementing a more equitable distribution of power which is inherent in a social justice agenda that needs to be implemented by the state as part of a national initiative.

VIII
Social Justice Philanthropy as a State-led Strategy?: Processes of Funding Dissent

Some might say that the biggest enemy of social justice is charity (Burkeman 2004).

Grantmaking for social change involves not just increasing funding to social and economic justice causes but altering the structure and processes of philanthropy itself (Shaw 2002).

According to the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy in their report on "Understanding Social Justice Philanthropy" (2003), "the conflict associated with giving for the sake of charity (traditionally associated with a sense of duty to give alms to the needy, without necessarily addressing the sources of inequality) as opposed to giving for positive structural change is as old as the voluntary structure itself" (NCRP 3). As a result, NCRP believes that the most important role that philanthropy plays is to "create a more equitable distribution of power – to truly reform institutions so that the need for chronic charity is eliminated" (4) and this can be achieved through practicing social justice philanthropy. Obama's more equitable distribution of power is inherent in a social justice agenda that needs to be implemented by the state as part of a national initiative in order to change the current definition of national identity. Abercrombie & Fitch's ideal brand representative is the same ideal used to define national identity. Social justice philanthropy and Obama's social justice strategy is the solution to changing this paradigm. Accordingly, "social justice philanthropy is the practice of making contributions to nonprofit organizations that work for structural change and increase the opportunity of those who are less well off politically, economically and socially" (NCRP 6); thus, it provides a long-term societal benefit as it works toward solving society's problems *at their source*. By tackling these problems at the root, social justice

grantmaking reduces the demand for charity and basic service programs and also allows people without economic, political and social access the opportunity to improve their conditions through systemic change (NCRP 5).

NCRP acknowledges what is often the view of many in the nonprofit world "that money given to those less well off in society equates to social justice" (6). However,

> one of the important distinctions between charity and social justice grantmaking is the offering of services versus teaching a group of people how to organize and influence change that has a positive impact for themselves and society as a whole. It does not mean, as some observers imply, that social justice advocates cannot or should not provide direct service, but that service alone does not meet enough of the standards to constitute social justice action (NCRP 7).

In their follow-up report, "Social Justice Philanthropy: The Latest Trend or a Lasting Lens for Grantmaking?" (2005), NCRP notes:

> discussions of social justice lead to questions of how equity and power fit into the concept. Equity in social, political, and economic realms can have a variety of meanings. Equity can mean equal distribution of *power* (economic, political, or social), equal *welfare* (or utility), or equal *opportunity*. In the United States, the focus has been on promoting equal opportunity (the ability to pursue happiness) as opposed to the other two (NCRP 2005: 2).

As a result, this chapter will explore the relationship between philanthropic funding and social change organizations (i.e. groups that challenge dominant systems). Specifically, I will raise questions about the impact of support for organizations (and campaigns) with revolutionary agendas and ask, *what are some of the difficulties in funding radical social change and the factors inhibiting increased philanthropic funding for these types of organizations?* Analyzing the connections between civil society, social movements, foundation, federal and NGO funding, and barriers to funding systemic changes that challenge current institutional structures, I seek to identify the shifts in approach, rhetoric, patterns of assistance and recommendations for sustaining social justice philanthropy and ultimately how this has an impact on Barack Obama's grassroots campaign.

In "Social Change Philanthropy and How It's Done," (2002) Alison D. Goldberg notes, "despite their growth in numbers, the ranks of social change foundations are still relatively small in the world of philanthropy." The National Network of Grantmakers estimates that *less than 3 percent* of all domestic, private, institutional grantmaking is distributed to social change causes. The numbers show that foundation resources have been overwhelmingly distributed to direct service programs—providing important support in a climate of eroding safety nets—but not effecting policy changes to solve social problems. In addition, economic disparity in the United States has worsened significantly during the past two decades, so that today the wealthiest 1 percent of the population controls 40 percent of household wealth (Goldberg). What distinguishes social change philanthropy (also called "social justice" philanthropy) from other forms of grantmaking is the central tenet that philanthropy's success is measured not only by where money is given, but also the *process* by which it is given. Social change philanthropy strives to incorporate giving principles that provide access to those left out of grantmaking in order to support their campaigns for social and economic justice.

Goldberg provides the following core principles of social change philanthropy:

Focuses on Marginalized and Disenfranchised Communities

This includes protecting the rights of communities of color, low-income populations, women, immigrants, international communities, disabled people, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. The issues and campaigns that social change philanthropy supports include civil and human rights, political access, peace and nonviolence, worker's rights, anti-poverty strategies, environmental justice, corporate reform, prison reform, education and healthcare access, as well as challenges to international trade and privatization.

Addresses Root Causes

Social change foundations support work by community leaders that creates systemic or policy change to address the root causes of problems. Rather than applying Band-Aid solutions to problems, it aims to prevent the problems in the first place. Such work requires shifting the power dynamics in communities through grassroots organizing, advocacy, policy-related work, research and activism.

Strives to be Accountable to Marginalized and Disenfranchised Communities

Grantmakers are accountable to a board of trustees. Social change foundations recognize a second, equally (if not more) important level of accountability—the communities where they make grants. That's why social change foundations invite community leaders and the people affected by the foundation's programs to participate in the needs assessments and related decision making. Participation might range from establishing advisory groups to inviting members of the affected communities to serve as board members. Also, social change foundations investigate the demographics of grantees' leadership to determine whether the organizations are community-led.

Establishes Inclusive Processes

Social change foundations pay particular attention to the accessibility of their grantmaking processes for grassroots organizations, recognizing that generally these groups operate with very few staff members who have little time to spend writing proposals. They are concerned with grantees' access to information and whether their processes are respectful of grantees' time. Foundation staff often will take part in workshops or other training programs to evaluate their assumptions—especially, those that guide their perspectives on social issues, and therefore, their grantmaking.

Evaluating the power issues that inform the experiences of grantmakers will help them become more effective and improve their communications with grantees who are likely to have race and class backgrounds different then their own. While traditional philanthropy also works to benefit marginalized and disenfranchised communities and to support the root causes of issues, the process, players and analysis of politics and power are what distinguish social change philanthropy from other forms of grantmaking. Peace Development Fund Executive Director John Vaughn puts it this way: "It is more than teaching people to fish. It's supporting their efforts to get a company to stop polluting the lake they're trying to fish in."

In a similar fashion, NCRP (2003:7) outlines broad categories that foundations and organizations can consider as the purposes or targets of social justice funding:

1. Researching root causes of societal problems (like poverty and its implications, discrimination, lack of access to politics, public policymaking and the economy, etc.).

2. Communicating and disseminating this information to the public with a particular emphasis to reach those who are directly disadvantaged by social problems.

3. Strengthening new and/or existing social movements that work for social, political and economic equity through:

   ▪ Grassroots political activism toward the mobilization of disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups.

   ▪ Creating networks or alliances among social justice groups.

   ▪ Community organizing toward increasing opportunity and redistributing political power.

   ▪ Technical assistance including board development, inclusion of constituencies and democratic funding processes for social justice nonprofits.

   ▪ Economic development that increases the socio-economic

opportunities of disadvantaged and disenfranchised populations.

- ▪ Labor organizing.

- ▪ Legal advocacy.

- ▪ Political lobbying to enact changes in government laws, policies, regulations, and programs affecting disadvantaged populations.

4. Promoting inclusion of constituents in grantmaking decision-making processes and governance structures.

So, if it is as simple as following steps 1-4, why hasn't social justice philanthropy been a popular mode of giving?

Multiple challenges to social justice philanthropy emerge in practice, including but not limited to accessing social, political, economical, educational, and legal barriers. NCRP (2003) highlights:

Political Obstacles

The current political climate scares many in the foundation world. There is a tendency toward risk aversion that deters even progressive funders from making aggressive investments in social justice movement organizations. Overt support for social justice causes runs the risk of incurring the ire, disapproval and perhaps sanction of political opponents, including those in government who would use social justice grantmaking as a motivation to limit or curtail the latitudes of U.S. philanthropy. Government policies that increasingly favor and incentivize the need for charitable support of services meeting human needs either in conjunction with or in place of governmental resources, and the proclivity of foundations to respond accordingly.

Social Obstacles

Many Americans do not view social justice movement as relevant to their lives, seeing the need for basic services as more immediate and tangible than the promotion of social justice. Foundations can get almost immediate recognition and reasonably measurable outcomes for funding "good deeds" as opposed to taking on societal or global phenomena and proposing to support change through what are fundamentally "micro" resource commitments. The nature and scope of the problems causing the need for social justice grantmaking are immense; the grantmaking of even the largest foundations pales in comparison. Demonstrating progress and success against such mammoth issues clearly makes foundations lean toward the concrete and measurable. Overcoming the marginality of social justice work, the sense that social justice simply does not appeal to the majority of Americans or that Americans simply are not interested in programs addressing the needs of populations that are the least well off in our society, is an important first step which we will return to.

Economic Obstacles

With so much of foundation assets in the stock market and the market's recent declines, many in the foundation world are paring down their grantmaking and funding "band aid" solutions – traditional charity instead of innovating and positioning their grants for long-term solutions.

Obstacles Internal to Foundations

Increasing lack of understanding (or interest) on the part of foundation boards and staff as to the importance of social justice work – what social justice actually is and how (or what kinds of) grantmaking can be most useful to advance social justice is a concern. The lack of representation by minorities and poor people in foundation boards and staff

means that the voices of the populations in need of social justice grantmaking are unlikely to be heard, or at least heard directly, when they should be speaking for themselves, in front of foundation board members, trustees and other decision-makers. In addition, the limited training available around social justice philanthropy for younger donors and trustees of family foundations in order to foster social justice leadership within philanthropy and the weakness or even absence of arenas for social justice grantmakers to gather to strategize and collaborate around social justice movement building is problematic. There are organizational egos and bureaucratic differences among foundations, particularly a tendency among foundations (despite the rhetoric) against collaborative work and in favor of individualistic, idiosyncratic, sometimes faddish grantmaking that exalts the new and distinctive simply because they are different. It is sometimes difficult to develop a means to measure the need for outcomes of social justice philanthropy, because of the fact that social justice grantmakers possess and use few instruments for calibrating their funding to the array of issues they might take on and for assessing the outcomes of their grantmaking in meaningful and appropriate ways. And there is the tendency of many foundations toward "niche" or "boutique" funding as opposed to applying a more rigorous analysis of social and economic issues and deploying grants more strategically for improved social justice outcomes.

NCRP asks, "How can nonprofits grow and become more effective without losing their legitimacy with core constituencies, and how can small social movement organizations demonstrate their validity as productive recipients of foundation social justice grants?" The quandary of funding small or large groups and how to measure that impact is: small groups tend to carry more legitimacy among specific constituencies and

large social justice groups possess economies of scale allowing for larger impact. Identifying the contradiction between social justice grantmakers' beliefs in democracy and their general unwillingness (or perhaps the structural impediments that make it difficult) to democratize their own grantmaking; and fostering a common ground between nonprofits and labor organizations, particularly when organized labor is so frequently not included as a category of social justice or social movement nonprofits, are necessary.

Legal Obstacles

Fear of skirting the legal limits of advocacy or lobbying, persistent reaction by even the most progressive foundations that supporting social justice movements endangers the grantmakers' tax-exempt status or, even more dire, opens the foundations up to political scrutiny from ideological opponents is intense. (This fear persists despite the fact that the law allows far more advocacy work than is currently being funded or performed by nonprofits.) Yet, given post-911 regulations including the Patriot Act and increased surveillance of domestic terrorism, this is not surprising. This is clearly a case where there is such concern about crossing the line that few even go anywhere near it – to the detriment of nonprofits, social justice advocacy and our democracy as a whole.

Obstacles Facing Not-For-Profit Organizations

The complexities of the application process often make it difficult for social movement organizations to navigate, identify and negotiate with funders that might have a propensity toward social justice grantmaking, especially when some social movement organizations might be good organizers and advocates but less skilled at nonprofit fundraising techniques. The challenge of generating commitments for core operating support grants, which social movement organizations desperately need; going against the

grain particularly of large foundations which increasingly favor project or program

grants; and encouraging funders to stay focused on a social justice project once it is

started and not to move away from it; as opposed to the short attention span of all too

many funders, that begin and then exit funding relationships long before their grantees

have achieved any kind of long term sustainability, are all important strategies.

Interviews with foundation executives generated additional obstacles including

confusion surrounding the term social justice philanthropy. In other words,

> One interviewee's discomfort with the term results from people's unfamiliarity with the phrase, which could potentially scare off corporate or conservative funders with which her foundation may need to partner. Another representative stated that the terminology invokes images of 'a rabble rousing hippy-dippy group'—an image with which most foundations would not want to be associated. Another individual said that social justice is closely associated with the 1960s and the civil rights movement, and the new generation of philanthropists is unable to relate to the term (NCRP 2005: 5).

Yet, there are foundations that accurately use social justice and/or social change

to describe the work they promote, including Ben & Jerry's and Resist, which are

outlined in more detail below. *The Mission of the Ben & Jerry's Foundation is to make*

the world a better place by empowering Ben & Jerry's employees to use available

resources to support and encourage organizations that are working towards eliminating

the underlying causes of environmental and social problems. Likewise, The Ben &

Jerry's Foundation will only consider proposals from grassroots, constituent-led

organizations that are organizing for systemic social change. They support programs and

projects that are examples of creative problem-solving. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation

funds grassroots organizing projects that are working for progressive social change and

ask that their applicants answer yes to following three questions before proceeding with

their grant request:

1. Does your program focus on creating broad-scale social (community, institutional, systemic) change, as opposed to change in an individual's life?

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2. Is your organization made up of people "doing for themselves"? In other words, are the constituents that are affected by the issue you are confronting on the staff, on the board, and in decision-making positions within your organization?

3. Is your style of organizing "doing with others", rather than "doing for others"? Is this program an example of grassroots, bottom-up organizing?

Grant applicants need to demonstrate that their projects will:

- lead to societal, institutional and/or environmental change;

- address the root causes of social or environmental problems; and

- lead to new ways of thinking and acting.

Applicants should:

- develop a plan for long-term viability;

- articulate a clear analysis of the underlying causes of the problem; and

- outline specific goals and strategies of their organizing campaign or program.

Projects must:

- help ameliorate an unjust or destructive situation by empowering constituents;

- facilitate leadership development and strengthen the self-empowerment efforts of those who have traditionally been disenfranchised in our society; and

- support movement building and collective action.

What do we mean by the term "grassroots organizing?"

Grassroots Organizing implies activism from the ground up as opposed to top down decision making. Local, constituent-based and disenfranchised are words that often describe the leadership and membership of grassroots organizations. Specifically, we look for groups who are working to help themselves, help their own communities, and help others like themselves through self-empowering, community organizing efforts.

What do we mean by the term "social change" and how does it compare to "social service?"

Social change addresses the root causes of problems; social service addresses the consequences of those problems. Social change addresses whole communities, systems and institutions; social service aids and assists individuals. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation does not offer grants to support social service programs.

In a similar way, RESIST is a progressive foundation that supports grassroots organizing for peace, economic, social and environmental justice, and provides political education for social change activism. For 40 years, RESIST has funded groups that challenge reactionary government policies, corporate arrogance, and right-wing fanaticism through organizing, education and action. As a non-profit organization itself, RESIST relies on contributors with a strong commitment to social, economic and environmental justice, and a firm belief in the need to build grassroots movements and capacity.

RESIST supports strategies that:

- build community;

- organize or educate people to take action;

- encourage collaborations with other social change organizations;

- increase skills and/or access to resources;

- produce leadership from the constituency being most directly affected; and

- promote organizational longevity.

To be eligible for RESIST funding, applicants must:

- have an organizational budget under $150,000 per year;

- carry out most of their work in the United States;

- submit progress reports for all prior RESIST grants; and

- be a nonprofit organization with 501(c)3 status as determined by the IRS, be a federally recognized American Indian tribal government or agency, or be sponsored by one of the above.

However, there seems to be a lack of agreement in the general philanthropic community about the meaning of the term "social justice" or "social change".

Consequently, according to one interviewee,

> "Some foundations simply adopt the term in order to look good but are not necessarily funding social justice work." The foundation representative who made this observation gave an example of a foundation that funds programs that improve the self-esteem of individuals—in part to encourage them to do more for themselves, rather than relying on outside sources of support—but falls short of empowering them for social change (NCRP 2005: 5).

Furthermore, the lack of collaboration among social justice grantmakers and grantees also proved problematic to some. One foundation representative stated that the disaggregation of social justice work prevents the field from achieving effective, far-reaching outcomes.

> One interviewee remarked that each foundation is focused on a single issue area, such as women's rights, GLBT rights, or ending homelessness. This narrow focus ("tunnel vision," in the words of one interviewee) creates a division among funders and prevents them from working together. One interviewee stated that "A lack of unity among the left to mobilize and organize to fight the right" affects the effectiveness of progressive funders. She also asserted that "the self-destructive behavior of the left through infighting prevents us from effectively mobilizing as the right does" (NCRP 2005: 5).

Nevertheless as the descriptions of Ben & Jerry's and Resist have shown, there is a core definition of social justice that permeates academic and activist circles that needs to be more widely disseminated through education. The role of Resist for example as not only a foundation but also a space that "provides political education for social change activism" is a key component to changing the role of social justice in the philanthropic community. However, this process must also involve the examination of the role of the state.

NCRP's updated report from 2005 implicitly addresses the larger systemic problems with the unpopularity of social justice philanthropy: that is, consumerism,

capitalism, and actions of the state. They have identified problems with politics and

society generally and issues with philanthropy itself which include (NCRP 2005: 6):

Social and Political Challenges

- A crisis of leadership and a population steeped in consumerism in the USA prevents social justice in general from advancing.

- Failure of the political system to address social justice issues.

- A lack of political momentum on issues relation to social justice.

- A disinterested population, especially the youth who are not interested in political issues.

- The Bush Administration's desire to give more money to the wealthy through the tax system send a signal that progressive economics are unfeasible and that there is no point in even trying to effect this type of change.

- Capitalism and an overall top-down approach to solving issues in the USA.

Foundation Challenges

- The length of time and amount of patience required before observing the impact of social justice programs.

- Difficulty in measuring the outcome of social justice programs, and a lack of concrete successful examples of social justice work.

- The growth and influence of conservative foundations.

- The unheard voice of community members prevents their issues from being known to the philanthropic community.

- Foundations want to provide direct services rather than fund social justice programs.

- High turnover in staff of progressive funders and grantees prevents the advancement of social justice work.

- Continual change of foundations' grantmaking priorities.

- Progressive foundations' inability to maintain strong ties with grantees.

- A lack of diversity (racial, socio-economic, gender, or sexual orientation) among board members and staff in philanthropic institutions.

In "Foundations, the State, and Social Justice," Steven Burkeman argues "too much charitable activity accepts without question the circumstances which give rise to the need for it in the first place. Charity is about ameliorating intolerable situations, not changing those situations fundamentally . . ." (1). Burkeman acknowledges that you cannot have social justice without social change, and in the end it is governments – *the state* – which have to act (2). While the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy places much of its social justice emphasis on foundations, Burkeman says:

> foundations cannot be a significant tool of social justice *except as part of a state-led strategy*, or as part of the pressure on the state (maybe even with its connivance) to change or as instruments to change the culture or the climate – to create a context in which governments feel obliged to change, or are enabled to change (2).

If this is true, what does it mean for social justice philanthropy?

Burkeman asks, "How [then,] can these assets be applied in the interests of social justice – remembering that ultimately foundations and their assets cannot achieve much without the intervention of the State?" (4). Addressing the role of foundations and the state in social justice processes Burkeman finds:

1) Foundations can support those who press for legislative change. They can work to change the climate of ideas, and they can support local policy-focused action.

Such change may be the direct means through which greater social justice is achieved, or merely a means of changing the climate of opinion rather than to create enforceable offenses (Burkeman 4). Giving an example of a classic demonstration of the power of the state to make forms of behavior respectable, or disrespectable – Burkeman discusses the state of South Africa under apartheid.

> For decades, the State there made it respectable in South African society to be racist. By its own

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policies and practices, it said, in effect, to the people of South Africa (and especially to those who thought of themselves as part of the "respectable establishment") that is was okay to favor white people over black people (Burkeman 4).

Similarly, one can look at U.S. policy and see who is favored.

2) What is foundations' role in bringing about legislative change?

"It is, I believe, to support those who campaign for it, pre-figure it, show why it's needed, demonstrate a vision of how a better future might be achieved" (Burkeman 4-5). And "foundations who are after quick gains, notches in their belt whereby they can say to their boards, 'your grants did that, and did it in the space of the usual three-year grant' should think again" (Burkeman 5). Furthermore, sacrificing autonomy is only part of the price to be paid if foundations are serious about using their assets to achieve social justice. They will have to be prepared to behave in ways which will not bring them the instant and obvious gratification on which they have traditionally lived. Social change – without which, in socially unjust societies, there cannot be progress towards greater social justice – is not achieved quickly. It is difficult to measure, impossible to photograph, and difficult to contribute to specific actors. It is difficult to know whether the things you agreed to support have been successful, and whether the things you didn't support might have been better bets. *It emerges from steady continuous unglamorous work, based on a strong core rather than a succession of sexy projects*. Not, then, easy territory for foundations increasingly focused on measurable and attributable outcomes, and reluctant to pay for core costs (Burkeman 9). Most important of all, foundations have to accept that they cannot take more than a tiny bit of credit for the change which their grants help to achieve. Foundations write checks: other people do the work. Too often foundation rhetoric conveniently omits that fact, and foundation people lay claim to achievements which are in large part the achievements of those they fund (Burkeman 9).

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According to Burkeman, foundations can do nothing without getting the state and other major actors to shift, to make changes.

> Foundations can draw on a range of assets to help to do this, but doing this is much tougher than old fashioned charity or just 'doing good' – it requires foundations and those working with them to behave in ways which are not easy, to accept that they may be engaged in some efforts for a very long time without much to show for them, to sacrifice autonomy in order to work effectively with others, or to measure still less than what has been achieved, or even to attribute it to the foundation dollar. Are we up for it? (Burkeman 10).

Dylan Rodríguez isn't so sure.

[T]he symbiosis between racist state and white civil society . . . is not simply a relationship of convenience—it is a creative relation of power that forms a restricted institutional space in which "dissent" movements may take place, under penalty of militarized state repression (a political violence that has, through the pedagogical work of the state won a broad approval from US civil society more generally) (Rodríguez 35).

As Dylan Rodríguez notes in the above quote, dissent movements are often marginalized and the bodies involved criminalized. Thus, the U.S. state

> has generated a *popular consensus* around its modes of dominance: punitive racist criminal justice, paramilitary policing, and strategically deployed domestic warfare regimes have become an American way of life, built in part through a symbiosis with the non-profit liberal foundation structure, which, in turn, has helped collapse various sites of potential political radicalism into nonantagonistic social service and pro-state reformist initiatives (Rodríguez 26).

Likewise, in "Foundations and Public Policy: The Mask of Pluralism," Joan Roelofs believes "containment became more urgent when radical ideas spread beyond university intellectuals, who sometimes *did* become leaders of popular revolt" (169). As a result, there is an increasing disconnect between non-profit advocacy and radical social change networks.

As containment and depoliticization of radical ideas get subsumed under the institutionalized efforts of government and (I)NGOs, the focus becomes on the "service" rather than the "change." Joan Roelofs gives a potent example:

> The foundation-created organization, Americas Watch (now Human Rights Watch/Americas), did not relate U.S.-supported militarism (including death squads) to the abuses in Latin America. Its remedy was publicizing human rights violations to media and international organizations and encouraging human rights groups throughout the hemisphere. Abuses were regarded as

> "deviations," even when a regime used terror as an instrument of policy. "The demand by human rights organizations that a regime account for human rights abuses against its people tends to legitimize the regime by acknowledging that the regime is still in place to seek redress" (170).

As right-and left-wing NGOs have become increasingly similar (Roelofs 170), perhaps they are both "foster[ing] a new type of cultural and economic colonialism—under the guise of new internationalism" (James Petras, Roelofs 170). In "Media Spaces: Innovation and Activism," Clifford Bob agrees that "the NRA uses many of the same communication methods as the 'progressive' human rights, environmental, and women's NGOs so closely identified with global civil society" (198-199). Even more specifically, "despite contradictory content, the framing of the contending sides' messages, like their media strategies, is quite similar; both networks portray themselves as moral actors representing the global public interest" (Bob 200). So are all NGOs "in the service of imperialism" (Roelofs 170)? Given that "global civil society remains primarily an arena of elite, not mass, politics" (Bob 201), this may be the case. But then how do "mass politics" become legitimate players, or part of the global civil society? And is it really possible and effective to operate outside of it?

I prefer Nick Couldry's global civil society that "encompasses movements that are not particularly 'civil', that emerge initially out of national politics, that involve an implicit cultural politics rather than an explicit formal politics and that challenge existing media powers as much as political power" (Bob 218), and that seemingly can include radical networks. Yet, I want to know how these "dispersed practices" (Bob 219) are directly connected to structural changes and government policy (a question that Couldry leaves with the reader). As the "information-sharing aspect of transnational networks facilitates control by consent, information may be gleaned from the very grass roots, but it is then filtered through centralized newsletters and reporters and promulgated

worldwide on Web sites and in other media" (Roelofs 192). So, how are radical/grassroots networks creating changes without adhering to the more filtered process of large NGOs?

Even if "*the whole context has changed*" according to Marc Lindenberg and Coralie Bryant in *Going Global*, one still must ask, "Whose reality *does* count?" (213). Examining non-profit program and project evaluation in their chapter on "Accountability, Evaluation and Organizational Learning," Lindenberg and Bryant note that in 1996-97 the Save the Children UK organization stated that evaluations too often emphasized the achievement of outputs—the numbers—rather than how lives were improved; "this issue of going beyond counting outputs to address impacts, on how lives are improved is not a narrow issue but one that goes to the heart of *institutional change*" (227, emphasis added). Thus, the demand for what Alex De Waal in "Famine Crimes" names a "humanitarian product" (82), or the commodification of experience, often overrides the need for increased accountability based on "program outcomes that lead to social change" (Lindenberg & Bryant 235). Furthermore, in "The NGO Scramble: Organizational Insecurity and the Political Economy of Transnational Action," Alexander Cooley and James Ron, argue that the growing number of IOs and INGOs increase "uncertainty, competition, and insecurity rather than being evidence of a robust global civil society and that the use of competitive tenders and renewable contracting generates incentives that produce dysfunctional outcomes" (6). Thus, the very dependence of major U.S. relief groups on short-term, renewable government contracts often creates principal-agent problems that put the focus on donor requirements rather than social change (Cooley & Ron 14-15). Ultimately, "the many problems within the transnational sector, including

aid diversion and poor project implementation, are *institutionally conditioned*" (Cooley &

Ron 37, emphasis added). Unfortunately, Cooley and Ron focus on prominent INGOs

leaving out the impact of more radical networks.

Echoing the sentiments of dysfunctional non-profits, and proclaiming that

"humanitarianism is a disappointment," De Waal questions: "How can so many well-

educated, cosmopolitan and to a fair degree well-intentioned people work within

institutions with such noble goals, to such little effect?" (65-66). He distinguishes the

"humanitarian international" in a similar fashion to Bob's view of global civil society as

an elite group, calling it the international elite which includes the staff of international

relief agencies, academics, consultants, specialist journalists, lobbyists, conflict

resolution specialists and human rights workers (De Waal 65). Although De Waal

pinpoints a distinction between "soft" and "hard" humanitarian interests: stated aims of

humanitarian institutions versus institutional demands of the organizations themselves

and their staff, respectively (66), he leaves out a category for the more radical

community-based interests, which suggests that a continuum may be more effective for

analysis here rather than a binary. Nevertheless, as Lidenberg and Bryant, and Roelofs

have exemplified, DeWaal also names a gap in "the absence of any political approach" to

famine prevention in addition to "the failure to address the accountability of the UN

system itself" (71); ultimately he concludes: "with each big relief operation, the

humanitarian international becomes more powerful and more privileged" (De Waal 85).

The social truth of existing society is that it is based on the production of massive,
unequal, and hierarchically organized disenfranchisement, suffering, and death of those
populations who are targeted for containment and political/social liquidation—a violent
social order produced under the dictates of 'democracy,' 'peace,' 'security,' and 'justice'
that form the historical and political foundations of the very same white civil society on
which the NPIC [Non-Profit Industrial Complex] Left is based (Rodríguez 35-36).

So, the question remains: "Are the champions of the oppressed in danger of mirroring some of the sins of the oppressor?" (Shaw-Bond 1). In "The Backlash Against NGOs," Michael Shaw-Bond confirms that "the 'difficult' issues, which are often those most in need of attention, are ignored" (3) and wonders, "Should NGOs be granted responsibilities on the big stage if they shirk responsibilities on the small one?" (4). What remains indicative of all of the critiques of INGOs in the academic literature is a lack of attention to the influence of radical groups, yet a consensus to incorporate a much needed focus of social change and the power of hegemony within the structure of non-profits, despite their often celebrated nature of fluidity (a la global civil society) and decentralized inclusive identities characteristic of the postmodern age.

Specifically in a post-911 context, the popularity of social justice philanthropy has been further thwarted by the state. In "Aid, Security, and Civil Society in the Post-911 Context" (2007), the Centre for Civil Society at the London School of Economics and Political Science remind us "that there has been considerably less attention given to the impacts of post-911 counter-terrorism structures, measures and practices on the spaces and actors of civil society" (1). Examining the effects of new security legislation and antiterrorism measures and practices on civil societies, CCS note "these changes relate to specific but often unsubstantiated fears rehearsed by politicians that civil society actors and spaces may be used directly or indirectly to support and perpetuate terrorism. This has lead to new strictures on the non-governmental realm, appearing variously as 'directives', 'guidelines' and laws" (1-2). Given the new guidelines that nonprofit organizations must follow imposed by government regulation, this has impacted the funding of social justice philanthropy.

> For example, in 2002 the US Treasury Department issued guidelines for the non-profit sector on terror financing that affected a broad swathe of organizations and groups. Muslim organizations were the focus of suspicions and government efforts to crackdown on terrorist financing. This involved freezing the assests and closing the offices of several Muslim organizations, as well as drawing up a watch list of terrorist organizations, which were predominately Muslim. However, the blacklisting of organizations was done outside of a clear legal and policy framework and was based upon an organisation's associations rather than its own actions (CCS 2).

In the U.S., foundations have come under suspicion for supporting groups that promote extremism and violence. As a result of these fears, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations have altered standard grant agreement letters to include new language requiring grant recipients to guarantee they will not misuse funds. In comparison, smaller foundations and organizations that work overseas have struggled with the bureaucratic burden created by the stricter regulatory environment (CCS 2).

The responses of governments to the perception of a terrorist threat have disproportionately targeted organizations and groups working on "suspect" communities, foremost being Muslims but also including refugees, asylum-seekers and government opponents. "USAID has a requirement that its grantees sign an 'Anti-terrorism Certificate', although there is insufficient evidence of how seriously and with what consequences, this has been implemented in practice" (CCS 3). Ultimately, "the War on Terror has brought Muslims [and I would argue social justice organizations] within the gaze of donor agencies, a gaze however, that constructs Muslims [and radical progressives] as problematic" (CCS 4). Thus,

> government posturing on counter-terrorism, such as passing anti-terror measures and laws and facilitating western military operations, is rewarded as has been observed in countries such as Columbia, Ethiopia and Pakistan. These politics of security and aid are also apparent in the demonition of human rights and democracy concerns in bilateral relations with allied regimes in the war on terror, as seen for example in Pakistan, Albania and Saudi Arabia (CCS 5).

In the U.S. it has been organizations most effected by antiterrorism measures, which have been the most resistant in their reaction and response.

> Importantly, broader civil society in the US did not contest the crackdown on the Muslim

charitable network in the aftermath of 9-11 even while the organizations that were being targeted challenged the legal basis of the government's response. It was only later when it became apparent that a range of organizations were under surveillance, and not only Muslim organizations, that more groups have begun resisting counter-terrorism regulation of civil society (CCS 6).

The effects have been apparent in various internal efforts to increase transparency and accountability, more conservative tendencies in programming and relating to partners overseas, and the failure to assertively contest new counter-terrorism structures. However, there are indications that civil society is awakening to the need for a more assertive and organized response. There has been a proliferation of interest in addressing the challenges of counter-terrorism regulation. These range from grassroots citizen's initiatives to oppose counter-terrorism measures and laws to cyber networks to share information on government proposals and actions and exchange experiences on efforts to resist new regulations and laws. Development NGOs are examining how antiterrorism regimes affect their partners overseas while humanitarian organizations have sought to initiate fresh discussions on humanitarian principles in view of counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and changing military competencies (CCS 6). Therefore, one cannot overlook the connections between nonprofit missions, foundations, social justice philanthropy, and state initiatives that often discourage and impede progressive change.

In *The Revolution Will Not be Funded*, Andrea Smith notes:

the Ford Foundation reversed its decision for a one or two year grant of $100,000 to cover general operating expenses because of our organization's [INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence] statement of support for the Palestine liberation struggle. INCITE! quickly learned from firsthand experience the deleterious effects foundations can have on radical social justice movements (Smith 1).

Strapped with this sudden loss of funding but committed to organizing two major projects, INCITE! members raised money through grassroots fundraising—house parties,

individual calls, T-shirt sales, and so on—and were able to quickly raise the money lost when the Ford Foundation rescinded their grant offer (Smith 2).

This story is not an isolated incident of a social justice organization finding itself in a precarious state as a result of foundation funding (specifically, a lackthereof). Since the late 1970s, social justice organizations within the U. S. have operated largely within the 501(c)(3) non-profit model, in which donations made to an organization are tax deductible, in order to avail themselves of foundation grants. Despite the legacy of grassroots, mass-movement building from the 1960s and 70s, contemporary activists often experience difficulty developing, or even imagining, structures for organizing outside this model. At the same time, however social justice organizations across the country are critically rethinking their investment in the 501(c)(3) system. Funding cuts from foundations affected by the current economic crisis and increased surveillance by the Department of Homeland Security have encouraged social justice organizations to assess opportunities for funding social change that do not rely heavily on state structures (Smith 2). In particular, *The Revolution Will Not be Funded* is concerned with the nonprofit industrial complex and the way in which capitalist interests and the state use nonprofits to:

- monitor and control social justice movements

- divert public monies into private hands through foundations
- manage and control dissent in order to make the world safe for capitalism

- redirect activist energies into career-based modes of organizing instead of mass-based organizing capable of actually transforming society.

- allow corporations to mask their exploitive and colonial work through "philanthropic" work.

- encourage social movements to model themselves after capitalist structures

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rather than to challenge them (3).

Dylan Rodríguez defines the non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) as "a set of symbiotic relationships that link political and financial technologies of state owning class control with surveillance over public political ideology, including and especially emergent progressive and leftist social movements." He and Ruth Wilson Gilmore argue that the NPIC is the natural corollary to the prison industrial complex (PIC). While the PIC overtly represses dissent the NPIC manages and controls dissent by incorporating it into the state apparatus, functioning as a 'shadow state' constituted by a network of institutions that do much of what government agencies are supposed to do with tax money in the areas of education and social services. In other words, "The NPIC functions as an alibi that allows government to make war, expand punishment, and proliferate market economies under the veil of partnership between the public and private sectors" (Smith 9).

This popularized and institutionalized "law and order" state has built this popular consensus in part through a symbiosis with the non-profit liberal foundation structure, which in turn, "has helped *collapse* various sites of potential political radicalism into nonantagonisitic social service and pro-state reformist initiatives." Vast expenditures of state capacity, from police expansion to school militarization, and the multiplication of state-formed popular culture productions (from the virtual universalization of the "tough on crime" electoral campaign message to the explosion of pro-police discourse in Hollywood film, television dramas and popular "reality" shows) have conveyed several overlapping political messages, which have accomplished several mutually reinforcing

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tasks that Rodríguez identifies in "The Political Logic of the Non-Profit Industrial

Complex":

- the staunch criminalization of particular political practices embodied by radical and other-wise critically "dissenting" activists, intellectuals, and ordinary people of color; that is to say, when radically pathologized bodies take on political activities critical of US state violence (say, normalized police brutality/homicide, militarized misogyny, or colonialist occupation) or attempt to dislodge the presumed stability and "peace" of white civil society (through militant antiracist organizing or progressive anti-(state) racial violence campaigns), they are subjected to the enormous weight of a state and cultural apparatus that defines them as "criminals" (e.g. terrorists, rioters, gang members) and, therefore, as essentially opportunistic, misled, apolitical, or even amoral social actors;

- the fundamentally political construction—through everything from restrictive tax laws on community-based organizations to the arbitrary enforcement of repressive laws banning certain forms of public congregation (for example, the California "antigang" statutes that have effectively criminalized Black and Brown public existence on a massive scale)—of the appropriate avenues and protocols of agitation for social change, and liberationist activisms can assume in both the short and long terms; and

- the state-facilitated and fundamentally punitive bureaucratization of social change and dissent, which tends to create an institutionalized inside/outside to aspiring social movements by funneling activists into the hierarchical rituals and restrictive professionalism of discrete campaigns, think tanks, and organizations outside of which it is usually profoundly difficult to organize a critical mass of political movement (due in significant part to the two aforementioned developments) (26).

Given the pragmatic construct for social justice philanthropy found in the

tradition of seeking a balance of individual and collective rights, the idea of increasing

everyone's welfare (in the economic sense, for example) without making anyone else

worse off leaves much room for advancing social justice, and using philanthropy (which,

in its most basic sense, is an individual's excess or unneeded wealth) as a means to

accomplish that goal. "In economic terms, this concept is known as 'Pareto Optimality,'

in which society's utility or welfare is maximized without any one person worse off."

(NCRP 2005: 2). Moving toward increasing social justice initiatives is the next step.

Knowing that foundations may be a precarious source of funding, in "Fundraising is Not a Dirty Word: Community-Based Economic Strategies for the Long Haul," Stephanie Guilloud and William Cordery propose grassroots fundraising as an alternative. They realize:

> though an important component of most organizing efforts in the United States, fundraising is usually perceived by activists as our nasty compromise within an evil capitalist structure; [yet,] as long as we relegate fundraising to a dirty chore better handled by grant writers and development directors than organizers, we miss an opportunity to create stepping stones toward community-based economies (Guilloud & Cordery 107).

Importantly, putting an emphasis on grassroots fundraising means it can be planned and implemented by "ordinary people" rather than professionals and does not require being close to sources of money or power (Rosso 290). However, the reality is that many social justice organizations depend on foundation funding.

NCRP estimates that while foundation funding only makes up around 10% of total nonprofit budgets, certain types of nonprofits—including social action and change groups—rely much more heavily (and in some cases, almost entirely) on foundations for their existence. Ironically, though, these groups generally receive the smallest piece of the foundation-giving pie. Working to make sure that these organizations receive more and better foundation support should be a key strategy in any kind of progressive movement building. To do otherwise is rather cynical, suggesting that one of the last avenues for (ideally and potentially) democratic social participation is not worth preserving or even strengthening (NCRP 2005: 1). What other recommendations are important for social justice grantmakers? "In an effort to present constructive feedback for the progressive social justice field, interviewees were asked to make recommendations for their peers in philanthropy—as well as others involved with social change—to strengthen and expand this movement. Given the range of foundation

officials that were interviewed, they had a variety of suggestions for how the social

justice philanthropy field could overcome the challenges that it faces, including the

following as outlined by NCRP:

▪ Grantmakers need to find innovative ways to advance social justice, especially when
programs do not succeed initially. Long-term strategies to change public policies,
popular ideas, and institutions are key elements to progressive social, political, and
economic change.

▪ Social justice grantmakers (grantees) need to collaborate more often (or at the very
least improve their communication), to avoid duplicating efforts or competing with each
other.

▪ Funders should work to measure the problems that social justice philanthropy is
attempting to solve and communicate their magnitude to the general public so that the
importance of social justice issues is made known to people outside of philanthropy.
Creating awareness among the general public could increase support and possible
funding for social justice groups.

Awareness and education are by far the most important steps to creating a culture of

social justice philanthropy. Thus,

> based on interviews with social justice foundation leaders, it is clear that many people inside and
> outside of "social justice" work find the language around social justice loaded or meaningless. A
> problem with many of the terms related to social justice is that they are associated with a period of
> time or political beliefs that many people view as either irrelevant or inflammatory. The wide
> range of activities that people from all over philanthropy claim fall under the rubric of social
> justice may contribute to the dilution of its meanings and reinforce the fragmentation of social
> justice activities (NCRP).

How does one change this perception? A couple local Cleveland organizations have

begun this process.

The InterReligious Task Force on Central America (IRTF) is a Cleveland-based

interfaith group that promotes peace and human rights in Central America and Colombia.

It provides an annual social justice teach-in: Good Global Citizenship. On Saturday,

March 4, 2006, IRTF hosted its 7th Annual Social Justice Teach-In at St. Ignatius High

School in Cleveland. The annual event attracted about 200 participants, half from area

high schools and colleges. For some, the workshops were an introduction to human

rights concerns. For others, the teach-in provided education and resources to support their own human rights programming at their school. The day included community-building, training and education to help individuals become better informed global citizens. This year, 9 workshops were offered and people had the option to attend 3 of these workshops. The topics for these workshops included poverty and injustice; consumer awareness - Dole, Killer Coke, Nestle and more; trade agreements; the re-militarization of Latin America; successful student organizing; and Latin American countries in general.

Community Shares of Greater Cleveland is also funding solutions for community problems. Their 35 member organizations address the root causes of social problems facing our neighborhoods, our community, and our region. They provide a toolkit to start your own workplace campaign. The Community Shares mission is to support social justice organizations through workplace giving programs and other philanthropic initiatives. Founded in 1985, Community Shares is Cleveland's only workplace giving federation with a focus on social justice and the second largest such fund in the country. They generate essential operating funds for nonprofit organizations that are working for positive community change.

▪ Foundations need to focus energies and resources on issues that are important. According to a respondent, "Progressive communities have a tendency to take on everything and fail to accomplish much as a result." Targeted, focused efforts are more likely to yield positive results.

▪ Social justice grantmakers should consider finding an alternative terminology since "social justice" is not a comfortable, universal phrase. The terminology should center more on the concept of fairness and should pose the question, "What kind of nation do we want to be?"

▪ Funders need to spend more time with grantees and should pay closer attention to what grantees are telling them.

▪ Social justice grantees should be better marketed among philanthropists. Social justice grantmakers should educate people about social justice and what it really means by finding and sharing concrete examples and success stories of social justice grantees and philanthropists to share with the philanthropic world. This would help make social justice work function and real.

▪ Foundations committed to social justice philanthropy should find strategic ways to target new philanthropists and educate them about this approach before they become captured by the philanthropic mainstream.

The last two recommendations above point to the resource problem currently facing social justice philanthropy. Interviewees repeatedly mentioned that more foundation dollars need to be directed to social justice efforts, and until that happened, little progress could be made. As a result, several interviewees had suggestions for bringing more philanthropists and foundations into the social justice field. One interviewee encourages all foundations to closely examine their goals because "most foundations have implicit in their mission statement a desire to create a fair and equitable society" (NCRP 2005: 7). Foundations should therefore be encouraged to embrace those ideas embedded in their mission statements. The same foundation executive added that non-social justice foundations should ask themselves the question, "What kind of grantmaking do we have to adopt to make a difference?" This person is convinced that many foundations would realize that the social justice approach would be the answer (NCRP 2005: 7).

> Despite the challenges that social justice philanthropy currently faces, the general goal of this style of grantmaking—effecting long-term, permanent, and progressive social, political, and economic changes—reflect the ideal spirit of philanthropy and need to be supported. The social justice approach has the best chance of effectively and efficiently using philanthropic dollars to provide a broad swath of benefits to the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised members of society. Serious thoughts, however, must be given to articulating a core set of social justice values and bringing the boards of supposedly progressive funders philosophically and politically in-line with staff members. Although neither task is easy, both must be accomplished sooner rather than later. Otherwise, in a few years social justice philanthropy will find itself at the top of a long list of philanthropic fads that roared into philanthropy with much potential, only to be neglected in favor of a new grantmaking approach. (NCRP 2005: 8).

I would like to list practical guidelines for maximizing social justice in an unjust world courtesy of Alison D. Goldberg's Top Ten Ways to do social change philanthropy from her article, "Social Change Philanthropy and How It's Done."

1. **Reflect on your grantmaking process** and program areas; consider if you are practicing any of the principles of social change philanthropy.

2. **Hold a meeting for grantees**, past and present, to think collectively about the issues you are addressing and how you can extend your grantmaking to have a greater impact.

3. **Ask your grantees what they think about your grantmaking process**, the types of grants you give, and how you help and hinder their work.

4. **Solicit community leaders who work in your program areas and populations affected by your grants for input**; enlist the help of your former grantees, your local community foundation or an advisor.

5. **Get involved with active membership organizations and affinity groups**. The Council on Foundations supports a number of affinity groups. The National Network of Grantmakers, the Neighborhood Funders Group, as well as several of the identity-based affinity groups, include many social change grantmakers in their memberships. (For a list of affinity groups and how to contact them, go to www.cof.org/links/affinity index.htm)

6. **Find other funders** who are active in social change philanthropy and hold a meeting to share information and strategies.

7. **Support social change foundations or funds that distribute grants in your area of interest** or region and find out which organizations they support. Look at the National Network of Grantmakers directory, search the Foundation Center database, or contact Changemakers, Foundations for Change or your regional association of grantmakers.

8. **Set aside a proportion of your grantmaking funds to support advocacy and organizing.**

9. **Create a community-based task force** for one of your foundation's issue areas.

10. **Invite community representatives or nonprofit leaders to join your grantmaking board** as members or advisors. Consider who can help you become more accountable to your grantmaking community.

Obamas grassroots strategy is a key component of his social justice agenda. By "transforming the way political campaigns are run, Obama has shattered the top-down, command-and-control, broadcast-TV model that has dominated American politics since the early 1960s" (Dickinson, *Rolling Stone* March 20, 2008). Yet, this transformation is not without risk (Dickinson). Obama's campaign strategy negotiated its own representation in the media with its mission to create change:

> In February, right-wing blogs had a field day when a Fox News affiliate ran footage of a volunteer office in Houston decorated with a Che Guevara flag. But the unique structure of the Obama campaign blunts the PR fallout of such off-message moments because it offers plausible deniability: "This is a volunteer office," the campaign wrote in a press release that forced a clarification from Fox, "that is not in any way controlled by the Obama campaign" (Dickinson).

Fox news is disassociating the connection between Obama and Che Guevara because it feels uncomfortable with the impending shift. At the same time, the Obama campaign is doing its own degree of disassociating in order to walk the fine line between placating a white audience and making a transition to an administration that implements a community-oriented social justice approach. However, in addressing the Obama campaign's well-honed operation, Dickinson notes it "has succeeded not by attracting starry-eyed followers who place their faith in hope but by motivating committed activists who are answering a call to national service." Yet, the title of Tim Dickinson's *Rolling Stone* article, "Machinery of Hope," (March 20, 2008) implies that you need to have both: the machine that functions as a social justice community and the faith that upholds a spirituality of hope. I argue that this is the essence of Seong-Ho Lim's idea of "social trust."

Social trust needs to be a part of any state-led social justice agenda. According to Seong-Ho Lim in "Between Dogma and Consensus: American Democracy in the Age of Terrorism," social trust forms an antithesis to dogmatic rigidity and involves a respect for

and toleration of others, whether others embrace an alternative idea or an unfamiliar

custom (Lim 199). Lim argues that the "dogmatic" response to post-911, prompted for "

an increasing number of South Koreans . . . to transition from unabated respect for

everything American toward a suspicious re-examination of the U.S." (Lim 179).

Obama's social justice agenda reflects this re-examination process and incorporates

social trust; labeled as the "new hope" by *Rolling Stone* (March 5, 2008), he represents

not only structural change, but also community and spiritual renewal. Obama's emphasis

on "social trust, understood in this way, is bridging societal and governmental actors, a

tie binding heterogeneous social members in a community spirit" (Lim 199). *How are*

the ideas of social trust and community spirit enacted in everyday life?

> Open-minded reciprocity is a prerequisite for social trust, in sharp contrast to a narrow dogmatic
> obsession. Should Americans develop a sense of social trust, they would take a more tolerant and
> flexible attitude. They would not always insist on their moral superiority and infallibility and
> would try to understand, accept, and respect others' values and ideas. What American citizens and
> officials need to keep in mind is that social trust is reciprocal; when you trust others, others come
> to trust you. When Americans reject unilateral arrogance, people in other countries will trust the
> U.S. The growing anti-Americanism in South Korea, and in the rest of the world for that matter,
> would subside if American society, despite the shocking 9-11 tragedy, developed a sense of social
> trust and accordingly toleration of alternative ideas and values (Lim 200).

Obama supports this shift toward social trust and applies it to implement social justice

policy. As "theorists in the communitarian tradition have been optimistic about the

prospect of brewing social trust through such non-governmental mediating agents as

family, school, religious organizations, local community, and citizens' groups" (Lim

200), Obama has made it a national agenda.

Obama's slogan "change we can believe in" is part of the national agenda. With a

halo surrounding Obama's body, the cover of *Rolling Stone* touts his "people-powered

revolution" (March 5, 2008) representing him simultaneously as a spiritual and

community-oriented figure. Like bell hooks who states: "I have wanted simply to locate

that meeting-place of spirituality and progressive politics in my life" (hooks, *Rapture*

123), Obama is also embedded in this space; part of this process is understanding:

> A culture of domination like ours does not strive to teach individuals how to live in community. As a consequence, this must become a core practice for all of us who desire to transform society in ways that will bring justice, enable peace and well-being—learning to live in community. All too often, individuals think of community in terms of being with folks like themselves—same class, race, ethnicity, social standing, and the like. It is when we are able to empathize, feel with and for experiences that are not our own and may never be, that we come to know "how good and pleasant it is for brethren to come together in unity." To make community, we need to be able to know truth, to speak openly and honestly (hooks, *Rapture* 120).

Hook's idea of community implicitly involves Lim's notion of social trust. Furthermore,

hooks identifies "one of the most intense political struggles we face as individuals

seeking to transform society today is the effort to maintain integrity of being" (hooks,

Rapture 122). Integrity is inherent in community. Obama must incorporate honesty in

order to fulfill the possibility of community. For hooks this means:

> Truth-telling has to be a spiritual practice . . . because we live and work in settings where falsenesss is rewarded, where lies are the norm. Deceit and betrayal destroy the possibility of community. In challenging the separation of public and private in feminist activism, or any struggle of the exploited to move from object being to subject being, we act to restore the idea that meaningful ties, bonds of love and affinity, are fruitful in a world beyond domestic reality. Strengthening our capacity to offer a sense of community to those who are different, we prepare to dwell in that deeper community that is based on shared vision (hooks, *Rapture* 120-121).

Change is Obama's shared vision. At the time Barry Boyce's interview with bell

hooks, "Love Fights the Power" (July 2006) was published, hooks was unaware that

Obama would be president. Yet, her ideas foreshadowed the ways in which Obama

currently embodies a shift to a "deeper sustaining power" as he moves away from the

"enemy for sustenance" model toward social trust that imbues a more "Buddha-like

process of self-actualizing that spreads into the political world" (hooks in Boyce,

Shambala). Obama's emphasis on change reflects a need for a sustainable future and a

social justice approach that both he and hooks share. Obama's emphasis on a spiritual

people-powered revolution parallels hooks approach with her students:

> Activism does not need to be some kind of organized 'against' protest. When my students say they want to change the world, I espouse an inward to outward movement. If you feel that you can't do shit about your own reality, how can you really think you could change the world? And guess what? When you're fucked-up and you lead the revolution, you are probably going to get a pretty fucked-up revolution (hooks in Boyce, *Shambala*).

As Obama is trying to avoid a "fucked-up revolution" and instead lead the revolution toward social justice, it is important for "those of us who are concerned with radical social change to [remember to] not allow our visions to conform to a pattern we seek to impose but rather to allow them to be 'molded and shaped in accordance to the innermost transformation that is going on' in our spirits" (Thurman, hooks, *Rapture* 120).

IX
Why Obama Can't Punt:
Reclaiming the American Dream, Re-imagining National Identity and Healing Justice

Her prescription, laid out in books like *Killing Rage: Ending Racism* and *Salvation: Black People and Love*, was to find within the rage that has arisen from repeated injustices, a path to healing. From hooks' point of view, this requires people to discover what it means to love—not just greeting card love or the love expressed in gestures, but self-love, and a love of others strengthened by justice. It is the deep 'metaphysics of love,' where you learn to bring to everyday life a sense, not just of doing things, but of being and meaning (hooks in Boyce, *Shambala*). In his book, *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* Obama similarly questions, "Do we participate in a politics of cynicism or a politics of hope?" (40). What does it mean to reclaim the American Dream within this context?

The "American Dream" based on a notion of rugged individualism is being transformed to one based on extraordinary efforts to "strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples," (Zakaria 10-09-09) as the Norwegian Nobel Committee honored Obama with the Nobel Peace Prize for these efforts on October 9, 2009. The fourth president to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, Obama sees this honor as a "call to action" (CNN 10-09-09). In his article, "Nobel Rewards Obama's 'Big Bold Gambit,'" Fareed Zakaria understands how Obama's call to action reflects public policy:

> For decades, it's been thought deadly for an American politician to be seen as seeking international cooperation. Denouncing, demeaning and insulting other countries was a cheap and easy way to seem strong. In the battle of images, tough and stupid always seemed to win. President Obama is gambling that America is now mature enough to understand that machismo is not foreign policy, and that grandstanding on the global stage just won't succeed. In a new world, with other countries more powerful and confident, America's success -- its security, its prosperity -- depends on working with others. It's a big, bold gambit (Zakaria 10-09-09).

The Nobel Peace Prize is representative of the recognition of the shift Obama has been engaged in. According to Zakaria, "Obama's outreach to the world is an experiment: He wants to demonstrate at home that engagement does not make America weak" (Zakaria 10-09-09). In other words, the shift from individual to collective, is summed up by Obama's response, "'This award is not simply about my administration. It 'must be shared' with everyone who strives for 'justice and dignity'" (CNN 10-09-09). Similarly, for Zakaria, the Nobel Peace Prize represents an "award to America for rejoining the world [rather] than recognition of President Obama per se" and includes the shift to "a more engaged, less bullying America [which according to Zakaria] collectively adds up to a changed American profile in the world" (Zakaria 10-09-09). Thus for Obama, reclaiming the American dream means "that America has learned the right lessons from the Japanese internments during World War II, and that [he] will stand with them should the political winds shift in an ugly direction" (261).

Obama has managed to accomplish what other [white] presidents have not. He has addressed questions of citizenship, belonging, racial profiling and as Zakaria has noted, ended many "war on terror" practices that made people (both inside and outside the country) see America as betraying its ideals; reached out to the Muslim world in a way that hasn't been done before; made proposals to reduce the world's nuclear arsenals; re-engaged on the Israeli-Palestinian issue; and winded down the Iraq war (Zakaria 10-09-09). That is, according to John Payton, president of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, "unlike white presidents who could dance around racial issues, Mr. Obama had to be direct. That's the whole difference. Bush could punt. Obama can't punt" (Baker & Cooper 7-24-09). Referring to the July 16, 2009 incident where Henry Louis Gates Jr., a

black Harvard University professor was arrested for disorderly conduct in his own home and Obama's use of the word "stupidly" to describe the acts of Sgt. James Crowley, the white Cambridge police officer, Payton acknowledges, "This issue resonates with him [Obama]." (Baker & Cooper 7-24-09). In "Obama Shifts Tone on Gates After Mulling Debate" Baker and Cooper argue:

> The Gates case has become the first significant racial controversy Mr. Obama has confronted since being sworn in as the nation's first African-American president. The improvisational handling of it underscored the delicate challenges for a leader who has tried to govern by crossing old lines and emphasizing commonalities over differences. (7-24-09).

Highlighting the difficulty of such a challenge, Obama states, "The fact that this has become such a big issue I think is indicative of the fact that, you know, race is still a troubling aspect of our society. Whether I were black or white is part of my portfolio" (Baker & Cooper 7-24-09). Obama acknowledges racial injustice and the continued existence of discrimination thereby shifting the individualistic viewpoint toward a social justice one. According to John A. Powell in "Post-Racialism or Targeted Universalism?," this individualistic point frame of analysis [means] if one does not engage in conscious acts of racism, or better still does not see race as a reality, then there can be no racism or racialization" (2-3). Despite many beliefs that the election of Obama signifies the end of racism, Christopher Edley Jr., a former adviser to President Bill Clinton on race issues and current law school dean at the University of California, Berkeley, said "the [Gates] episode dispelled the 'rosy hopefulness' stemming from Mr. Obama's election in case anybody needed more evidence that we're not beyond race" (Baker & Cooper 7-24-09).

As I have argued in (Not) Abercrombie and Looking (Un)Patriotic?: The National Allegiance Dress Code Survival Guide, Obama represents a changing America. His

subtle but effective strategy is to pursue a social justice agenda while placating white fear

throughout his campaign. Obama negotiated this by "softening his language" from

accusing the Cambridge police of acting stupidly to stating that there was an overreaction

by all parties involved including himself (Baker & Cooper 7-24-09). It also took the

focus off of his healthcare initiative (Baker & Cooper 7-24-09). As Obama oscillates

between a type of placation and activism, he places himself in a liminal space between

aligning with ideals of white privilege and choosing to step outside of such restrictions in

order to implement social justice policy and undermine norms of the state by "rejecting

the claim that we are in a post-racial world" (Powell 4). He says:

> "[W]hen I hear commentators interpreting my speech to mean that we have arrived at a 'postracial
> politics' or that we already live in a color-blind society, I have to offer a word of caution. To say
> that we are one people is not to suggest that race no longer matters—that the fight for equality
> has been won, or that the problems that minorities face in this country today are largely self-
> inflicted . . . as much as I insist that things have gotten better, I am mindful of this truth as well:
> Better isn't good enough" (Obama 232-233).

Therefore Obama is working to address the festering wounds of individuals and

the nation as he negotiates the two visions of America that have been underway:

> between a culturally conservative view of a country made up mainly of traditional families –
> Christian and white – accepting of traditional values and the perspective of the United States as the
> center of the universe; [while] the other is a secular, dynamic, tolerant society composed of
> different groups that is part of a changing world with shifting balances of power (Corn 9-21-09).

Obama's focus must be on healing justice which places an emphasis on structural issues

in order to heal individual wounds and incorporate a social justice approach that points to

the "importance of ordinary, everyday experience in the making of national culture"

(Raymond Williams in Lewis 871). As I noted in Dressing Wounds, this is made

possible in part by "the 'cultural turn' that emphasizes human subjectivity and contextual

meaning" (Dikovitskaya 47). Before the cultural turn, researchers did not question the

meaning or operation of social categories or pay attention to individual motivation within

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social formations (Dikovitskaya 48). As a result, the cultural turn influenced the birth of visual culture; included are "are practices of the skin in that they are everyday – taken for granted/ 'normal' actions that construct boundaries of belonging and give meaning to certain kinds of interaction and experience" (Lewis 880). In "Racializing Culture is Ordinary," Gail Lewis describes how "'whiteness' establishes the limits of the 'British' nation and national belonging" (882). I argued in Why the U. S. is Like Abercrombie & Fitch: Concealing Chronic Wounds and Selecting Virtues of the Ideal Brand Representative, that this configuration is also representative of the U.S. as part of their national "look policy." The ideal brand representative "constructs those deemed to be 'minority ethnic' as outside the nation" (Lewis 883).

As I examined the ban on low rider pants, in Crimes of Fashion: Regulating and Resisting Appearances from Sumptuary Laws to Sartorial Offenses, I found an increasing shift to privatization of racist expression facilitates the disciplining of public space (Goldberg 145). The law reinscribes the distinction between public and private spheres as

> everyday racisms in private spheres proliferate behind the veil of their public disavowal
> in the name of ethnic pluralism and multicultural decency, on one hand, and the
> substitution of racial reference by the coded terms of policy concerns over immigration,
> criminalization, and the integrity of national culture on the other (Goldberg 148, 218-
> 219).

Similarly, as I argued in Discourses of Hyperreal "Diversity": Identifying Gaps Between Principles and Practices of University Education Inclusiveness Policies, the "image of diversity" has taken precedent over the experience of a highly dynamic, complex, and necessary paradigm shift of examining the realities of diversity through privilege and power relations. Like Abercrombie & Fitch's diversity policy, educational institutions also reflect the nation's look policy and often do not bridge the theory and practice of

inclusion. Ultimately, this is due to a failure to implement a social justice lens. As a result, by promoting hyperreal diversity, both continually reinforce an allegiance to a national identity that is colorblind. "The question of where we are with regard to race then becomes binary. We are either in a divisive space from the past where we continue to assert the dominance of conscious racism, or we are in a post-racial world where race really does not matter to most Americans" (Powell 5).

Obama is conscious of the bind and works to discount both these positions in his design of policy and programs. He recognizes that "fairness is not advanced by treating those who are situated differently as if they were the same" (Powell 6). It is clear that something that is neutral [in other words, post-racial] in design is not necessarily neutral in its effect. "Yet, the courts and the public are all but obsessed with the design, and even more narrowly with the intent of the design, but not the effects of these policies" (Powell 5-6). As I argued in Social Justice Philanthropy as a State-led Strategy?: Processes of Funding Dissent, the relationship between philanthropic funding and social change organizations (i.e. groups that challenge dominant systems) is in question, because their emphasis is on effects. The support for organizations (and campaigns) with revolutionary agendas continues to be inhibited. "The energy and need for race not to matter to whites in and of itself suggests that race does indeed matter" (Powell 8). In many instances, universalism will not work to address the needs of marginalized racial and ethnic groups (Powell 9). Powell describes Veteran Administration (VA) programs as an example; they were:

> race and gender –neutral in their design. Yet, in practice, they increased disparity between Blacks and whites and between white men and white women. In fact, there was no single greater instrument for widening the racial gap in postwar America. The Bill provided for local and state administration with Congressional oversight, which was controlled by Southern congressmen. As a result, Blacks were excluded, rejected, and discouraged from partaking in the benefits of a

generous federal program (Powell 10).

Specifically, in the case *Personnel Administrator of Massachusetts v. Feeney*, the Supreme Court found there was no discrimination because there was no proof of any *explicit conscious desire to exclude* (Powell 10, emphasis added). This ruling has been repeatedly enacted using a façade of neutrality to deny explicit discrimination as I have shown in Why the U. S. is Like Abercrombie & Fitch, where despite a discrimination lawsuit filed by the woman with the prosthetic arm, the tribunal "did not find evidence of direct discrimination, due to the fact that all store employees must adhere to the in-house looks policy dictating appearance" (Donnelly 2009). What this fails to address is that groups of people are differently situated in relation to institutional and policy dynamics and the flaw is not overcome by anti-discrimination policies (Powell 12). As I examined in (Not) Abercrombie and Looking (Un)Patriotic?: The National Allegiance Dress Code Survival Guide, both the Muslim family on the TransAir flight, and the man wearing the "we cannot be silent" t-shirt were taken off the plane because their appearance placed them outside of the nation's look policy creating a security threat despite the official statement by each airline that no threat existed. The argument is often made that "the disfavored group is not being discriminated against in a traditional sense. Instead, their situatedness is the cause of the disadvantage" (Powell 12). The rhetoric used by each airline exemplifies their commitment to keeping certain passengers comfortable, while not acknowledging the distinct connection between discrimination and national security polices.

Many public programs fail to understand the importance of different groups in relation to institutional interactions and processes (Powell 12).

> One of the major assumptions today is that if universal programs focus on an area where a marginalized group is over-represented, such as poverty, then the benefit will disproportionately benefit the marginal group. This would allow race-blind universal policies to do race-sensitive work. This approach is not only favored by policy makers but also by the Supreme Court, which has limited the remedial efforts to those where the harms are most visible. While the idea is intuitively appealing, in fact it is often wrong (Powell 11).

As I noted in Crimes of Fashion, this sense of race as "there but not" that Goldberg asserts coincides with the capability of "contemporary states to [also] assert themselves racially without explicit invocation of racial terms" (Goldberg 119). In other words, the practices of laws are in fact quite racialized, while the language inherent in the law remains raceless. It is imperative that "to fully understand the importance of this situatedness, one must look at what the interaction of institutions does in creating and distributing opportunity" (Powell 12). President Obama reminds us:

> If an internalization of antidiscrimination norms over the past three decades—not to mention basic decency—prevents most whites from consciously acting on [negative racial] stereotypes in their daily interactions with persons of other races, it's unrealistic to believe that these stereotypes don't have some cumulative impact on the often snap decisions of who's hired and who's promoted, on who's arrested and who's prosecuted, on how you feel about the customer who just walked into your store or about the demographics of your children's school (Obama 139).

Obama walks the line between avoiding race and leaving much of the existing racial practices and arrangements undisturbed, or dealing with race and racial resentment that undermine the policies and his electability (Powell 18). According to Powell, Obama implements a targeted universalism approach in order to bridge this gap; I call this Obama's social justice paradigm shift. Powell describes targeted universalism as rejecting:

> a blanket universal which is likely to be indifferent to the reality that different groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society. It also rejects the claim of formal equality that would treat all people the same as a way of denying difference. Any proposal would be evaluated by the outcome, not just the intent (Powell 18).

With his push for universal health care Obama is using a targeted universal approach according to Powell. In his book *Audacity of Hope*, Obama writes:

> We should support programs to eliminate existing health disparities between minorities and whites . . . , but a plan for universal health-care coverage would do more to eliminate health disparities between whites and minorities than any race-specific programs we might design (247).

Conscious of the oppression minorities face, rather than put an emphasis on individualism, Obama places the emphasis on social justice that examines white privilege and racism. However, Obama must position himself to employ "universal policies which are race-sensitive in pursuit of the same end as '*good politics*' that is less likely to arouse the flames of racial resentment" (Powell 19, emphasis added). This is a delicate balance.

In order to impose his social justice agenda, Obama must become more palatable and acceptable to white audiences, as we are not familiar with images of black men who are responsible for being president of the nation. As I argued in Persuasive Acts: Nineteenth-Century Women Public Speakers and the Visuality of Strategic Resistance, it is often necessary to make oneself appear palatable in order to create a strategy for resistance within political and social movements. As women in politics negotiate the fine line between choosing what policy is important to them and what involvement is expected of them, their performance becomes deeply tied to the normative boundaries of gender roles. And should they step outside of those boundaries, they are soon reminded to go back in. As I examined in TransDressing: Clothing Identities in Clarissa Sligh's Exhibit Jake in Transition, visuality is important in Sligh's exhibit where she examines her own subjectivity within the context of Jake's female to male transformation and Ellen Craft's journey.

> As I observe and support Jake in his changes so that his body can pass as a white man, I cannot help but think about the fact that I will never be able to change my brown skin to escape the layer of oppression one experiences from being black in America. Working with and supporting someone whose values and beliefs differ radically from my own is forcing me to face some things about myself that I never wanted to look at. It is the experience that is grounded in my body, the Self-Other conflict that reverberates with the history of the Master-Slave relationship, and its strong resonance within our culture that I continue to explore (Sligh).

Sligh visually notes that "mind/body dualisms are functional parts of current social practices, reinforced by the social punishments lined up for those of us who make some effort to live our raced and sexed bodies reflectively in all their specificity" (McWhorter 157). Sligh bridges historical and contemporary manifestations of power and regulation and reexamines them in the context of her exhibit. I have argued that these examples give shape to our current national identity, what is required by its look policy and what's now required to make headway in the shift between individualism to social justice. Obama continues to negotiate these roles, as "the president is always a symbol of the nation, a representation of the country's self-identity" (Corn 9-21-09).

Labeled as the "new hope" by *Rolling Stone* (March 5, 2008), Obama represents not only structural change, but also community and spiritual renewal. "In analyzing how Obama's ascendancy to the presidency has changed and will change the process of racialization, we should congratulate ourselves. But we should also be deliberate and thoughtful about how to make the most of this important opportunity" (Powell 20). Although Powell states Martin Luther King Jr.'s approach was "race-blind" (3), invoking the need to focus on the content of our character, not the color of our skin, the wisdom of MLK as hooks notes is inherent in the present moment. According to bell hooks,

> to understand the place of compassion and forgiveness in resistance struggle is important for any revolutionary movement. Unless such a movement is guided by profound Love, it will often embody the forces of evil and corruption that it may seek to change. This is why it has been so necessary for black liberation struggle in the United States to have been nurtured by the wisdom of both Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Both men emphasized the power of Love. For King, it was often the love we direct outward to others, even our enemies; for Malcolm, it was the love we extend to ourselves. Authentic spiritual practice is not a naïve experience. It does not lead one away from reality but allows us to accept the real more fully (hooks, *Rapture* 119-120).

The distinct approaches that MLK and Malcolm X embody are inherent in Obama's desire to have "change we can believe in" as a national agenda and know that "yes we can" as individuals. Race matters, but not in the same way as it did forty years ago. If

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we do not change our institutions to reflect our expressed attitude, our attitudes will change to reflect our institutions" (Powell 21). We are still in the process of Dressing Wounds and Healing Justice, as part of a Journey of Individual and National Transformation.

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