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Notes on Contributors

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Donna Culbreth is the founder and CEO of the National Girls and Women of Color Council, Inc., Executive Producer and host of Complexity Talk Radio, Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Colorism Studies*, and managing partner at Culbreth, Jung-Kim & Severino, LLC, USA. Dr Culbreth's projects and research include topics that are complex in nature because she believes that not only dialogues, but initiatives, strategies and programs must be developed to address the plethora of societal ills. She focuses on colorism, racism, identity, racial unity, issues affecting girls and women of color, people of color, and quality education for students of color.

Dannielle Joy Davis is a tenured Associate Professor of Higher Education at Saint Louis University, USA. A graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, she has studied and conducted research in Ghana, South Africa, Senegal, Egypt, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. Her interdisciplinary research examines the experiences of marginalized groups in educational settings, the role of organizational policy and practice in the promotion or inhibition of egalitarian academic and occupational outcomes, and spirituality in the workplace and other learning environments. Dr Davis is the elected Chair of the American Educational Research Association's (AERA's) Spirituality and Education Special Interest Group (SIG) and has served within the leadership of AERA's Qualitative Research SIG. She has published numerous books and over 50 refereed journal articles, book chapters, academic commentaries, volumes, and reviews. Her most recent books are *Specialists: Passions and Careers* and *When All Else Fails: Motherhood During Precarious Times* (both forthcoming in 2017). She is Vice President of Professional Development for the National Girls and Women of Color Council, is a longstanding Leadership Team member with Sisters of the Academy Institute, and serves on the Editorial Review Board for the *Journal of Colorism Studies.*

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Porranee Singpliam is a PhD student at the Graduate School of International Culture and Communication, Waseda University, Japan. She obtained her Master's degree from Waseda University and her Bachelor's from Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. Her research interests lie in gender studies, media representation and nationalism. Currently, she is investigating the interrelations between the conceptualization of Thai femininity and its cultural representations.

Introduction

Welcome to the latest issue of the *IAFOR Journal of Cultural Studies*. Once again, the editorial team was swamped with submissions and it took us a long time to decide which contributions to include. This is always a painful task, as so many worthwhile texts unfortunately cannot be fitted within the confines of a single issue.

Much has happened since the last issue came out. The negative implications of the Brexit vote in Europe have become all the clearer; many people continued to migrate to Europe and many of them tragically died; thousands of our colleagues were fired from their jobs and/or imprisoned in Turkey; and the US elections were held, with an erratic (elected as a) result. But even with all these setbacks, it seems that there is always a way to continue work in and through the cultural arena. This is reminiscent of China Miéville's 2016 novella *The Last Days of New Paris*, in which the spectres of surrealism come alive to fight fascists in the streets of an alternate Paris. Back in our universe, it is encouraging to see that so many individuals and groups of individuals are continuing to do academic and applied work researching social and cultural issues, with the clear aim in mind not only to describe the world but to make it a place more just and liveable for more people.

This issue includes contributions from Qatar, South Korea, Indonesia, Thailand and the United States. It starts out with a mini spotlight on Qatar, with two articles analysing cultural and gender issues in that country. Ahmed Elshenawy's "Globalization's Effect on Qatari Culture" describes the impact globalization, together with changing consumption patterns, has had on Qatar. He interviewed 36 Qatari nationals regarding their lifestyle and feelings about cultural changes in Qatar and comes to the conclusion that, especially for women and the realm of education, globalization has had rather positive effects. On the other hand, indigenous rituals, intra- and inter-family relations and religious practices have all been weakened because of the effects of globalization.

After this general framing of the issues, Mohanalakshmi Rajakumar and Rumsha Shazad's text, "Measuring Qatari Women's Progress through Reactions to Online Behavior", analyses Qatari women's online behaviour against the backdrop of the dichotomy between modernisation and traditional culture in the Arabian context. Their article arose out of a larger study about contemporary marriage practices and attitudes toward partner selection in Qatar and comes to the conclusion that "in a society where family reputation trumps personal preference, social media may be a burgeoning avenue to elide social convention". Clearly an indictment for savvy new media usage!

Frida Rahmita's "The New Order Nationalist Rhetoric: The Articulation of Javanese Identity in Post-Colonial Indonesia" examines the attempt to combine traditional Javanese images of womanhood with a drive towards nationalism under Indonesia's New Order Regime via school textbook images and texts. It delineates how these traditionalist images served the dual purpose of creating a more nationalist country and at the same time keep women from striving for more freedom.

In their "Human Traffic: The Fashionably and Unfashionably Marginalized in the Korean Cultural Context", Dustin Hellberg and Yun Ha Kim set out to criticise how cultural studies' ideology has been privileging the treatment of certain marginalized groups over others in today's South Korea. In an enlightening introduction, they portray how cultural studies came to be embraced by South Korean tertiary education institutions. While this continues to be a

good development, the down side of it was that it also came with the focus on "typical" marginalized groups such as LGBT. What fell under the table, though, was the treatment of local "unfashionable" marginalized groups such as the elderly poor. While not per se faulting cultural studies for merely following international trends, they plead for a more inclusive treatment of marginalization issues, encompassing especially the locally marginalized, which before might not have found entry into a more Western-oriented cultural studies theory and practice.

Porranee Singpliam's "Reversed Realities: National Pride and Visual Coding" examines notions of what "Thai-ness" means by combining two cultural events: the creation of Thailand based on a historical map during the reign of King Mongkut in the second half of the nineteenth century (thereby echoing some of the thoughts from Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*) and the election of Abhasra Hongsakul (aka Pook) as the 1965 Miss Universe. Singpliam argues that both events provided an opportunity to Thais to revisit notions of Thai-ness, but that in each case, there was a reversal to traditional roles, both as subjects to a national regime and as adherents to a traditional female gender role. The innovative and compelling approach of this text lies in the combination of these at-first-sight diverse events and then in using them together to criticize traditionalist and backwards-oriented cultural engineering.

The issue concludes with **"Black Women's and Girls' Return to Joy: Addressing Trauma, Healing and Educational Opportunity"** by Dannielle Joy Davis, Cassandra Chaney, Denise Davis-Maye and Donna Culbreth. This contribution examines ways in which black women and girls can thrive despite finding themselves in traumatic situations. Based on data gleaned from a number of sources such as radio call-in shows, their findings reveal the strength of black women and girls in dealing with such traumata, and even moving beyond "mere" coping with their circumstances towards potential thriving in education and beyond.

The editorial team wishes readers happy and informative reading.

Holger Briel

Editor

Globalization's Effect on Qatari Culture

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Abstract

Qatar has a rich national and cultural identity. Particular customs and traditions characterize the Qatari cultural heritage. Globalization, though, has generated a lot of controversy with regard to the rise of a global culture. Western norms and practices are gradually being transported across the globe and becoming the accepted way of behaviour. The purpose of this article is to examine the effect of globalization on Qatari culture. The sample in this study consisted of (36) participants of Qatari nationality. Employing the focus group interview technique, a semi-structured questionnaire was used as a research method. Participants confirmed that globalization has had a significant effect on the country's culture. From the participants' viewpoints, globalization had a negative impact on religion, family connections, customs, manners and language. One the other hand, there has been a positive impact on the educational system and women's rights.

Keywords: Qatar, globalization, culture, education, values

Introduction

In any of the well-known malls in Qatar, you can recognize Qatari people by their traditional dress, taking lunch at KFC, carrying a cup of Pepsi, sitting in a Starbucks cafe speaking in English and drinking coffee. Downtown, you notice Qatari women in their black *abaya* smoking shisha and their hair flowing out from underneath their veils. All of these phenomena are indications of a huge change in the country's culture. Caesar (2003) stipulates though that the effects of Western-style consumerism are merely superficial among the Gulf citizen locals due to the strong attachments to their cultural and traditional heritage. People carry cell phones and wear jeans and baseball caps without feeling that their culture is threatened because of their strong sense of identity stemming from family and religion. The following study will analyse how true this statement is in the case of Qatar.

The State of Qatar is a small country, but it has a carved out a significant global profile in the past decade. The country is considered one of the wealthiest countries in the world, with a population of only 2,334,029 at the end of February 2015. Qatar's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the highest worldwide at $227 billion, with the largest per capita income per person, $94,744 as of 2015 (Ministry of Planning and Statistics, 2015).

Qatar's traditional culture follows the Arabic heritage, but the country is gradually becoming very westernized. Qatar has always been known for its strong nationalism and sense of regional pride because of its Muslim cultural influences, which are similar to those of other GCC nations like the UAE. Recently, due to hosting the FIFA World Cup 2022, Qatar made large investments in construction, infrastructure and the new Qatar railway. These projects have attracted many foreigners seeking employment opportunities in the country (Seddiqi, 2012).

Generally, globalization became an important issue in the academic world especially after the Soviet Union fell. During the past two decades, globalization expanded with the help of the information and technology revolution. However, globalization has two sides, an optimistic and a pessimistic one. The optimists relate to the concept of the global village, through which knowledge becomes widely available and easy to access. On the other hand, the pessimists relate it to destruction of the environment and local culture (Friday, 2002).

In academic literature on the subject, the majority of researchers discuss globalization from economic and political viewpoints. The cultural methodology of examining global theory has only relatively recently entered this area of study (e.g. Al Khazraji, 2009). Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the effect of globalization on the culture of the Qatari people.

The article at hand examines globalization and its impact on the state of Qatari culture along the following questions: What is the impact of globalization on Qatar Culture? What is the effect of globalization on the Qatari local language, its education system, the local language, religion and values and customs?

The Concept of Globalization

Globalization is a contested concept that evokes a range of images and responses, depending on the context in which it is used and who is using it (Wood, 2008). According to Waters (1995, p.3) globalization is defined as a "social process in which geographic obstacles to social and cultural arrangements lose importance and where people are becoming increasingly aware that they lose importance". From an economic prospective, globalization is defined as the creation

of a "globally integrated economy" characterized by increased international trade, capital, and labour movements of foreign direct investment and global trade, foreign exchange, speculative capital flows which lead to a multination cooperation (Burbules and Torres, 2000). Globalization refers to the increasing interconnectedness of people, products, information, and processes throughout the world and the consequences that arise from such interconnections (Abdul Hadi et al, 2013). Held and McGrew (2003) highlight the importance of technology and identify globalization as "a result of entering the era of information technology and communication revolutions that invade the world in the end of the twentieth century".

According to Heron (2012), globalization has contributed to shifting traditional societies and cultures across the globe. For some societies, globalization means opportunity while in others it means exploitations (Prilleltensky, 2012). GCC countries have similar cultural, values, social and political dimensions. Thus, globalization studies are not focused on one single Gulf country only and the majority of studies are represented as "Gulf studies" (Abdul Hadi et al, 2013).

Culture
Culture has been defined in many different ways depending on the differences in the orientation of people. From a wider perspective, culture includes the "total repertoire of human action which are socially transmitted from generation to generation". Within the same concept, culture is the way of life of a group of people that has been developed, shaped and practiced over many years (Kwame, 2010).

According to Dimmock and Walker (1999), culture is defined as encompassing the values, traditions, customs and way of life which distinguish one group of people from another. Later, Gillespie et al. (2004) identified the culture elements including religion, language, history, and education. On the other hand, Cateora (2005) defined culture by listing five elements (values, rituals, symbols, beliefs and thought processes). Recently, Hollensen (2011) identified values, language, customs, Technology, social institutions, education, religion and aesthetics as the main eight (8) elements that are commonly included in the perception of culture. While there is clearly no consensus on what culture is, all these definitions help to create a constellation of cultural attributes, many of which will find entry into the study below.

Values
Values are consider as one of the important culture elements, and it they differ from individual to individual and from society to society. One of the most important roles of the cultural community members is to keep and maintain their values (Ragab, 2014). Values help to identify what is desirable and what is vital, moreover, its guide people to determine what people think is right or wrong. Values are socially hereditary as they are gained from elders, books and parents, transmitted from one generation to another. When a natural object is imbued with meaning, it becomes a value (Farooq, 2011).

According to Dasgupta (2004), the values of the locals in the state of Qatar have been affected negatively by globalization, for example, in how the holy month of Ramadan has become increasingly commercialized rather than celebrated as a spiritual occasion. On the other hand, Abdul Razk (2011) confirmed that, in Arab societies, globalization has a positive impact on women's rights. Problems many women faced are now addressed, for example, the ability for women to drive a car in the Saudi kingdom. Similarly, Al Khazraji (2009) found that Qatari women expressed a strong desire to select their husband, as opposed to their mothers' generation where arranged marriages between families were still the norm.

Recently, in the state of Qatar, the situation of women has improved. The percentage of full-time housewives has decreased from 69.2% at the end of 2007 to 55% at the end of 2009 (Jakobsen, 2010). Moreover, the number of women as a percentage of the adult labour force in Qatar increased from 4% in 1970 to 12% in 1995. Finally, the author speculates that because of the increased participation of women in education and the workforce, the social status of women, in general, has improved and has begun to move away from the more historically traditional roles, i.e. that the place of women is in the household only.

Customs and Manners
Customs and manners should be carefully monitored to determine exactly what is different among cultures. An example of this element is where "in so-called right-hand cultures (Middle East, amongst others) the left hand is the 'toilet hand' and using it to eat, for example, is considered impolite" (Yalcin and Cimendag, 2012). Furthermore, in Qatar the national dress is very distinct, but it has the same features as all other GCC countries. The national dress of Qatari women consists of an *abaya*, a long black dress-like coat that covers the entire body, and a *hijab/sheyla*, which is a black head cover. Some women also wear a thin black veil hiding their face, and/or gloves. As for Qatari men, they wear the *thobe* (white full-length shirt dress) with a white, or red-and-white checkered, headdress (*gutra*).

In Qatari culture, hospitality is an important feature. The local Qataris receive their male guests separately in a reception area, the *majilis*, where traditionally the guests are seated on large cushions on the floor. Currently, the *majilis* has become a more contemporary living room with the latest technologies, for example, televisions, PlayStations and DVD players, etc. as well as modern furniture (Seddiqi, 2012).

Customs are important. They coordinate everyday interactions and special occasions and they let people know what to expect, as noted by Caterora (2005). People's lives are full of learned and repeated customs, the most obvious associated with major events in life, for example, marriage ceremony or funerals. In the Qatari marriage ceremony, gender segregation still exists, but the style has been affected by globalization. Nowadays a music DJ plays not only Arabic, but also English and Indian and songs at most of these ceremonies. Moreover, all the ceremonies have shifted from homes to luxury hotels.

Education
Education consists of the procedures of transferring ideas, skills, attitudes and training in a particular branch of knowledge. One of the main purposes of education is the dissemination of the existing culture, customs and religion to the new generation (Abdul Razak, 2011; Yalcin and Cimendag, 2012).

In the state of Qatar, the number of students enrolled in public education rose to 136,575 in 2007 compared with 78,343 in 1990 and numbers are still going up today. However, the table belwo displays an increase in the ratio of female students at university level. Moreover, Qataris can take advantage of further education and training opportunities after they have joined a government or government-owned organization. That may be part of the reason why the majority of males reported wanting to seek work first (Salem, 2008). On the other hand, in Qatar a large percentage of women prefer to continue their studies at university level. Women in Qatar do not like to take up employment in the government sector and work with high school degrees only. Their attitudes have been changing and the ambitions have become very high. Moreover, the government universities that are funded and maintained by Qatar (such as Qatar University and the Community College) have played significant roles in the increased

participation of females in higher education. As per university of Qatar statistics at the end of 2014, the graduation figures for Qataris were as shown in Table 1.

	Male	Female
Undergraduates	64	490
Masters	1	15
Diploma	0	4
PhD	0	1
Total	65	510

Table 1: Graduation Figures in Qatar

Several research studies have investigated the effects of globalization on education in Arab countries. According to El Arini (2007), the positive impact of globalization in providing students with high quality knowledge and skills is that they are prepared to compete with those with skills and experience coming from abroad. On the other hand, some educational leaders perceive globalization as a threat to their culture and values (Lieber and Weisberg, 2002). Accordingly, the Higher Education Supreme Council in Qatar licensed numerous foreign colleges and universities, for example, Georgetown and Texas universities, to set up branches in Qatar because of the strong cultural pressure for female students to stay with their families (Al-Khazraji, 2009).

According to Abdul Razak's 2011 study of the impact of globalization on education and culture, educational knowledge available through the internet is being overshadowed by the relentless pounding current of globalization. Thus, the idea of education among society is still available, but the perception and the reason why parents send their children to school has been forgotten due to globalization and modern-day lifestyles. On the other hand, globalization might be a chance for interaction between "national heritage" and "contemporary needs" and an opportunity to be exposed to the global educational system (Bloom, 2004).

However, the question of how educational changes have influenced Qatari culture is still something that requires a brief examination in order to determine the effects globalization has had on this society and culture.

Language
Language is a source of communication and can be described as a reflection of a culture (Yalcin and Cimendag, 2012). Unfortunately, the number of spoken languages continues to decline worldwide (Cateora, 2005). One of the main challenges of globalization is its threat to the national language of the Arab world (Ateyat and Gasaymeh, 2015). Languages crossed official barriers a long time ago. Governments have little or no control over the spread of foreign languages (Al Hassan, 2007). Moreover, information technology, the internet and the communication revolution, much of which was developed in the United States, has made the English language a necessary part of the daily lives of all Arab communities.

The dominance of the English language in higher education has been perceived as a threat to the culture of the Arab countries (Kilani, Dhyat and Abu Odeh, 2007). According to Al Hassan (2007), globalization has had a significant effect on the Arabic language; the "English" language has undergone a complete change to become an item of economic value, due to the constant advertisements from for instance the British Council available in the Arab countries and the availability of international schools and global universities. Consistent with the same

concept, Ateyat and Gasaymeh (2015) note that the English language "should continue to be the language of instruction in medical, engineering and science fields". Most of the textbooks and research journals are in English and it will be difficult to find updated Arabic resources on the Internet.

In Saudi Arabia, a study carried out by Al Muhadib (2006) about the advantages of using the Arabic language in the local universities, revealed that 90% of the participants confirmed that studying the course material in the Arabic language enables faster and deeper understanding compared with studying in English. Moreover, 82% of the respondents declared that using the English language reduced discussion and sharing abilities during lectures. It is very clear then that while there is great global gain in applying English, especially local differentiations, as contained in and expressed by local languages are being lost.

Technology and Media

Technology is seen as one of the initial contributors to globalization, which in turn brings people into closer and more intense contact, making the world "smaller" (Vesajoki, 2002). Technology has been the main reason for popularising the trend of globalization. Indeed, the Internet is widely attributed to be the primary agent in making this world a smaller place and leading to the coinage of such terms as "Global Village" (McLuhan). It is technology that refers to a tangible culture including the aspects that are very clear in the society, for example, computers, television, cars and iPads.

The marketing of television is the best example to address the power of technology in globalization. When the United States introduced black-and-white television, it took more than 15 years to achieve a level of market share in Europe similar to that in the United States. However, the marketing for the colour television and the power of technology reduced the period for similar adoption in Europe to five years (Yalcin and Cimendag, 2012). This makes clear that markets have very much come together of the last decades.

According to Frank (2014), new technologies of communication have had an even more significant impact on culture. The influence of the Internet has been most significant in the way it has transformed the lives of young people. Mobile phones, the Internet, friendship interaction and peer-to-peer relations are increasingly conducted online or through text messaging and social media. Such interactions have had major cultural consequences (Frank, 2014). According to Al Saggaf (2004), the internet and social media have a positive impact on the Saudi Arabian culture. Saudi women have become more open-minded, more confident and the social media in Saudi Arabia create an environment in which they can have "intellectual discussions'. On the other hand, the new social and internet technology have impacted negatively on the individual attitude and the direct interaction within the family (Fahd, 2011)

Social Institutions

Social institutions such as businesses, political institutions and family members influence behaviours in any culture (Yalcin and Cimendag, 2012). Most of globalization research focuses on its economic nature and the implications of this process for markets and nation-states, and other aspects have been ignored (Tarsek, 2010). Thus, in this research, focus lay on the family as the centre of social change. According to Trask (2010), "The relationship between globalization and families, however, is even more profound and complex than economic or political perspectives reveal. Globalization is the critical driving force that is fundamentally restructuring the social order around the world, and families are the centre of this change".

The family in Qatar refers to a group larger than the domestic unit. After marriage, women remain members of their father's lineage but are partially integrated into the lineages of their husbands and children. The Qatari people still have a connection with their families. But this is changing: according to Nadia (2014), the Qatari culture is not like before. Globalization has had a great effect and the connection with family has become very weak; everybody is busy and unable to accept criticisms from family members. Moreover, family visits have been reduced largely to national and religion occasions.

Due to the vast influx of oil wealth into the Gulf countries' communities, local culture has been compromised (Sulayman, 2005). The old city centres and outlying villages have been demolished to make way for modern developments and key infrastructure projects, thereby eliminating the very few physical and visual reminders of cultural architecture and ways of life in the past. Moreover, the skewed ratio of local to foreign populations (as of the end of 2015, 70% of the total population in Qatar are expatriates). This also has led to the abandonment of some traditional values and beliefs, given the influence that foreign populations bring with them from their own cultures (Sulayman, 2005).

The public social institutions in Qatar are trying to preserve local culture by applying several rules and activities. The government built the "Souq Wakif" in downtown. This souk is designed in the old traditional fashion, selling traditional garments and souvenirs. Moreover, the Authority of Culture and Arts in Qatar has exerted much effort to preserve the culture and the country traditions, building three museums focusing on national culture and Islamic history. Also, on an annual basis, the Ministry of Culture holds several ceremonies and festivals related to traditional activities, for example, the 5th Katra Traditional Festival.

Religion
Islam is the predominant religion in Qatar. According to the 2004 census, 77.5% of the population are Sunni Muslim and about 4% Shi'a Muslim; 8.5% are Christian; and 10% are other. Some religious tolerance is granted and foreign nationals are free to affiliate with faiths other than Islam so long as religious duties are carried out in private and do not offend public order or morality. In March 2008, a Roman Catholic church, Our Lady of the Rosary, was consecrated in Doha. No missionaries are allowed in the community. The church has no bells, crosses or other Christian symbols on its exterior or premises. In Qatar, religion is not only a means of communication; it also carries beliefs, values, ideas and customs (Helble, 2008). Religion is not only related to worship, but beliefs and moral conduct are considered main components of the religion; the believer might believe in God, but his/her attitude, own lifestyle and interaction with others might differ greatly from that of others, even if they share the same faith (Hutter, 2005).

Aesthetics
Today, in the Doha Katara district, there is a big theatre where Tango dances are performed. Furthermore, there are several art shows displaying the works of Louise Bourgeois, Takashi Murakami, and Chinese artist Cai Guo-Qiang – nothing like this ever happened before. Qatar has established the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, which is composed of a large number of European musicians and performs a mostly classical European repertoire.

Conversely, traditional folklore dancing is another important aspect of Qatari heritage and culture. The government and social institutions are playing an important part in trying to save and protect Qatari folklore. People are still celebrating National Day in the traditional old way, including traditional music and dancing the *Ardha*, one of the most popular folklore dances

where the dancers carry swords and the one performed at celebrations in Qatar. It is a dance performed to "display the unity and strength of the group and is a display of alliance to the Emir and the society. It combines dance and poetry, with a poet moving back and forth between two lines of singers and dancers" (Siddiqi, 2012). Again, a clash of cultures can be observed and this clash would also be present in the research detailed.

Research Methods

In order to examine the effect of globalization on Qatari culture, 36 participants were selected for interviewing purposes by using the convenience sampling technique. The participants were 20 males and 16 females, aged between 20 and 40 years old.

Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. Fifteen interview questions (see Appendix 1) were constructed to investigate participants' perceptions of the phenomenon of globalization and its effect on Qatari culture. Qualitative data analysis techniques were used to analyse participants' responses. The sets of data thus obtained were organized, themes were identified, and an interpretation undertaken.

Discussion

Based on the respondents' reactions, it is clear that globalization has had a significant impact on Qatari culture. The study revealed that globalization has had a negative impact on the Arabic language, consistent with the findings of Ateyat and Gasaymeh (2015). All participants confirmed that the English language has become common and important in schools and universities. Participant (1) mentioned that, "Everywhere you can see English signs and when you travel, you also need a language to contact people." Participant (4) confirmed that, "in Qatar there are many workers from different countries, so if I don't know English, how do I communicate". Moreover, as a result of technology and social media, participants believe that usage of the English language has become more common and easier in most communication. Eighty percent of the participants confirmed that English should continue to be the language of instruction in the universities and higher education, which is in contrast to the study results of Al Muhadib (2006). One might speculate that the time difference of ten years between the two studies has probably contributed to the difference in results.

When looking at the effect of the globalization on the education system in Qatar, most of the participants believed that globalization has had a positive effect on the educational system. Participants noted as positive that many international universities are now available in Qatar, providing better education and knowledge. This is consistent with the conclusions of El Arini (2007) study. Participant (6) declared that, "it's easy now to select among different universities and take your own decision, rather than traveling abroad to get your higher education". Moreover, 80% of the participants confirmed that the availability of different foreign universities, encourage Qataris to continue their higher education. Participants (7) and (9) confirmed that before "due to the high cost we are unable to travel outside and continue our higher education…".

The interviews findings revealed that globalization has had a negative impact on the Islamic religion: people have become less religious and more interested in the joys of life. According to the participants, technology, the internet and social media have contributed to this trend. Moreover, in Qatar there are more than forty (40) international schools, where religious subjects and related materials are not high on the agenda, which impacts negatively on the level

of Islamic knowledge among the pupils. Participant (30) mentioned that, "in the international schools, my kids are taking only one lesson per week which is not enough". Participant (20) added that, "I have to hire an external teacher to cover the school gap in teaching the religion".

Globalization therefore has had both positive and negative impact on Qatari values and customs. From a positive perspective, there are significant improvements in women's rights, which is consistent with Abdul Razak's findings (2011). Women can now apply and work in all business entities; they have the right to select their husbands and have been elected to join the parliament. On the other hand, there is negative impact as well. For example, family connections have become weaker and family visits have become less frequent than before, which is consistent with the findings of Nadia (2014). The relations with neighbours have been reduced, taking place only during religious and public occasions. Moreover, the *majilis* of homes have become smaller and, according to the participants, soon will disappear completely.

Based on the interviews, the effect of cultural globalization is also very clearly visible in the commercialization of culture. Qatari markets are increasingly bombarded with new images, new music, food, new clothes and new values. The image of the national dress has been affected, becoming more western. Moreover, the Qatari people's consumption behaviour has also changed. According to the participants, they are replacing their personal cars and mobiles on a yearly basis. Most of the participants prefer American and Indian movies, and they listen to English songs. Nowadays, Qatari people are celebrating Valentine's Day and New Year's Eve, which constitutes a huge cultural change. Finally, based on the interviews, 84% of the respondents eat fast foods at least once a week. There is still a local culinary culture, but nowadays, it is much more influenced by Indian spices and tastes. Three-quarters of the participants preferred Indian foods like majboos and biryani; on the other hand, 20% preferred Mediterranean cuisine.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of globalization on Qatari culture. Based on the interview findings, globalization has had a significant impact on the Qatari culture. The conclusions of the study are as follows:

- Globalization has a negative impact on the quality of written and spoken Arabic. English has become dominant among the schools, universities and in daily life communications.
- Globalization has a positive impact on the quality of the education system, the availability of different universities and the quality of education.
- Globalization has a negative impact on the teaching and spreading of Islamic religion among the society.
- Globalization positively affects women's right and economic advancements.
- Globalization negatively affects family connections and neighbors' social connections
- Globalization has a negative impact on the Qatari people values, attitudes and customs.

Globalization has both positive and negative effects on the Qatari culture. As demonstrated above, there are explicit indications that globalization has changed Qatari culture. Higher education levels have become the ruler and the situation of the Qatari women has been improved; but, on the other hand, globalization negatively affects the local language, family connections, values, attitudes and customs.

It is clear that Qatar cannot live in isolation, running away from globalization. The Qatari people will have to find the ability to deal with these new challenges, examine different cultures and choose the most relevant to their needs. The interest of the government in improving the education system is an excellent indication that the country is supporting the same concept – modernization and globalization, while at the same time continuing to support local customs and value systems.

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Appendix 1

Interview Questions

1. What type of channels you are regularly watching on the TV?

2. What kind of language you are using when chatting and talking with friends?

3. What kind of music you prefer? And what kind of movies you prefer?

4. What about your connection with you family, did you visit them on regular basis?

5. What about your opinion on the national dress?

6. What type of restaurants you regularly visit and what kind of foods you prefer?

7. How many mobile do you have? Type? And last time you change it? And why?

8. How many car do you have? Type? And last time you change it? And why?

9. Do you travel abroad and how many time per year?

10. What about your level of education? And do you interest to continue?

11. Did you pray in daily basis? How many chapter from Quran you memorize?

12. How do you spend Ramadan time?

13. Did you prefer to marriage at which age? And the wife/husband you prefer to choose by yourself or through the family?

14. The marriage ceremony will be in hotel or at home? And you will stay in the family house or in a separate house?

15. Did you agree with giving the Saudi women the right to drive her car alone?

Measuring Qatari Women's Progress through Reactions to Online Behavior

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Abstract

The close kinship structure of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries of Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) means that appeasing one's family often supersedes personal aspirations. The family occupies a central space in the life of the individual, one that mimics the state's involvement in the everyday lives of its citizens. Within such a context we need a new framework to understand how women's private choices have sociopolitical implications. Qatari women are ensconced within the political and economic stability of the Arabian Gulf. The Western feminist tropes of activism and advocacy, as have been studied in Egypt and other Arab countries affected by the Arab uprisings of 2011, cannot characterize Qatari women's behavior on social media. Yet the degree to which women present themselves online, using their real names, is a form of agency important to their context. Qatari women also use social media in order to educate themselves about the personalities and activities of potential spouses. Similarly, male Qataris consider certain behaviors as disqualifiers for potential brides. We discuss these trends within the larger context of Qatari society and the dichotomy between modernization and traditional culture in the Arabian context. This article arose out of a larger study about contemporary marriage practices and attitudes toward partner selection in Qatar today. The ways in which both males and females analyze the social media usage of potential partners is an interesting ancillary discussion against the backdrop of larger trends in Qatari society.

Keywords: gender, social media, Arabian Gulf

Introduction

Much of the recent scholarship about Arab women's online identities focuses on their experiences of the uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Syria. In many cases, women used social media to participate in their respective revolutions (Newsom & Lengel, 2012; Stephan, 2013; Guta & Karolak, 2015). Western media lauded them for being transgressive, fighting for political rights, and agitating against entrenched systems. Indeed, the women who joined protests in person and online are to be commended for standing up to dictatorial regimes—many of them at the cost of their personal safety—and subjecting themselves to harassment. Their actions in tweeting, posting, and marching are in line with the rhetoric of Western feminism, which was created in a similar social and political context of public agitation for women's rights. Social media usage during moments of political upheaval may be a starting point for discussions about the empowerment of Egyptian or Libyan women. But this is not a strategy that can be employed wholesale to women of all Middle Eastern countries. Unlike Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, or Syria, the countries of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates have remained unaffected by the social upheaval characterized by the so-called Arab Spring. The placid relationship between the welfare states of rentier monarchies and their comfortable citizens has made revolt unnecessary in the majority of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC). With the notable exception of Bahrain, where ongoing conflict simmers between a ruling Sunni minority and a populist Shia majority, most of the GCC remains unaltered by the regional calls for change.

The political stability and economic prosperity of the GCC countries make it impossible to read female agency in a similar fashion to that of their contemporaries in Egypt or other neighbors. *Khaleeji*, the Arabian Gulf states, concurrently advocate for the maintenance of culture and tradition alongside the benefits of education and technology in diversifying their economy. The advent of petrodollars in the 1970s has funded the development of a range of attendant features of industrialized societies, including advances in tertiary education as well as increased spending power for citizens, but has left the social status quo intact. Allen Fromherz (2012) suggests this might be due to the fact that Qatar and other oil-rich emirates embraced economic development without an accompanying social change.

If we try to examine the women of the GCC alongside their counterparts in the greater Middle East, there is a marked difference in the stability and affluence of their governments, particularly in light of the recent so-called Arab Spring. Until the 1930s, progress for women across the Gulf was relatively comparable. For example, the establishment of girls' schools lagged well behind those of boys across the GCC (Alessa, 2010, p. 232). The initial focus in Gulf studies centered on Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as the first two states to develop their petrodollar economies and consequently their infrastructure. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1996 also raised the profile of the nation worldwide. As discovery of petroleum occurred in other GCC countries, including Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, a stair step of development ignited advancements across the peninsula in different stages. Contemporary life in the GCC—despite its relatively small size—cannot be treated as a monolith.

For example, a natural comparison might be between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, two of the geographically closest GCC countries. Qatari and Saudi societies also share some social similarities based on a shared conservative Sunni interpretation of Islam. Research on Saudi women and the consequences of cultural and traditional infringement on personal agency is well established. Caryle Murphy (2013) describes how young Saudis enjoy conversations and

friendships with opposite-sex friends, but if they were to see each other in public they would keep walking because of the strict codes against mixed-gender friendships with non-relatives. Such is also the case among Qataris, where non-related men and women do not socialize in public.

But when considering how aspiring female drivers in Saudi Arabia have protested, broken the law, and been jailed in their campaign to gain the right to drive, we see no such social upheaval in Qatar. In 2003, for example, 25 women drove in Saudi Arabia, posting videos on YouTube and garnering further public and international support. Female civil disobedience in Saudi Arabia is an important movement toward Arab women gaining their civil liberties, and constitutes a growing area for current and ongoing research. In 2011, more than 60 women joined together to protest the driving ban by driving themselves in their cities, and the then king responded by promising women the right to vote. Qatari women have had the legal right to drive since 1997; however, their family's opinions regarding the appropriateness of women driving unchaperoned (this can include input from fathers, brothers, or husbands) influences their decision about whether or not to make use of this right.

How then can we measure Qatari women's social progress if not by overt demonstrations and use of social media as grassroots publicity? We raise this question as Gulf Studies moves forward as a field from an initial focus on Kuwait, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia into more specialized studies to understand the contexts of each emirate as well as the differences between them as the means of creating more nuanced arguments about modernity and identity. In this article, we contribute to the growing body of work about Qatari women. Keeping in mind this is a highly niche area of focus, when possible and relevant, we will offer comparison to their counterparts vis-à-vis the other GCC countries.

This article arose out of a larger original project in which we explored whether the rise in popularity of Western-style tertiary education among Qatari men and women affected the traditional marriage process. The initial multifaceted research agenda included an online survey, focus groups, individual interviews, and the collection of archival materials, including marriage contracts. This four-prong approach allowed us to create a cross-sectional understanding by which to assess the practices, attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs of the Qatari population in relation to attitudes about the ideal bride or groom. In our interviews with both men and women, there emerged a repeated theme of how traditional reputational monitoring—asking others about a prospective bride or groom's reputation—was translating into monitoring the online behavior of one's potential partner. For Qatari men, a woman's online persona is an extension of her real life; the same rules apply. For Qatari women, however, who are not allowed to socialize with non-*mahram*, or men from her immediately family, a potential spouse's online persona is a window into his identity that she may not otherwise access during the engagement process.

This article will situate Qatari women's use of social media by first providing the social context within which female citizens' actions are judged. In what ways can we measure *khaleeji* women's presence in the digital world if they are not responding to specific social or political causes? To what extent are other forms of personal agency exercised online in their everyday uses of social media? How and why do women of the GCC use social media if they are not engaged in civil unrest? We answer these questions by drawing from several examples of public discourse as case studies in which thousands of citizens and residents debated on Facebook and Twitter what constitutes appropriate Qatari women's behavior. These incidents, in which a few Qatari women are singled out for public shaming, or defended for exercising

their autonomy, exemplify the ways in which personal, everyday choices reveal the engendered social structure of one's society (Hanisch, 1969).

Secondly, in light of the public, ongoing conversation about appropriate Qatari women's behavior, we discuss how public behavior informs Qatari men and women' selection of marriage partners in our mixed methods study on contemporary marriage practices. Our respondents were students attending one of the many tertiary institutions across Qatar, ranging from coeducational American universities in Education City to the gender-divided campuses of Qatar University and the Community College of Qatar. The range of institutions reflects a broad socioeconomic demographic of men and women of diverse ages, marital statuses, and educational backgrounds. In order to tease out specific changes in Qatari social mores, we expanded on an initial online questionnaire with 15 in-person focus groups, consisting of 3–30 female participants, and 6 in-depth one-to-one interviews for a total of 350 female participants. Within the female data set, 52% were neither married nor engaged. We also interviewed 100 Qatari males in 10 in-person focus groups consisting of 5–25 participants. The disproportionate number of men is due to the fact that there are fewer men in university classrooms in Qatar overall. The 2014 Qatar Social Statistics Report states that 60% of graduates every year are women (Ministry of Development and Planning Statistics, 2014). *World Education News & Reviews* (Clark, 2013) attributes the disproportionate representation of female undergraduate students within the country to limitations on unchaperoned female mobility: "While female students represent 68% of the tertiary student body in Qatar and over 75% of the student body at Qatar University, a much higher percentage of male students are abroad studying than female students." All interviews and focus groups were conducted in English, given that this was the language used within the university setting and the primary language of the research team.

Qatari Women and Progress

Within the tight kinship structure of tribal Gulf societies, one's actions affect not only one's personal ethos but also the family's reputation (Joseph, 2000). Therefore, family identity often supersedes the wishes of the individual members. What Ahmed Kanna (2011) calls "neoorthodox" explains how the role of the family is to protect and promote "authentic national culture" (p. 109). Unlike youth in other countries, most noticeably America, Qatari university and high school students operate within the boundaries of their real-world relationships, even in their online personas. Much of Qatari society, regardless of age, evaluates the appropriateness of their peers' online behaviors through the conservative moral code applied to women's roles in society. The shielding of non-relative males and females from one another is enforced socially and structurally in much of the GCC, and the practice is evident on every Qatari street (Tetreault and al-Mughni, 1995; Mernissi, 1992) and in the boundary walls that enclose every Qatari home. This is also true of Qatari women, most of whom wear some form of *hijab* and are protected from the gaze of the passerby. In the more crowded neighborhoods, families attach partitions to the top of their boundary walls to ensure complete privacy and to prevent any accidental gazes from the family next door (M. Al Subaiey, personal communication, February 2010).

As a part of a thriving patriarchy, Qatari women, along with most female citizens in the GCC, are under the legal guardianship of their fathers, husbands, and, in the case of widows or orphans, their brothers (Murphy, 2013). This means that men are favored in inheritance law as well as more subtle forms of sexism—including higher wages and eligibility for housing allowances that working women are excluded from because the religious and cultural expectation is that a wife's salary "is for her" whereas the husband is socially and religiously

obligated to provide for the household. Within such a framework, the Qatari woman's need for agency is first within the home because the family is a microcosm of the male-dominated monarchy.

The most measurable advances for women is the incremental rise of the age of marriage for women. This is most clearly seen when we compared the age and marital status of current female university students with those of their mothers and grandmothers. Nearly half of the paternal and maternal grandmothers of respondents in our study had been married by the age of 18. This is compared to the fact that the majority of their mothers were between the ages of 18 and 24 when they were married. Within one generation, the age of marriage rose among Qatari women. Across three generations, we found that the "magic number" (as many of our participants referred to it) by which a woman needs to be married rose from 14 in the grandmother's generation to 18 in the mother's generation to 25 in the respondent's generation. Younger respondents, in the 18- to 21-year-old category, are significantly more likely to be unmarried; this is a major shift in trends compared with the ages at which their grandmothers and mothers were married. Overall, there is a higher enrollment of Qatari women in post-secondary institutions, as indicated by participants in our focus groups. However, the necessity of marriage persists, as evidenced by the fact the majority of women over the age of 25 in our sample were married.

It Began with Television

The hypervigilant nature of Qatari society toward women's behavior is enforced both in person and online. Consternation about the relaxing of strict codes of female behavior is expressed by all ages of Qatari society, including this first-year male university student: "For instance, many Qatari women use every chance they get to not wear the *shaila* that covers up their hair, and the main reason for that might be TV, media, social media, but it is definitely the influence of people outside of their region" (Al Nuami, 2015, p. 1). This student expresses dismay about women's changing dress and behavior. Exposure to Western media, beginning with images in television and films, causes women to neglect their modest customs. Al Nuami's concern about the connection of social media and a loss of female modesty is echoed in one of Caryle Murphy's Saudi Arabian participants. A young woman recounts a similar disappointment that some Saudi women take off their face veils and headscarves as soon as they board planes heading out of the kingdom: "I think they are affected by Western media" (4). A loss of religious piety is also among the neoorthodoxic concerns described by Kanna in Dubai (2011).

Insistence that Qatari women conform to specific modes of dress emerged in a public backlash against a group of young female volunteers who appeared on camera without their veils or *abayas* (traditional black robes) while building a school in the Brazilian Amazon. The program was funded as a corporate social responsibility project by Vodafone Qatar, the joint venture of global telecommunication outlet Vodafone and the Qatari government. Qatar Firsts was to be an ongoing campaign to showcase Qatari youth volunteerism, beginning with My First Amazon Adventure. Seven Qataris, three men and four women aged 19 to 24, were selected to travel through the wilderness of the Amazon to help build a remote school. When the trip's first update video was released on the corporate Facebook page, however, Qataris overlooked the team's altruism, citing the female participants' lack of *hijab*, or veil over their hair, as shameful, not only to the women themselves but also to the nation as a whole.

Using the Arabic Twitter hashtag ‫فودافون_تسيء_لأ‬ ‫في‬ ‫قطر‬# (which translates to "Vodafone insults the people of Qatar") Qatari men and women decried the group's ability to represent

Qatar and Qatari values (Windrum, 2014a). Chief among the concerns was the lack of traditional clothing and veiling worn by the female participants: "To hell with marketing that is done at the expense of our values and the teachings of our religion," said one user (Al Khuleifi, 2014). Others who tried to temper the conversation called on families to police the women's behavior: "Even if the women in the video are Qatari, they have parents who can set them straight. Leave people alone," commented another (Al Yafee, 2014). Others were not so neutral in their opinions about the families of the participants. "People are saying that my sisters won't get married," said one of the participants' brother. "They are preaching against my family in the mosque, saying they should never have been allowed to go."

The fact unmarried men and women were traveling together raised an associated list of concerns, specifically about the young female participants. The online debate revealed the degree to which Qatari women's everyday choices are read as emblematic of the communal culture: "To organize such a gender-mixed trip that is not in keeping with our conservative society is indeed an insult to the people of Qatar," tweeted another (Al Mohannadi, 2014). The discussion escalated until Vodafone Qatar pulled their support and liability incursion of the trip within a few days of the social media outcry. A company statement reveals the degree to which public platforms permit the scrutiny of Qatari women's behavior:

> This decision to completely withdraw from this project and cease all kinds of support to it reflects our Chairman H.E. Sheikh Dr. Khalid Bin Thani Al Thani's commitment to seeing Vodafone Qatar providing the best services and initiatives that are suitable to the norms and values of the Qatari culture.
>
> We will have no responsibility of this initiative from here on in. This initiative will now be the sole responsibility of the production company overseeing the project. (Windrum, 2014b)

The trip continued, as Vodafone Qatar completed their funding obligation, and the participants were supported by their families, which notably included their brothers. Mediadante, the production company, took on liability for personal injuries. As a result of the outcry, several members of the public who disagreed with the conservative views created their own hashtag (#istandwithqatarfirsts) to encourage the team while they were away.

Such a controversy over the behavior of four young women demonstrates the entrenchment of gender and social codes to which the majority of Qatari society subscribes. The reaction to the Amazon Adventures is an example of the unevenness of modern traditionalism (Harkness & Khaled, 2014), which is the degree to which individuals manage the connections between their conventional and contemporary values (p. 591). Modern traditionalism helps explain why the Qatari public feels they can censure online content about and by female Qataris.

Let us contrast the experience of the Amazon Adventures in 2014 with the televised interview of Maryam al Suabiey on *Hadath al Yawm*, an Arabic program aired on French television, two years later in 2016. The topic was "How a Qatari Woman Views Herself," and Ms. Al Suabiey's replies centered on women's independence and accomplishments, despite the persistence of patriarchy. For some of the viewers at home, in Doha, the fact she was not wearing a veil did not go unnoticed: "If education leads to disobeying God's orders it's no good. I'm not honoured by this woman," tweeted one woman (Um Abdulla, 2016). Others came to her defense, including bloggers and university students, calling attention to the ironies of such fault finding: "A Qatari entrepreneur appeared on television and all we noticed was her

hair" (Al Bawaba, 2016). The public exchange in this instance was much more measured than in the case of the Amazon Adventurers, with rumors circulating that someone from the Emiri Diwan, the seat of Qatari government, had called to thank Ms. Al Suabiey for her positive portrayal of Qatari women. We see in this second example another instance where modern traditionalism and progressives clash over the proper behavior (i.e., attire) for Qatari women in public. For the purposes of our study, we expand the idea of modern traditionalism to also include the degree to which women adapt online spaces for their own ends yet maintain social conventions.

We will now discuss other tangible ways of measuring changing social mores about women's behavior in Qatari society, as discovered during our study of contemporary marriage practices. What role does reputation monitoring play in spousal screening? Has social media changed the way couples assess potential marriage partners? Two generations ago there was little formal education for women in Qatar, and they relied on their families to make good marital matches. Modern young Qatari women have a wide range of educational choices and options by which they form their own opinions about prospective husbands.

Modernity and Qatari Women

As we gathered data about Qatari women, education, and contemporary marital practices, we discovered that social media gives these otherwise restricted women access to knowledge about male behavior in public arenas that they would not be able to witness themselves. Such access then allows them to make informed personal choices about their selection of partners. This type of agency among young unmarried females is revolutionary within the context of their tribal, patriarchal society.

Our participants' responses led us to a second and more focused look at how social media usage confirms and challenges gender norms for Qatari women. During focus group sessions, university-age participants mentioned the way social media accounts allowed them to form their own opinions of potential spouses. Even as parents and other relatives were asking close friends about the reputation of the prospective groom, young women declared they were checking his Instagram posts to discover for themselves what kind of man he was. Once we realized the degree to which potential partners could inform themselves about one another through social media, we expanded our original questions to include the extent to which women and men consulted social media as part of the partner-screening process.

Qatari women are well aware of the disconnections between tradition and modernity as applied to traditional gender roles. The articulation of the tensions between personal ambitions and familial obligations are felt even by university students, as this first-year journalism major explains:

> A woman in Qatar is expected to weigh both the social and domestic sphere equally, to appease her own aspirations, society and her family, which are often in conflict. The government encourages women to further pursue their studies, offering great opportunities in and outside of Qatar, while the dynamic and expectations of Qatari families haven't changed as drastically … women are still expected to get married and raise a family of their own. (Al Attiyah, 2015, p. 1)

Previous research shows that Qatari women are constrained in the creation of their social media profiles by social conventions applied to their lives offline (Rajakumar, 2012, Faceless

Facebook; League & Chalmers, 2010; Vieweg & Hodges, 2016). While some might view the lack of personal photos, one of the salient features of the popular application Instagram, as contradictory to the purpose of being online, we argue, along with Vieweg and Hodges, that making deliberate choices about one's online content allows users to "repurpose them in ways that fit within their lifestyle and ethos" (p. 1).

Our research, and that of others working in Qatar, indicates Qatari women prefer to use accounts that include their real names (Rajakumar, 2012, Faceless Facebook; Vieweg & Hodges, 2015). Taking such a public stance can be both empowering – the female user is online under her own name—but also limiting, since now anyone she knows can censure her for inappropriate behavior. It is these tensions that Qatari women are constantly balancing.

There are other significant differences between these seemingly similar populations: Qatari women have had the legal right to drive since 1996, though many use drivers because of familial preference. Qatari women have access to coeducational classrooms from primary school to university as well as mixed-gender workplaces. Again, some families choose single-gender schools for their daughters. Many couples stipulate post-marital working conditions in the engagement process. The important fact is that should a Qatari woman, with her family's consent, choose to exercise her options, she may do so.

Methodology

As part of the larger study, we conducted an online survey with males and females to glean demographic information about participants' educational levels and marital status in comparison to that of their parents and grandparents. We then invited survey respondents to discuss their views on the changes in the engagement process in an interview or focus group setting. During many of these focus groups, the use of social media by potential partners emerged as a common theme. Both Qatari men and women acknowledged that social media was an additional source of information through which to evaluate a prospective bride or groom. Yet their approaches and weighing of online behavior varied significantly depending on gender and age.

Our team also collected and analyzed 63 marriage contracts from a broad range of Qatari families as archival evidence reflecting changing bridal expectations. These contracts were translated from Arabic to English. In comparing the survey responses with the focus group discussion and marriage contracts, we constructed a picture of how educated Qatari women are balancing the demands of modern and traditional roles. We did so to capture the changing social landscape and the impact these shifts are having on traditional Qatari institutions, namely marriage.

Men, Women, and Social Media

When asked to what degree men would consult social media in order to form impressions about prospective brides, an older married male student said, "I wouldn't rely on this [social media activity] …. After all, she can change if she wants to. It's better to ask people, they will know the truth." The reliance on personal networks to seek information about women's reputations was the preferred method of the older generation. This comment was consistent with other respondents over the age of thirty in our sample, most of whom were married with at least one child. However, female university students referred directly to social media as a means of screening potential suitors:

> Interviewer: Through social media, would you go and look him up on Twitter or Facebook, Instagram?

> Participant 3: I actually did that once, but he wasn't interested in social media. I just wanted to know more about him. (Rajakumar, personal communication, August 14, 2015)

Our female participants indicated that assessing the followers of an account was as important as the content the user was sharing. "I would look to see who is commenting on his posts," a female university student said. "Is it all girls?" (Rajakumar, personal communication, August 14, 2015). Most respondents saw a large female followership as inappropriate because in a society that maintains gender segregation after puberty, it indicates a man who craves female attention. Women cited their concerns about a man's lack of trustworthiness, and viewed extensive contact with other women as indicative of a propensity for affairs. In a polygamous society, worries about infidelity or their spouses finding new partners is a consistent theme for women.

Women were also screening the content posted by the men who proposed. "Flashy cars are a big no," a first-year female university said. There was considerable agreement among the other participants of this particular group that the car he drives is a symbol of the groom's personality and level of maturity. The flashier the color of a man's vehicle, including neon and pastels, the more likely he was associated with a host of playboy traits that would not ensure a successful marriage. These included cruising the city late at night with his friends and driving around densely populated areas like shopping malls to attract the attention of girls. Other males also view such activity negatively. "They [men who drive brightly colored cars] are pimping themselves," explained a male interviewee in the short film *Doha Driving* (Rajakumar, 2012). Analyzing a male's social media profile and postings allows women to form their own character studies of prospective partners. The asynchronous nature of social media allows women to do this in a culturally acceptable manner—from the privacy of their own homes. They use new media technologies as an additional layer of information in determining their fit with the lifestyle of a suitor. Being equipped with more knowledge about their potential partner empowers them to say no and perhaps persuade family members who might otherwise be inclined to accept the groom.

Men, however, gleaned a different set of information from the online activity of prospective brides. "Maybe [I'll do] some basic investigation online. Because in the end she definitely has a public profile online. If that public profile is very inappropriate then definitely she's not the one," said a young unmarried male professional. In our discussions, the male participants were in agreement about the type of content that would dissuade them from pursuing a proposal: "If she posts a picture of her face, that's a big red flag," said a male university student. This idea was greeted with many nods and echoed by others in our groups. The idea that a woman would post a photo of her face, in a selfie or with others, is the ultimate sign of indiscretion and defies the strict social conventions about women's behavior. Others indicated they would exercise their privilege as fiancées: "It doesn't matter what she has up. It's all going to change," said one male college student with a laugh. This was met by sheepish grins around the room.

What was interesting to discover is that while men had hard-and-fast opinions about their brides, the role to which they influenced the other women in their family varied greatly. For example, one first-year university student explained that her actions were less than favorable in her brother's eyes, but he wouldn't address it with her: "I post photos of my fingernails with nail polish. My brother doesn't like it but he feels it is my father's place to correct me. So he

lets me do it" (Rajakumar, personal interview, 2015). We did not speak to fathers with teenage (or older) female children for this study, but clearly further study on the role of the father's influence and permissiveness is important.

What varied among the men was the indication that some were beginning to overlook such transgressions if the disapproved content was removed as the relationship progressed: "Maybe some will say okay now that everything's gone, they'll turn an eye . . . to say 'okay, fair enough, everything's been removed, everything's been deleted'" (Rajakumar, personal communication, April 2014). A "forgive and forget" attitude signals a more flexible approach to women's online behavior than has been previously seen in studies on Qatari society. However, the insistence that an error is a permanent blemish was also shared: "Then again some people say once it's up, it's up." Unlike our female participants, the men were not in agreement about the extent to which a woman's social media profile was an indication of her personality.

Our focus group participants referred to a fairly conventional use of social media: strangers were checking in on various platforms to see the types of content and behavior posted by a person of interest. Participants did not disclose any of the clandestine behavior discussed by Ansari and Klinenberg (2015) in their chapter on dating in Qatar. The authors describe Qataris as "using technology to flout these repressive rules" (p. 600). Some of the responses from his sample, comprising two Qatari female interviewees questioned over video, perhaps do not resonate with ours, because they are by necessity more modern in their outlook by participating in a commercial project with a male interviewer, a set of circumstances that most Qatari women would eschew because of impropriety. Many female students at the Qatar Foundation campuses, for example, tape a piece of paper over the built-in camera of their laptops "just in case" someone happens to have taken over control of their machine and is watching them without their permission (M. Al Darwish, personal communication, December 2013). Their observations that Qataris are "a photophobic society" . . . resonate with the experiences discussed by our participants: "People don't want any record of themselves in public. Especially when people are out in clubs or malls. Their families could get very upset." Another of Ansari's subjects describes Qataris "using the Internet to organize small private parties in hotel rooms" (p. 604). That this subculture exists is likely true for a subset of the elite members of society who have a greater degree of freedom and have the disposable income to organize parties in the international hotels around the city. Such usage of digital technology and their social implications are among many topics that deserve further study.

Women, Media, and Choice

For Qatari women, who are expected to fulfill the twin goals of marriage and motherhood, screening potential suitors is directly related to the degree that she will be able to exercise her personal choices about pursuing an education and a professional career. Social media provides an additional way through which women can form their own opinions about prospective grooms apart from the advice and information they are given by parents or other relatives. A prospective partner's online profile allows the Qatari woman to survey a suitor's actions and personality in a way that she would not be allowed to do in person in a gender-segregated society. Ansari suggests that "social media is giving people in Qatar and in the United Arab Emirates more new ways to meet and express themselves" (p. 606). We stumbled on the uniqueness of this topic while setting out to study other trends, and were surprised to find how interrelated tradition and modernity are in Qatari society. The focus of our questions was Facebook and Twitter; this is a rich field for further investigation, which also includes Instagram and the now popular Snapchat. Ansari's informants suggest "guys sometimes get

photos of girls [through Snapchat screengrabs] that would dishonor them and then use that to extract things from them" (p. 606). Such behavior is in keeping with the policing of female-generated content that our participants also discussed.

Backed by culture and religion, Qatari men enjoy a place of privilege further entrenched by social media. They can censure women's behavior, online or otherwise, through social media channels like Twitter and garner support for their conservative views. Until brothers and fathers, some of whom we discussed in this study, are more supportive, Qatari women's adverse choices, both online and offline, will continue to have far-reaching consequences.

In a society where family reputation trumps personal preference, social media may be a burgeoning avenue to elide social convention. As women utilize new ways to inform themselves about their suitors, many other factors are at work in the success or termination of a marriage. We need further studies about women in the GCC that complicate notions of empowerment in both the political and social arenas, both online and in real life. The established body of work about Kuwaiti and Saudi women can be expanded to include the second wave of modernization in the Arabian Gulf, Emirati and Qatari societies. In so doing we create a more nuanced understanding of diversity in the GCC countries and a more accurate picture of non-western feminism on the Gulf Peninsula.

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The New Order Nationalist Rhetoric:
The Articulation of Javanese Identity in Post-Colonial Indonesia

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Abstract

The article seeks to find evidence that Indonesians perception of 'the west' is still continue to be informed by the past 'nationalist' rhetoric of the New Order government. Ever since Indonesia's second president, Soeharto, the state government has raised awareness of 'the West's' cultural paradigm by using dogmatic virtues of female sexuality and 'westernization'. The article employs scholarly archives in the form of school textbooks in order to critically trace the tensions between nationalism and what is perceived as 'western' culture, as well as its effect on gender and sexuality norms in Indonesia.

Keywords: gender, sexuality, Indonesia, school textbooks

Introduction

The paper will trace the long-term effect of the Indonesian New Order reconstruction of national identity within the representation of gender and sexuality. It will focus on how the New Order nationalist rhetoric of gender politics and Javanese values have been used by the state government to spread its policies.

Under Indonesia's second president, Soeharto, the state government introduced the term *kebarat-baratan* (westernization). *Kebarat-baratan* is viewed as an articulation of corrupting influences from western social norms, such as pre- or extra-marital sex and alcohol consumption. Pre-marital sex, among young people in particular, is often being cited as stemming from western influences of *pergaulan bebas Barat* (free socializing). The term has been preserved and popularized by media presentation in films and on the internet (Webster, 2010, p. 2).

Keeping in mind that *kebarat-baratan* is mostly used to oppose openness on sexuality and pre-marital sex, the nationalist construction of womanhood evidently continues to play a central role in the re-construction of gender and sexuality in post New Order Indonesia, since it was part of the New Order nationalist rhetoric to remind women for their *kodrat* (inherent nature) as a motherly, obedient wife.

That gendered discourses used to be at the center of Indonesian nationalist identity can be seen from the portrayals of female protagonists on television drama (Webster, p. 41). Famous television dramas at the time such as, *Losmen* (Motel) and *Jendela Rumah Kita* (Our House Window), featured female protagonists skilled in taking care of their households. Dating, intimacy, sex, love, marriage and romantic relationships scenes are handled 'safely' and only then presented by Indonesian channels.

State government construction of gender-specific ideology went as far as imposing regulations that internalized the explicit roles of women and men in a form of Marriage Law No. 1/1974 (Kusaeni, 2010). Article 34 states: "The husband is responsible for protecting his wife and providing basic needs for his household". Moreover, Article 34 (2) states: "[…] the wife is responsible for taking good care of the household."

This study argues that state intervention in the household life of its citizen has significant impact on the re-construction of gender, sexuality and feminism as part of 'western products'. The post-New Order era, the short-lived celebration of women's movement that had been established by former President Abdurrahman Wahid, ended in 2005, when President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won his first Presidential term.

The year was marked with the introduction of the Pornography Bill. Since then, Indonesians have witnessed an ongoing struggle between conservative and progressive groups. One of the examples is when *Playboy Indonesia* hit newsstands in 2006. Irrespective of how one feels about this publication, freedom of press issues were at stake, and members of the hardline Islamic Defenders Front repeatedly attacked the magazine's editorial offices and filed a criminal complaint against Arnada, the magazine's editor, who was then sentenced to two years in prison. Islamic Defenders Front claimed that *Playboy Indonesia*, a magazine franchise of the US *Playboy*, is linked to western imperialism and decadence.

But this was only a symptom of what the government wanted to do. In order to evaluate this situation further, this study will underline the importance of understanding local 'nationalist' discourses behind the New Order politics for a feminist, Indonesian Studies program that will provide ethnographically informed alternatives to the common explanation of gender politics.

The study argues that the reinforcing of the systems put in place by those once in power is still ongoing today, and that the following questions need to be answered: Are notions of gender and sexuality in Indonesia still influenced by the New Order's gender politics? And if yes, how?

Methodology

A qualitative method was chosen in order to produce a well-rounded understanding of the present situation on the basis of rich, contextual, and detailed data (Mason, 1996, p. 4). On account of many discursive forms of gendered nationalism of *Ibu Kita Kartini* (Our Mother Kartini), the study employs discourse analytical approaches in the analysis of school textbooks and Kartini's letters as the study's primary source.

As the study seeks to demonstrate that normative rendition of national identity on gender and sexuality still exist in terms of colonial discourse, it is this 'othering' and media representations that enforce it that will be analyzed. The study employs Judith Butler's perspective in framing the evolving notions of gender, tradition and nationalism.

Gender and Culture within Cultural Studies Framework

The cultural studies framework highlights culture as a key concept for understanding features of our contemporary historical situation (Dahlgren, 1997, p.53). Cultural studies look further at the media as a powerful tool in meaning-making process and examine the media for their relations with people and with structures of power. They particularly look at how media create meanings and how these meanings are reproduced, negotiated, and struggled over in the flow and flux of everyday life (Murdock, 1995, p. 94).

Thereby the media are viewed as a driving force that reinforce or undermine dominant ideologies. Ideology is a key concept which assists us in understanding the manner in which the stereotypes that surround gender are established. According to Thompson (1984), ideologies can be regarded as a 'system of thought', 'system of beliefs', or 'symbolic systems' which pertain to social action or political practice. Ideologies as meaning, having been created through constant representation, are one of the keys to understand what over-arching systems of thought inform us and are maintained by those in power.

Judith Butler offers a relevant perspective on gender and culture when she specifically turns her attention to the production of selves as effects (Butler, 1999, p. 1). As gender is culturally constructed, Butler argues that gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. Gender cannot be separated from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained (p. 5). Therefore, gender is a performance of what one assumes to be the characteristics of one's sex, which is prescribed by one's political and cultural intersections (p. 10).

The above definitions particularly emphasize the use of meaning-making to enforce and advance the interests of those in power. The presumption that the penetration of media can

shape identities and behavior, led the state government to use the media as a medium to spread its policies.

In the following I will focus on how the nationalist rhetoric influences many Indonesians' dogmatic conception of gender and sexuality. I will initially discuss the nationalist rhetoric of gender politics by the New Order government, followed by its impact on gender construction and sexuality as a model of 'westernization'.

Masculine Militarism

Many theorists of nationalism have noted the tendency of nationalists to liken the nation to a family with its male headed household in which both men and women have 'natural' roles to play (McClintock, 1991). Indonesian nationalism during the New Order is a case in point.

The New Order government famously created and enforced stereotypes of national identity. The regime's security and social political functions have included monitoring social and political developments at national and local levels; providing personnel for important government departments and state enterprises; censoring the media and monitoring dissidents. An imagined tradition of patriarchal family life is the center of gender-specific model of political authority of Indonesia under Soeharto.

Joane Nagel observed how the micro-culture of masculinity in everyday life articulates the demands of nationalism, particularly on the militaristic side (1988, p. 244). The film *G 30S/PKI* highlights Soeharto's regime's preference of masculine militarism. From 1984 to the early 2000s, Indonesian state television TVRI annually aired the film *Pengkhianatan G 30S/PKI* (The 30th September Treason) that presents the suffering of military generals victimized by the Indonesian Communist Party. The film was made to embolden Soeharto's heroism in preventing the 30th September coup (Paramaditha, 2007). Paramaditha convincingly argues that nationalism in Indonesia during the New Order period was therefore defined within the framework of masculine militarism.

Competition over meaning among groups is referred to as the 'politics of representation' (Shapiro, 1988). In the chapter, "Chinese Indonesians in Public Culture: Ethnic Identities and Erasure", Indonesian scholar Ariel Heryanto states that the politics of representation have been central to the rise of modern authoritarianism in Indonesia. Popular culture often conveys political messages, and this is also true the other way around (Heryanto, 2008). Through the re-construction of the 30th September coup, Soeharto established the ideal (heroic) father figure and introduced the culture of Father-ism in Indonesian politics (Shiraishi, 2001, p. 51-78). Soeharto personified himself as a "father" figure who demands his 'children' to obey everything he wishes for (Shiraishi, p. 194). On that account, Indonesian gender ideology emphasizes men as community leaders, decision makers and mediators with the outside world. Furthermore, the state introduced five familial principles of *asas kekeluargaan* (family virtues). *Asas kekeluargaan* underlines the importance of collective values above individual good, and view leadership as the 'natural authority' of the father and of men in general (Kusaeni, 2010).

Chastity and Fecundity Values behind the New Order Nationalist Rhetoric

But nationalism doesn't stop with men. Nationalists often have a special interest in attempting to regulate sexuality and sexual behavior of women (Koonz, 1987). Women's purity as exalted mothers in the fatherland must be impeccable. Since women are thought by traditionalists to

embody family and national honor, since women's shame is family's shame, the nation's shame, and their husband's shame. Portrayals of women in state-produces media products during the Soeharto years were often stereotypical; they were mostly portrayed as sexually shy and passive in the domestic sphere, while catering to their husband and taking care of the children.

Julia Suryakusuma introduced the concept of *ibuism*, a conservative, government-sponsored definition of womanhood, (2004, p. 167) in order to discusses the underlying ideology that is used to legitimize the containment of women. *Keibuan* (motherly) are maternal qualities of the traditional role of women and the concept underlines womanhood as a pillar of the nation. Consequently, the state ideology of *ibuism* is a feudalistic, hierarchical structure, in which the democratic process is non-existent and social status becomes the primary orientation. Yulianto (2010) claims the hegemony of *ibuism* was purposely introduced to retain women in domestic and familial duties and managed to avoid women's involvement in public spheres.

School textbooks are set to influence young girls' idea about traditional feminine values that a true Indonesian woman must uphold: being a devoted wife and a family woman. Moreover, school textbooks are also enshrined with the discourse of *Ibu Pertiwi* (mother nation). According to Shiraishi (2001, p. 131), by referring to the state as *Ibu Pertiwi*, the New Order government symbolizes itself as a legal guardian of a mother nation.

Portrayals of women in state-produces media products and school textbooks are in line with Judith Butler's intersectional gender theory that links 'gender' to 'nation' and ideas of womanhood to the state. Thereby, 'nationalism' is articulated by the state as a form of citizens being required to perform as obedient children to their mother. In other words, to be a good citizen means: be obedient, show solidarity, and do not question the motifs behind 'the parents' instruction (Shiraishi, p. 131).

Javanese Values

The former president Soeharto came to power as the leader of an anti-communist and nationalist army, and he made the military the major force behind the New Order. Sarsito (2006) argues that, by emphasizing his self as a military hero, Soeharto had positioned himself as the father of a big family. He further claims that Soeharto had indeed treated the country and the state as a big Javanese family (Irawanto, 2011, p. 2).

A further stream-lining of national thought was undertaken by the government's insistence on Javanese culture speaking for all of Indonesia. Most of the elites were and are Javanese and the capital Jakarta is also located on the island of Java. With this move, all other Indonesian cultures were taken out of the equation. Evidence of how Javanese culture had enshrined the New Order nationalist ideology could also be seen from the reinforcing heroism of 'Kartini' through state mechanisms. Kartini, a figure who was famous for her criticism of Javanese patriarchal society, had been chosen as a national hero by Indonesia's first President, Soekarno. During the New Order era, her birthday on 21st April became a holiday called *Hari Ibu Kita Kartini* (Kartini's day). The day is often celebrated in schools and state departments by organizing national dress parades and cooking contests.

Kartini was actually a progressive mind who spent her life taking a stand against Javanese feudal and patriarchal society. However, school textbooks turned Kartini's profile into a traditional Javanese figure of *Putri Sejati* (a true lady). Instead of honoring her intelligence and

writing skills, a rarity for a woman during her time, the state government turned Kartini's profile into that of a domestic hero: an obedient (third) wife who dedicated her life teaching young women how to cook and to sew. Young Kartini had dreamed of pursuing her study in the Netherlands, but in the end she decided to obey her father's demand and was married off to an older powerful man (Kartini, 2005).

History textbooks always highlight this part of Kartini's life to tell young schoolgirls to imitate Kartini in 'embracing women's destiny', meaning getting married to form a family. Indonesian feminists often argue that Kartini is a symbol of New Order domestication towards women. I argue that in emphasizing Kartini as *Putri Sejati,* a passive obedient child to her parents in school textbooks and history lessons, the New Order has virtually institutionalized Javanese characteristics of 'submissiveness' and 'feudalism' as a nationalist model. Partly based on this story, Willner (1963) concludes that from childhood, the Javanese are taught to respect and obey authority figures which then lead to the strong hand of paternalistic leaders. The 'father figure' embodies the highest authority.

The natural hierarchical tendency of Javanese society that the New Order adopted cannot be separated from Indonesia since the Dutch colonial era (Cribb, 2011). Javanese is Indonesia's largest ethnic group and hold dominant majority in the government. Therefore it has become hegemonic understanding in today's Indonesia that what frequently refers as *budaya kita* actually means Javanese culture with all its accompanying paternalistic tradition. Contrary to the common perception that the New Order nationalist rhetoric has been informed by gender politics, the emphasis of Kartini's heroism as a true Javanese princess, *Putri Sejati*, points out that it is Javanese values of women chastity and submissiveness that occupy a distinct, symbolic role behind Indonesia's nationalist culture.

Sexuality and the Perception of the West

Women arguably occupy a distinct role in nationalist culture, discourse and collective action, a symbolic role that reflects a masculine definition of femininity and of women's proper place in the nation. Mosse describes how female embodiments of the nation stood for eternal forces and particularly highlighted innocence and chastity (1985, p. 98). Nonetheless, while female fecundity is valued as the mothers of the nation, unruly female sexuality is seen as a threat to discredit the nation.

As previously mentioned, the New Order rhetoric often reminded women of their *kodrat,* a natural destiny stipulating that women should be meek, passive, and obedient to the male members of the family, sexually shy and modest, self-sacrificing and nurturing, and find their main vocation as a wife and mother (Wierenga, 2002). However, similar characteristics are also taught to Javanese women from generation to generation, and therewith highly define traditional Javanese values and characters.

Through the nationalist rhetoric of 'female chastity', gender appropriation continues to influence Indonesians' perspective on gender, sexuality and westernization. The negative view of western social norms and pre-marital sex is exemplified by the concern of *pengaruh pergaulan bebas Barat* (free-socializing influence) amongst parents. In her study, Webster claims that the term *kebarat-baratan* (copying the West) is mainly associated with media presentation as well as forms of popular culture as distributed through films and the internet (Webster, 2010, p. 2).

Tension between 'the West' and 'Indonesian culture' is clearly addressed by Ida Rahmah (2008) in her study *"Consulting Taiwanese Boys Culture: Watching Meteor Garden with Urban Kampung Women in Indonesia"*. Rahmah looks at the phenomenon of the famous Hong Kong television series *Meteor Garden* amongst women living in small alleys of Surabaya. Rahmah's study suggests that there exists cultural proximity in how the show presents men and women's romantic relationships across Asian cultures where no inappropriate kissing scenes took place, especially compared to the 'western' version where we often see men and women easily engage in one night stands, *Meteor Garden* is viewed as more appropriate with "our culture" (p.133-148). One of her respondents commented that she liked the show because, "[…] unlike western TV shows where we often see men and women easily engage in one night stands, the show is more appropriate to our values".

The New Order enforced stereotype of national identity apparently influences how sex is viewed as acceptable only within the frame of marriage. In other words, when you are not married, especially if you are a woman, you should not have sex. Sexuality is further seen as a threat to discredit the nation. This explains why Indonesian feminists and pro-choice activists frequently have to defend themselves from accusations that they are spreading the viruses of western modernity and liberalism (Budiman, p. 77). They are even being accused of promoting pornography, child abuse and prostitution in their opposition to the anti-pornography bill (Amiruddin, 2006). As 'female chastity' was located at the center of nationalist ideology, this move suggests that the New Order traditional Javanese family values with masculinity and obedient women at its core, also stood behind the construction of the anti-western paradigm.

Conclusion

In contrast to popular beliefs among some Indonesian scholars, the manipulation and distortion of information concerning anti-western paradigms did not simply originate from the heritage of New Order's geo-politics. The New Order nationalist rhetoric was particularly influenced by masculinity and feminine values and thus rested on a basis of traditionalist gender ideology. Indonesian culture and nationalist values were thus deeply influenced by notions of what it means to be 'truly Javanese'.

Indonesian's tendency to view sexuality from the frame of post-colonialist discourses of Western paradigms has been influenced by how Kartini's heroism was articulated by the New Order regime as an obedient child and woman. The symbolization of *Putri Sejati* implies more than only a 'domestication of women', since the presentation of 'womanhood' as well as 'purity' become a moral standard that true Indonesian women should uphold.

Given that 'submissiveness' is part of a stereotypical Javanese characteristic, in nationalist contexts 'feminism' and 'sexuality' are viewed as western products that contradict the traditional feminine Javanese character. Since the notions of gender and sexuality in Indonesia have been established by traditional Javanese values, feminism consequently became a contested concept frequently misinterpreted. Misleading gender perceptions in which feminism is seen as a part of western tradition did not fit in with nationalist norms and values, causing its rejection by the New Order government to conform to the universal understanding of feminism and human rights. Moreover, within the state lay ideologies of a secular country with millions of religious people adhering to Islam, moral standard of the religion features as well. Sexuality, in particular, is considered offensive to public decency and Islamic values.

Above findings bring further evidence that the reinforcement of the systems put in place by those once in power is still existence today, and Indonesians are therefore challenged to reconfigure their traditions, beginning with separating the definition of 'national identity' from dogmatic virtue ideology.

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Human Traffic: The Fashionably and Unfashionably Marginalized in the Korean Cultural Context

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Abstract

This article will propose the novel terms 'fashionably marginalized' and 'unfashionably marginalized' to outline particular limits of description in cultural studies (broadly defined) of topics that are more easily and less easily discussed through the predominant vocabulary of the Humanities. This is not an attack on the aims of cultural studies and theorists. Instead, it will help to identify marginalized groups whose cause and advocacy require more consilient, interdisciplinary involvement to intersect public policy, theoretical discourse and media coverage in order to assist or give voice to groups of people who themselves may not have the means or wherewithal to address their own plight in the public sphere. We will outline the case of Korean elderly recycling collectors and how the academy has largely ignored them, despite the fact that they comprise a significant percentage of the Korean population. Then we will contrast them with two other marginalized groups, Korean shamans and the Korean LGBT community, groups which the academy has paid much more attention to, despite being smaller in demographics. We will use these contrasting groups as unfashionably and fashionably marginalized examples. We hope to demonstrate how the adoption of cultural theory's vocabulary in the Korean academy illustrates areas where cultural theory may fall short of its proposed goals as a symptom of the broader tendency in the Humanities.

Keywords: marginalization, Korea, cultural theory, policy, recycling

Estimate of the value of any proposed policy is held back by taking the problem as if it were one of individual "forces on one side and of social forces on the other, the nature of the forces being known in advance". We must start from another set of premises if we are to put the problem of freedom in the context where it belongs.

– John Dewey, 1939, 'Culture and Human Nature'

Part I

In Seoul, you see figures moving through the busy streets, backs bent and angled like question marks, pulling carts by hand, carts piled with cardboard and Styrofoam and plastic, recyclable odds and ends. These carts are pulled by the elderly, most of whom are of retirement age, near it, or far past it and amid the busy rush of traffic they seem echoes of the past, of a harder and more antiquated way of life. The elderly citizens of Korea, having endured a war in their childhood, and then years under a dictatorial regime, emerged in the 1980s with democracy and the promises that such a government brings, but the means of social change and safety were never fully established. Today, many of Korea's elderly population find themselves precariously close to total poverty, their meager monthly pensions barely able to cover the most menial costs of food, shelter, water, electricity. Many of them have been forced back into work, despite being over retirement age, collecting recyclable materials among the trash found all around Seoul. It is estimated that there are approximately 1,7500,000 trash collectors in Korea, mostly composed of the elderly over the age of 65 (Koo, 2014).[1] Since there are no direct statistics on the recycling collectors (the number mentioned above is an estimate collated by an NGO and derived from the number of existing neighborhood recycling centers and), the percentage of the elderly currently engaged in this activity could be between 15 and 35%, which is approximately 3.5% of the total population. The number of people over the age of 50 who are working and/or applying for jobs in 2015 surpassed 10 million individuals, with a third of retirement age individuals working in manual labor (S. H. Cho, 2016). Seeing that the poverty rate among the elderly above 65 is 49% – the highest rate among OECD countries (Koo, 2014) – it is not surprising to see them in need of extra income, and they are very often reduced to spending their days working, hunting around the city for recyclable materials, for which they receive the equivalent of a couple hundred dollars a month (Um, 2013). In 2010 when digital media overtook pulp printing, these recyclers lost the vast majority of their possible revenue in the form of paper recycling. Since then, their wages have declined and no strong governmental support has been offered to offset any potential loss. In fact, many of these elderly people, cut off from their families for whatever reason, are still considered under the care of these families with whom they have no contact, and thus are often disqualified from further governmental assistance (Y. Lee, 2014).

Seeing that such a large number of elderly citizens lives on the edge of total poverty, it should be reasonable to expect that this issue has been taken up by the political and academic communities, as well as the news media. Preliminary research into the recycling collectors in Korea led to several news articles and some policy debate, with several online articles in English cited in the previous paragraph. However, so far the topic has been ignored by academics in the Humanities. Searches among databases turned up only a few policy debates in particular journals (to be discussed later), and no articles on the subject from the perspective of the Humanities, and especially in cultural studies.[2] Considering the large percentage of the

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[1] Coote places this number at 1.4 million while Um places it closer to 2 million.

[2] Cultural studies and cultural theory as labels will be used interchangeably along with 'Theory'.

population that these recycling collectors constitute, the lack of attention by the academy and cultural studies came as a surprise. How could the larger academic community somehow be blind to this issue? If one of the aims of cultural studies is to give voice to those marginalized communities lacking a voice in the collective consciousness, then how have they failed to even mention these elderly citizens who have endured more than should be asked of any group and who are still subject to indignities one might expect of a third world nation, not one of the most educated, sophisticated and prosperous countries on the planet?

The answer to these questions is manifold. One reason that the elderly recyclers have been unfashionably marginalized by the Korean academy is that their identity is not abstractable into linguistic components or definitions. This linguistic move has loomed large over philosophy and cultural theory in the twentieth century, but has taken more and more radical turns in the past 40 years with the ascendency of postmodernist and poststructuralist debates in the academy and in the Humanities. To address the socio-economic status of a marginalized elderly population as a function of policy failure requires a much more consilient plan for action, one that actively draws on theory, policy and news media. To return to Dewey's prescient essay from 75 years ago, he says:

> Were it not for the inertia of habit (which applies to opinion as well as to overt acts) it would be astonishing to find today writers who are well acquainted with the procedure of physical science and yet appeal to 'forces in explanation of human social phenomena … [These authors] know that reference to electricity or heat, etc., is but a shorthand reference to relations between events which have been established by investigation of actual occurrences. But in the field of social phenomena they do not hesitate to explain concrete phenomena by reference to motives as forces (such as love of power), although these so-called forces are but reduplication, in the medium of abstract words, of the very phenomena to be explained. (p. 685)

When the discourse about any marginalized group remains abstract or subject to forms of linguistic reduplication that dismisses other social forces as contingent or irrelevant then what may result is a situation like the elderly in Korea. Replace Dewey's 'motives of forces (such as love of power)' with any spotlight word (privilege, différance, discursive practices, the Big Other) in cultural theory of the past 30–40 years and it is indefinitely reduplicable. One cannot abstractly redefine what poverty is and what it does, especially from a critical cultural perspective. For example, the Humanities in Korea have been importing the language of cultural theory since the late 1980s. Its general vocabulary being relatively new there, has found a wide range of applications as an analytical and critical tool for examining literature and culture. Though mostly rebranded in America (for the lately more fashionable vocabulary of Foucault), the vocabulary of theorists like Derrida and Lacan and their disciples have found new audiences in the Korean academy. Papers published recently in Korea attest to this, often doing little more than explaining Lacanian concepts in relation to general cultural concepts. The vocabulary of Theory has suffused many of the discussions in the Korean academy and has provided much in the way of academic jobs without providing much in the way of actualizing social or political change. During the 2016 Korean governmental elections, there was a large debate about an Anti-Discrimination Act that would outlaw discrimination against individuals based on their gender, sexual orientation, or political affiliation. What was most surprising is that there was almost complete agreement on both sides of the usual political divisions of conservative and liberal to not pass this bill. On either the conservative or liberal sides of the government, 81.7% of the National Assembly members were affiliated with parties directly against the anti-discrimination legislation (Paek, 2016). That such uniformity exists in

support of active discrimination against vulnerable groups and minorities is symptomatic of deep social divides. Of course, marginalized groups in any culture and society actively need champions who can give them a voice in larger cultural and political arenas, but that support for the LGBT community and the elderly is notably lacking in Korean politics, despite the former being fashionably marginalized and the other being unfashionably marginalized What should be a large and vigorous debate between political activism on one hand and the academy on the other through the news media and journals has not even risen to the level of discourse in the political arena because the language spoken by each group is not a vocabulary compatible with the others.

To be fashionably marginalized is to be part of a marginalized group whose identity may be rendered into linguistic terms, into those 'motives as forces' (Dewey, 1981). Here, we do not mean that such groups are more or less entitled to all forms of dignity, fairness before the law and equality of representation. Rather, we mean that certain groups will, by the very nature of their plight, be more amenable to cultural theory's methods and approach, while others will be less approachable, and thus will become unfashionably marginalized. Again, this does not mean that fashionably marginalized groups somehow have less claim to equality or that cultural theory (broadly) is somehow to blame for ignoring those unfashionably marginalized. Much good has come of cultural theory, especially in the way of applied education, dissemination of cultural practices and their overlaps with other cultures, and with the growing acceptance of gay rights. The questions that need to be asked, however, "are questions that demand discussion of cultural conditions, conditions of science, art, morals, religion, education and industry, so as to discover which of them in actuality promote and which retard the development of the native constituents of human nature" (Dewey, 1981, 686). To cloak issues in generally slippery language that will morph later into another term or phrase with a related referent and valence may serve certain issues and needs, but this methodology will not cover the wide gamut of injustice done to voiceless.

We have put forth these two terms: the fashionably marginalized and the unfashionably marginalized. Our critique is meant to fit locally onto one particular issue -the elderly recycling collectors – in contrast with other marginalized groups, such as those more easily framed in the social constructivist debate. We see this failure of the academy in Korea paralleled with earlier debates in, for example, the American academy. An essay from 1999 by Richard Rorty describes this loss of hope and loss of agential relation. He frames his debate about 'philosophy' here to mean the sterilizing turn in the Academy toward language and away from the possible building of a Utopic vocabulary of inclusion and fairness. Rorty says:

> I think this turn toward philosophy is likely to be politically sterile. When it comes to political deliberation, philosophy is a good servant, but a bad master. If one knows what one wants and has some hope of getting it, philosophy can be useful in formulating redescriptions of social phenomena. The appropriation of these redescriptions, and of the jargon in which they are formulated, may speed up the pace of social change. But I think we are now in a situation in which resentment and frustration have taken the place of hope among politically concerned intellectuals, and that the replacement of narrative by philosophy is a symptom of this unhappy situation. (p. 232)

It is precisely this intellectual abandonment identified by Rorty 20 years ago that has led to increasing disparities in the American cultural and political lives. On one hand, gay rights and more talk of egalitarian ways of life have increased, but so too have corporate rights, plutocracy and moneyed interests' clear sway over policy and law become entrenched political realities.

Moving back to Korea, this disparity between the fashionably marginalized and the unfashionably marginalized, may well lead to some progressive change, as we certainly hope it will. But, it also creates vast chasms of attention on very real and very large subsets of the population that desperately need help, attention and a voice, both from intellectuals and policy makers. The elderly recycling collectors are not the only group like this in Korea, since any marginalized group like the LGBT or immigrant or feminist communities deserve their voice, but the elderly recyclers are symptomatic of the problem we identify in the academy.

Part of the problem on the academic left and the use of theory, at least considered in general, is the issue of praxis. Because cultural theory focuses primarily on language and grants agency to the 'motives of forces', as Dewey noted earlier, very often there is a wide gulf between praxis (or practicable application) and the articles and books that crop up decrying the lack of public action in regards to inequality or injustice. Roger Scruton has outlined the failures of many of the principle theorists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, often coming down on this same issue again and again, namely, that of praxis. He says of the failure of liberal academics and theorists,

> Occasional lip service is paid to a future state of 'emancipation', 'equality' or 'social justice'. But those terms are seldom lifted out of the realm of abstractions, or subjected to serious examination. They are not, as a rule, used to describe an imagined social order that their advocates are prepared to justify … It is as though the abstract ideal has been chosen precisely so that nothing actual could embody it". (2015, p. 273)

Scruton's own politics notwithstanding, his pronouncement here reiterates what Dewey saw in 1939, i.e. that lacking a viable praxis, theory alone does little except to reduplicate abstractions and redefine terms without realigning the social, cultural and political conditions that create them. Certainly, as in the case of the Korean elderly recyclers, a marginalized group may have millions of individuals. Or another group may have but a few. Numbers alone should never be designators for public and civic attention. The Korean academy's silence on the recycling collectors is certainly a complex interrelation of causes, but that silence may well be due to the adoption of the language and methods of cultural studies, making these vulnerable elderly unfashionably marginalized.

Part II

At a more general level, this article addresses the incongruity arising when cultural theory is introduced to different cultural realities as an abstracted discourse, irrespective of that culture's specific socio-political contexts. To inspect the full gamut of Korea's contexts is a task that extends well beyond the aim and capacity of the current project. Yet, to simply hedge the article around a preliminary discussion and wait for a larger audience to heuristically respond to the questions raised here – that would be to repeat the fallacy the article initially sought to tackle. This is why we attempt to delineate, albeit in broad strokes, some of the pressing domestic circumstances that have eluded the abstraction of theory, thereby addressing the difficulties that any society will face in integrating abstract theoretical systems to the specificities of its time and place. This is similar to the task that Meera Nanda (2003) took up in her book *Prophets Facing Backward*, wherein she outlines how the Indian Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has conveniently appropriated post-modern critiques of "scientific objectivity" since the 90s to revive Hindu nationalism. As a result, the social relativist movements of the West in the mid-20th century that challenged "any claim of autonomy or the self-grounding of science" (p. 22) ended up serving the ideological basis for obscurantism and anti-realism by late 20th century

India. While this paper does not purport to match either the scope or the methodological rigor of Nanda's project, it certainly shares its spirit and concerns.

A good point to begin with is the historical context of Korea's rapid industrialization from the 1960s onward. Over the span of thirty years (1960–1990), the real GDP of this war-torn nation jumped from 3.89 billion US dollars to 263 billion (Nation Master). The fact that the period of Korea's highest economic growth coincides with the nation's two most notorious dictatorships leads to a rather uneasy acknowledgment that higher education in the country itself was in part only possible through a highly hierarchical, Confucian, and totalitarian culture as its fuel.[3] As Seungsook Moon (2005) points out, post-colonial Korea in the mid-50s was faced with the two-fold demands of modern democracy and militarization, the combination of which would eventually lead to the paradox mentioned above. On the one hand, the national narrative of modernity was heavily indebted to the ideals of "a strong military and high productivity […] that conservative nationalist leaders of the Chosun Dynasty had imagined at the end of the nineteenth century" (p. 2). This militaristic and authoritarian state narrative found historical justification in the persisting threat of North Korea from the 1950s until the current day (p. 9).

Such historical circumstances of the mid-to-late 20th century are one of the factors responsible for Korea's ongoing generational tension, in which the political and social demands that the younger generation makes – such as gender equality, a post-patriarchal social structure, or fair working hours – are often seen as a denial of the virtues and the sacrifice that the older generation thinks made possible the emergence of such discontents in the first place. Jae-Heung Park (2010), in his article on Korea's generational conflict, discusses the sharp discrepancy between Korea's birth cohorts of the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Those born in the 60s were the "standard-bearers of Korea's democratization movement that culminated in the recovering of the direct presidential election system in 1987" (p. 87, translation ours). Their epoch marks the watershed of Korea's modernization that led to the birth cohorts of the 1970s, which Park summarizes as an era of "economic growth, post-ideology, post-cold war, globalization and information" (p. 87).

The rather fantastic and disturbing consequence of Korea's hyper-express modernization is that it took only a decade for the next cohort to reap the tumultuous and blood-ridden sacrifice of the previous decade. When the historical transformations from one decade to the next is as drastic as to bar a common ground of experience between different generations, it is not all too surprising that intellectual liberalism runs the risk of coming across as a form of ingratitude. On top of that, Korea's ethnic homogeneity and the industrial mass-mobilization of the 1960s and 1970s allowed modernizing Korea to overlook discourses of diversity or equality in favor of a linear sense of progress. As NPR brought up in a recent broadcast, immigration is still a relatively new concept in the country. Foreigners make up about three percent of the population and can be legally barred from bars or restaurants, as there are no anti-discrimination laws to protect them against such measures (Hu, 2016).

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[3] The way that Christianity, Neo-Confucianism, and political conservatism all come together in the cultural texture of Korea is too socio-historically complex to do justice here. We would merely point out that it is in the historical context of post-war Korea that Christianity comes to form a prominent relation with political conservatism. As Dave Hazzan has stated in a recent journalistic article, Christianity was primarily perceived as an "American" religion in post-war Korea, and went hand in hand with the image of the United States as its political savior. For one of the more recent discussions of the interrelation between Christianity and Confucianism, see Buswell & Lee (2006).

The Crisis of the Fashionably Marginalized

These developments are some of the wider historical circumstances that we believe have contributed to the current gap between Korea's academic (theoretical, to be more precise) and political scene. On the one hand, the political culture is increasingly aware of problems of inequality that have been overlooked until now – problems that are often first acknowledged and promulgated by intellectual liberals – but on the other, the same culture is ill-equipped with a language to address those very issues. Throughout the debate over the Anti-Discrimination Act, the majority of the political sector coached its hostility against religious/sexual minorities in an overtly eschatological language,[4] the psychological subtext of which does not seem too far off from the fears and anxieties underlying popular zombie/virus apocalypse films.

Against this milieu, an article was published by one of Korea's most influential LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex) rights organization that identified the opponents' militant hostility to same-sex intercourse as a "repulsion against the anal, which occupies the position of the abject as an excretory organ" (H.-C. Kim, 2015, p. 34, translation ours). Another article from the web magazine "너랑나랑우리랑 (You, Me, and We) examined the controversy surrounding exhibitionism in Korea's annual gay parades, advocating it as "a political commitment before an erotic statement, as a questioning of the criteria that dictates which body is obscene and which is not" (Woong, 2014, p. 15, translation ours). Both articles addressed one of the most sensitive agendas surrounding the promotion of sexual minorities in Korea, i.e., the ideological and rhetorical coupling of the subject-hood of sexual minorities and their sexual experience. As interesting as the overall contents may be, the language employed in both cases only serves to overlook the more important contextual causes that fuel the crisis, such as the socio-political dominance of radical Christians in Korea, or the popular rhetoric that often pairs homosexuality with the ideas of sexual excess, hedonism, or even a pathological inability to restrain oneself.

We do not want to misrepresent the overall current of the LGBT debate in Korea. Their struggle has been persistent and surprisingly non-violent in the face of a conservative Christian society that will not hold back from condemning them to 'hell fire'. However, so far as the question of language constitutes the question of strategy, there is a need for the discourse to speak in a language that at least partially overlaps with that of the dominant political power. That is, there should be more talk about the political pressure from Christian fundamentalist groups, the discrepancy of language between younger and older generations, or the collision of a secular and religious culture. All of these require a concrete contextualization of an abstract theoretical platform. Such attempts are not absent, but they certainly could be more visible.

The injection of a new social language is integral to any social change, and Korea is much in need of it. But for better or for worse, the burden of social reconciliation falls on the reformers, as those who opt for the status quo will seldom venture to move outside the circuits of their own language. They have no need to. The grace of change will largely depend on the ability of the former to acknowledge the sacrifice of their previous generation and the values that allowed for such commitment. Only then will it be possible for the latter to recognize a better world that owes its existence to their sacrifice, and is now capable of extending its betterness and grace to those that had no place in the language of the previous epoch.

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[4] The 2016 election campaign flooded the country with comments such as that "homosexuality is the strategical temptation of the Antichrist and the heretics" (J. H. Lee, 2016) or that "the infiltration of Islam and homosexuality will dismantle the Kingdom of God" (Noh, 2016).

The Crisis of the Unfashionably Marginalized

From the point of the academic culture, the language of theory abstracted outside specific contexts has been disproportionately oriented towards subaltern crises that *can* be theoretically or linguistically disentangled. The upside is that Korea is becoming a country much more sensitive to language, with cultural theory lending an important and strategic voice to certain socio-political exigencies that Korea faces at the moment. From the early 1990s, for example, the Korean society campaigned for the word "장애우 (*jangaewoo*: a disabled friend)" as a new term to refer to a disabled person, instead of the conventional "장애인 (*jangaein*: a disabled person)". It was only in the early 2000s that the society as whole came to acknowledge the highly problematic implications of the substitute, that the term can never be used by a disabled person to refer to himself/herself.[5]

However, this increased awareness of language, coupled with a digitally overloaded society, is creating a culture more obsessed with being politically correct than looking at the deeper socio-economic injustices that require an institutional and political change. It has been eight years since the enforcement of the Disability Discrimination Act, but the number of relevant petitions against discrimination and human rights abuse has only been increasing (D. K. Kim, 2016). Telling someone to get their language straight is certainly easier than asking what political and social changes can be made to alleviate their conditions. Socially disenfranchised groups whose crisis cannot be solved in a "linguistic mode" tend to be pushed away for either politics or social welfare to deal with. Cultural theory in itself is not to blame for this, but it may stem from the combination of its appeal to social theorists who are solely interested in fashionable crises, the reign of the SNS (Social Networking Service) culture as the modern day language police, and intellectual/civic laziness in general.

The predicament of the recycling collectors is not linguistically resolvable and requires nothing short of an extensive welfare reform. Their circumstances turned for worse when the cost of paper waste plummeted in the early 2000s, aggravated by the repeated price rigging by paper companies and the governmental indifference to such cartels (Nam, 2015). The complexities are further heightened by the fact that the government still has to make up its mind on how to restructure the recycling industry. As of now, it is sustained by an implicit truce between the government and the mostly illegal recycling centers at the bottom of the industry's pyramid. (Lee [Eutteum Recycling Center], Interview, April 14, 2016).

Given the socio-economic context behind the crisis of the trash collectors, it is not difficult to guess why the cultural theorists haven't been too eager to address this particular social group, whose visibility and omnipresence in Korea's urban settings should have merited them more academic attention as a metropolitan "subaltern" group. University databases yield a single article directly relevant to their cause, published in 2011 in a social welfare studies journal (B. H. Lee, 2011). A similar example is the Korean elderlies who live alone, often located at what is known as the welfare blind spots. Over a million people that subsist below the poverty threshold are excluded from financial assistances, due to an anachronistic provision of Korea's Basic Living Security Act that makes it difficult for those with a lineal relative to receive governmental assistances. (K. W. Cho, 2014; Ministry of Health and Welfare). Elderlies that have been long out of contact with their family members are therefore non-eligible as

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[5] Even up to 2002, an official middle-school textbook will refer to 장애우" (*jangaewoo*) as the proper designation for disabled people, laying out the chronological evolution of Korea's "political correctness" that finally culminated in this term (Son, 2002).

recipients. Their issue is almost exclusively dealt with in applied sociologies, that have already formed a hermetic culture with its chain of references that do not extend beyond particular journals specializing in welfare policies.[6]

It is not the favoring of one marginalized subject over the other that is problematic, but the rising trend of a cultural theory that runs the risk of furthering the incommunicability between different social sectors and academic disciplines, and pushing its existence out of socio-political relevance. To be fair, Korea's academic culture has not yet reached the same degree of crisis (pushing aside its other vices) that American academia has been diagnosed with already in the 90s by writers such as Edward O. Wilson in his book *Consilience* (p. 196–259). That is to say, the trend is still reversible. Korea is at a critical juncture at the moment, where the issues of gender, racial, economic, and social inequality are dealt with in multiple strata of language that seem incapable of converging. The chasm exists not only between the political and the academic culture, but also between the more theoretical and the applied sociologies.

We would like to briefly introduce the case of Korean shamans here, for a side project on shamanism has yielded an appurtenant point of reference for the current discussion, both as a potential subject of the fashionably marginalized and as an instance of the crossroad that Korean academics finds itself at the moment. We say potential, for the domestic discussion on shamanism is, as of yet, neither popular nor asymmetrically theoretical. Yet, the noticeable disparity between the (older) domestic and (newer) international discourse on the subject suggests a different future. The Korean shamans are predominately female and occupy an interesting place in the country's cultural fabric. Their domestic discussion, however, tends to cluster around a handful of sociological journals dedicated to the aim of preserving local shamanistic traditions. Most of the articles focus on the shamans as the practitioners of local traditions, discussing the specific rituals and theologies behind the shamans of different regional backgrounds. With the exception of a few that incorporates anthropological giants such as Claude Levi-Strauss, the overall scholarly discussion is devoid of a wider theoretical framework.

The international discourse (composed of Korean scholars writing in English, usually with a graduate background in the US) shows a marked contrast. Already from titles such as "The Mudang: Gendered Discourses on Shamanism in Colonial Korea" (Hwang, 2012) or "Shamanism in Korean Hamlets since 1990: Exorcising Han" (H. Lee, 2011), one witnesses the shift from description-oriented studies of local tradition to theory-oriented studies of identity. The disparity is suggestive of what would happen once Korea's cultural analysts turn their eyes towards this fertile ground for theoretical abstraction, or when there is a wider interest and demand from the international audience. The patent contrast between the domestic and international articles seem to foreshadow the crisis of non-communication that has already befallen other discussions of the fashionably marginalized.

It is neither feasible nor compelling to argue that social studies or cultural studies should take it upon themselves to tackle an issue from all conceivable angles. A good starting point, however, would be to increase the number of journals with a more conciliated vision, instead of encouraging different academic disciplines to divide themselves into small islands of professional territories. What should be encouraged is not necessarily a polymathic academic

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[6] Law enforcers Seong Jo Yang and In Soon Nam recently (June 2016) hosted a panel discussion on Korea's Basic Living Security Act, inviting law enforcers, legal experts, and professors with a legal or cultural studies background to discuss the matter. It is a positive example of an integrated discussion on social policies that should be more encouraged (Gongam Human Rights Law Foundation).

culture, but rather the understanding that the mutual indifference between the theoretical and applied studies can only be sustained at the expense of certain social groups whose crisis cannot be successfully integrated into either paradigm. And this is a suggestion perhaps most pressing for cultural theorists, whose most compelling contribution has been the insight that the structural condition of any discourse involves the exclusion of those who precariously exist at the fringe of that very discourse.

When Noam Chomsky (2006) spoke of intellectual progress as articulating a "clearly formulated, abstract theory which will have empirical consequences" (p. 13), he was speaking more or less in the context of the history of science. But it is certainly a relevant question for anyone whose aim it is to outline the very margins of a society – i.e., what are the empirical consequences of my task? If an article that brings to light the conditions of disenfranchisement has no empirical consequences of challenging those very conditions, then its mission must be renegotiated as being infinitely more pertinent to itself than its avowed subject. Even the hope that a discussion will trigger a societal change of perception requires the existence of someone else to take part in that change; and the primary concern of this article is that the current breach across different social sectors may very well prevent that someone from understanding which language you are speaking in and whose cause you are speaking for.[7] As this article was written in the reconciliatory hope for a clearer language, the weight of the concern is meant to fall most heavily on itself.

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[7] Foucault, in 1971, identified the "real political task" as criticizing the seemingly neutral and apolitical operation of institutions through which political violence "has always exercised itself obscurely" (Chomsky & Foucault, 2006, p. 41). This article by no means disputes the validity of such tasks; only that a criticism written in a language as obscure as the political mechanism of the selfsame institutions easily defeats its own goal.

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Reversed Realities: National Pride and Visual Coding

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Abstract

This paper examines the historicity of Siam/Thailand and shows that the contact which took place between Siam and the European Other in the mid-nineteenth century, considered the start of the modernization period, paved way for the synthetic notion of what it meant to embody Thainess. This paper also focuses on the power relations affecting how the conception of Thainess was engendered. In order to tackle this history, we must study the counter-history of the remnants that were selectively left for us, the new generation. Following Thongchai Winichakul's (1994) analysis of the historical Siam map, the geopolitical framing that was introduced from the West itself, we can see that it signifies a code that interpellates numerous sentiments relating to patriotism, pride, and nation building. This particular notion of visual code is transcribed once again on the body of the 1965 Miss Universe. From these two cases, I argue that what it is to be Thai (with a special focus on Thai woman) is a conceptualization that is symbolically constituted and enunciated, forming a synthesis of contact with both the real and the imagined West.

Keywords: Thainess, *farang*, *siwilai*, femininity, performativity

Introduction

How do visual representations play a part in determining our identity or the sense of belonging to a nation? How is the notion of Thainess constructed and embedded in the representations that are glorified by the state? Following the analysis of Thongchai (1994)'s exemplary work on the historical Siam map that constitutes the geo-body of Siam,[1] I look at the constitution of Thainess that Abhasra, as a beauty pageant contestant, had to perform through her embodiment of Thai femininity. Her title, 1965 Miss Universe, centers on the body of a woman and specifically how she performs that embodiment. Both the geo-body of Siam and the Thai woman's body analyzed here signify and interpellate the discourses of nation building, modernity, anti-colonialism, and unique Thainess.

Through this analysis, I will show that the ruling elites played an integral part in determining the norm to define Thainess. I argue that the preoccupation with images projected both for the West and against it resulted from the need to keep up with the new world order. These images also ensured the state's independence in the face of Western imperialism in the nineteenth century and its asymmetrical power relations with Siam. As the historical paradigm shifted to the enhancement of Western (American) influence in the 1960s, we can see a similar maneuver used to construct the national cultural identity through the victory and the body of 1965 Miss Universe.

While the people of Siam/Thailand[2] may or may not know what these constructed images and codes of Thainess signify to a global audience, the elites nonetheless have always determined the sense of unique Thainess. Western influence was carefully incorporated in the constitution of Thainess, but only to the extent that the elites saw fit. In other words, the construction of national cultural identity was a process that Chatterjee (2010) called "selective appropriation" (as cited in Winichakul, 2010, p. 138). This paper overall reveals that inexorably both the imagined and the real West assist the establishment of the national cultural identity that is Thainess.

By collecting and analyzing the data from Thongchai's *Siam Mapped* and the articles from *The Bangkok Post*[3] on Abhasra's win, I will elaborate how the two symbolize the codes for the nation and modern subjects of Siam/Thailand. Once the visual representation of the map and the beauty queen is created and disseminated, it forms manifold discourses, the most significant of which is the construction of national identity. The visual representations justify the dominant discourse to work and to actualize what needs to be propagated with regards to national identity, gender identity, and its uniqueness.

The paper consists of four sections. It touches briefly on the dawn of the modernization period, before analyzing the transculturation process as symbolically represented respectively in the geo-body of Siam and the body of the Miss Universe, and concluding with an explanation of how the constitution of Thainess largely exists as a cultural response to the Western Other. My emphasis is to reject its acclaimed authenticity and instead focus on how such a synthesis reveals the performative nature of Thainess.

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[1] The historical atlas map was disseminated within the country during Field Marshal Phibun's regime (1939–1944).

[2] "Siam" is used to refer to the period up to 1939 and "Thailand" from 1939 onward.

[3] I am indebted to my friend, Appipar Norapoompipat, features writer at the *Bangkok Post* newspaper, for her kind help in providing me with the data and news articles on the 1965 Miss Universe.

Disavowed Transculturation

During the European imperialism of the mid nineteenth century, the kingdom of Siam adapted and adjusted to the new world ethos that was European civilization. In response, Siam, which had been immediately affected by European imperialism both politically and economically, later developed the cultural concept of *siwilai* or civilization as described by Winichakul (2000). The discourse of *siwilai* comprised solely of the elements the Siamese ruling class or the elites had championed in order to keep up with the "New World Order" (Winichakul, 2000, p. 532). In the following analyses, we will be able to recognize that Siam/Thailand was determined to uphold the unique sense of Thainess, yet discerningly adjusted to the new world order. This adjustment took place through the conceptualization of *siwilai* discourse, which truly was (and plausibly is) an ambivalent one. Thongchai Winichakul (2010), Peter A. Jackson (2010), and Rachel V. Harrison (2010), to name only a few, concluded that the knowledge and practices reflecting *siwilai* discourse were already part of a transculturation process despite the elite's claims regarding Thai uniqueness.

Siamese *siwilai* discourse was born for two main reasons. The first was coming into contact (in what Mary Louise Pratt (1992) called the "contact zone", as cited in Winichakul, 2000, p. 529) with the West since the mid-nineteenth century, most evidently in the form of the extraterritorial rights given to the British in the Bowring Treaty of 1855. Another was the insecurity and threats felt by Siam during Western imperialism because of its dominant power and its modernized status. As a consequence of their contact and encounters with the Europeans, the Siamese elitesfelt it necessary to protect the independent Siamese state and maintain the sovereign rule. This rule was what Winichakul (2000) terms "royal dignity" (p. 539), of the Chakrimonarchs. The ruling class felt compelled to uphold Western values as expressed in *The Quest for Siwilai* that the elites had the "anxiety to keep up with the world" (p. 534).

Both the apprehension to maintain Siam's independence against the colonial threat and the eagerness to keep up with the new world order resulted in a strategic response by the Siamese elites. They selectively incorporated Western elements into Siamese ways of life and culture during the modernization period or administrative reformation,[4] which began in the mid nineteenth century during King Mongkut's reign (Rama IV, 1851–1868). The King recognized the superiority of the Europeans yet disavowed the Siamese status. Such mentality was similar to postcolonial countries and can be considered justification for the newly created Thainess. Other consequences resulting from this line of mentality paved way for the emergence of the epistemological demarcation to which Winichakul (2010) gave the name "Material/Spiritual Bifurcation" (p. 140). This closed intellectual regime refers to how the ruling class of Siam/Thailand chose elements from the Western countries who assisted them to represent Siam as a modern state. Specifically, it refers to how the Occidentalist perspective was performed by the Siamese elites (Kitiarsa, 2010) to justify its rule over and action towards the Siamese subjects.

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[4] In *The Ambiguous Allure of the West*, various authors described in detail the discourse of modernization in the mid-nineteenth century as a process where the elements from the West had been localized so much that it was "always the Thai-ized West" (as cited in Harrison, 2010, p. 36).

Mapping and Constructing National Cultural Identity

Arguably, the most evident way Siam portrayed the modern state was through the historical Siam map. Thongchai Winichakul (1994) finely delineated the work of the map as a construction aimed at interpellating various kinds of nationalist sentiments andstabilizing the opposition between us and them (or *farang*).[5] The map defined a clear political body and represented a move away from the pattern of overlord and tributary state. However, in practicality, "Siam had its first geo-body and its representation made, filled, and shaped, at least in part, by Western powers" (1994, p. 128).

The constructed historical Siam map and the emergence of the modern geo-body were products of the transcultural process which was first constituted by a Westerner and was later widely circulated during the military regime of Field Marshal Phibun (Winichakul, 1994).The map symbolized and visually represented the modern polity. It was not created through the orthodox meaning of representing something that already existed: Winichakul eloquently pointed out that "Siam was bounded. Its geo-body emerged. Mapping created a new Siam–a new entity whose geo-body had never existed before" (p. 130). The new geo-body of Siam and the map brought discourses of nationalism, anti-colonialism, and interpellation of Thainess to the forefront. Most importantly, it spurred the anxiety for the territories lost to France in the 1893 annexation.[6]

The dissemination of nationalism and the grief over the lost territories was espoused by the ruling elites. This kind of "negative identification" (1994, p. 5) was fundamental and considered an integral strategy by a state that allowed us to define ourselves. Consequently, the Other is often a crucial element that makes us recognize who we are. Through the visual code of the map, sentimental feelings of grief and mourning over the lost territories, as well as the positive politics of belonging, can be achieved when Thais identify themselves with such a code.

Along with the mapping process, the constitution of the self versus the external Other – *farang* – was evidently manifested. Such binary opposition not only pointed out the way in which Siam was colonized consciously, i.e., by incorporating Western elements into its polity, way of life, culture, and so on, but also, how the Siamese ruling class colonized its own subjects.[7] Winichakul (1994; 2010) pointed out that the strategic responses that include epistemological demarcation, the "enunciation" (1994, p. 130) of the modern geo-body of Siam, and the centralized governmental administration are similar to that of colonial rule. In a way, the self versus the external Other does not constitute binary opposition alone. At this point, various scholars ,in particular, Thongchai Winichakul (1994; 2000; 2010), Peter A. Jackson (2004; 2010), and Rachel V. Harrison (2010), have concluded that Siam was a semi-colonial state where the discourse of the distinct Thainess could never have originated without the Western Other against whom it was defined. Likewise, the map was a transcultural product created to elicit the discourses that conserve its independence and a response to the new world order.

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[5] The term *farang* can disclose negative connotations, a disdaining attitude, as it is "a "usually ill-defined" Thai "reference to otherness", an adjective and noun referring to Western people without any specification of nationality, culture, ethnicity, language, or whatever" (as cited in Kitiarsa, 2010, p. 61).

[6] See Winichakul (1994), especially chapters 7 and 8.

[7] See Jackson (2010), especially the Afterword, for an elaborate discussion of the negotiation process of the colonial rule.

The visual code of the map was an instrument used to exhibit the nation's face or desired image both at the national and international levels. The exhibition of appropriate images–modern yet uniquely Thai–for the eyes of the West had always been Siam's preoccupation. Images portrayed on the world stagewere not always accurate depictions, rather the images that signify codes of Thainess led us to question the engrossment of self-representation.

The same way the historical Siam map defined the political body of the state and represented the progress of the nation, that strategy was used to create and enunciate the gendered body of an exemplary Thai womanhood through the 1965 Miss Universe Contest. Despite the time difference of over 70 years, the way in which the state and/or the elites selectively chose elements to represent the nation on the world stage was uncannily identical. Visual codes and their signification were historically contingent yet once they were created, they became the justification for the elites to impose upon Thainess and at the same time they reified the national identity and roles Thai subjects should embody and uphold.

Thai Femininity and Its Mobility

Another code that the ruling elites projected on the world stage was effected through the body of the 1965 Miss Universe, Abhasra Hongsakul (nicknamed Pook). Abhasra came to signify something similar tothe code of the historical Siam map. The ruling elite's preoccupation with the images was presented along the discourses of nationalism, unique Thainess, modern self, and Thai femininity through Abhasra's embodiment and performance. People, especially Thai women and Thai people, could identify with Abhasra's victory. *The Bangkok Post* (1965) wrote on the day of her success that it was "a great day for the women of Thailand" ("Miss Universe Supplement," 1965, "A Great Day").

Suphatra (1993) wrote in *Senthaaŋnaaŋŋaam* that the changes in socio-political and economical determinants all contributed to the social mobility of Thai women (p. 2). Diachronic study showed that since the period of modernization (at its full force during the reigns of King Rama V up until King Rama VII) was full of encounters with the West, which was present in Siam both physically and ideologically. Unavoidably, Western values and ideologies were introduced into the state via mass media such as prints, advertisements, and moving pictures (Barmé, 2002, p. 2).

Thai women's mobility was perhaps most notable during the early twentieth century. During this period, women's education, concerns regarding women's dress, socialization etiquettes, values of beauty standards, and even hairstyles became Western oriented.[8] Women were a major instrument for self-representation and were the public image of the country during the post-absolutist period, amid the intensified relationship between Thailand and the US. It was undeniable that since Miss Thailand competition first originated in the 1930s, the beauty pageants were incorporated into the social responsibility of representing the country as being modern and progressive, a move away from the absolutist reign.[9] Still they were to present values from the Thai tradition which, I suggest, was a realm where Thai femininity and the separation of private and public spheres were upheld to the standards of Thai patriarchal (and, at the time, militaristic) society (Callahan, 1998, p. 48).

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[8] See Kopkitsuksakul (1993) for a thorough explanation of the factors causing the change in Thai women's roles and the effects that emerge from the Miss Thailand competitions.

[9] Field Marshal Phibun stated specifically that Miss Thailand ought to employ and utilize her title to benefit the country (Kopkitsuksakul, 1993, p. 17) and to manifest the modern Thai self.

The discursive knowledge concerning gender, sexuality, and the sexes was governed by the patriarchal ideology of Thai society at the time. This internal factor was paired with the external influence (or sometimes threat) coming from the West, so that both were accepted and clashed with each another. This contact certainly represented another transcultural product and one significant attribute for the beauty pageants where values from the West were both endorsed and rejected at the same time. Parallel to the influences and novel conceptions from the West, some normative gender expectations, roles, and ideal Thai femininity were kept and exerted by the state through the woman's body. Examples are female virtues in preserving one's purity, mastering domestic tasks and duties, and becoming decent daughters, wives, and mothers, to name only a few.

Suphatra (1993), Van Esterik (1995; 1999; 2000), and Karim (1995) claimed that in agricultural society, differences in genders and sexes in the Southeast Asian region are of their own distinct character. In the case of Siam/Thailand, the modernization period during King Mongkut's reign onward was considered the period where Western influences started to flow into the state. Since then, Siam entered into economic expansion and gave away extraterritorial rights to the British. This milestone marks the beginning of change in Thai women's roles and social status that would measure up to other countries' expectations and especially Western ideals. The Siamese needed to represent an appropriate image to uphold Western standards of gender relations and the modern state, and to redeem itself from the contemptuousness exhibited towards Thai women (Kopkitsuksakul, 1993, p. 32). This mentality showed deep enmeshed relations between the governing of women's bodies with the representation of the state. Gender performance was crucial because in the time of politico-economic affiliation with the West in the 1960s, women played an important role in visually representing the modern nation and its unique national identity, something that will be delineated further in the next section.

The Sixties: Thailand's Promotion

Abhasra Hongsakul (Pook) earned the Miss Universe crown in 1965 as the delegate representing Thailand. Her victory did not mean that her beauty and intelligence certified the standard of Miss Universe alone. As Suphatra (1993) and Callahan (1998) wrote comprehensively in their diachronic studies, the year Abhasra won the title reflected a crucial stage in world politics–that of the Cold War. Van Esterik (1996) suggested that Abhasra's performance, as a Thai beauty delegate on the world stage, was heavily interlaced with the politics of self-representation and the appropriated image of Thai women. As *The Bangkok Post* (1965) wrote, "when our Miss Thailand, Abhasra Hongsakul, was named Miss Universe yesterday, it wasn't just a compliment paid to Pook–though it was justly deserved–it was also a compliment to Thai womanhood" ("Miss Universe Special Supplement," 1965, "For when," para. 3). Her entrance in the Miss Universe Contest was one of an obligation, a duty: both the "Miss Universe Special Supplement" (1965) and Callahan (1998) portrayed Abhasra as a dutiful daughter of the military General who compliedwith the family's desire for her to enter the beauty competition all "for the good of the country" (p. 44).

Indeed, in the 1960s under the rule of the militaristic reign of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn (1963–1973) Thailand espoused the values concerning the country's reputational promotion (Kopkitsuksakul, 1993; Callahan, 1998). It was inevitable that Thailand had to promote itself during this crucial time of world politics. The well-established relationship between Thailand and the US had existed since the predecessor of Field Marshal Thanom -

Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (1958-1963). Thailand was preoccupied with the conceptualization of free trade, capitalism, and Western-oriented tourism promotion. Furthermore, the profound tie between Thailand and the US was enhanced throughout the militaristic regimes in which Thailand received support socially, militaristically, educationally, and so on. Altogether, such affiliation was to keep Thailand as an ally for the anti-communist bloc. With the political bond in the picture, the ruling elites were more conscious than ever regarding what images would appropriately portray Thailand to be both Thai and modern despite the silences forced on many groups as they attempted to make political statements.

Certainly, the beauty pageant could be read as a code for national promotion, or rather, the body of the beauty pageant functions as a code that signifies the whole nation. She is an expedient instrument that signifies the type of image considered appropriate by the state and deemed as the ideal Thai woman.[10] First, hers is an image constructed through the embodiment of Thai femininity as was traditional to Thainess. Secondly, it was what the ruling elites considered apposite for the West to see i.e., a Thai woman representing the modern Thai state when in fact at the time the internal politics were quite chaotic (Callahan, 1998). Suphatra (1993) wrote that internally, there were outbursts from emerging political groups such as the Students' group who opposed and lambasted the Western materiality overflowing into the country because of the political ties. The feminist group also chastised the purpose of beauty competitions as mere objectification of female bodies, engendering the standardization of beauty, and the idealization of normative femininity.

So far, just as the historical Siam map was a model for what the state determined to represent, the Thai Miss Universe's victory was also a model for national identity and Thai femininity. Their visual representations on the world stage reified the state's agenda to appear modern and unique Thai. The proliferation of the visible allowed Thais to identify their national identity and gender expectations with respect to said codes. Once this circulation took place, its repetitiveness concerning the visibility of the map and the news of Abhasra's win generated a terrain of discourses that call for sentiments regarding the modern Thai nation or in the case of Abhasra, gender roles. Both the map and the beauty queen's function was immense given the fact that sentimental feelings can be called upon from the Thai subjects. The function of such visual representation was once "created and expected" (Winichakul, 1994, p. 130) and most importantly served as instrument for the elites and the state to justify their drive for the modern state. In the next section, I will elaborate how Abhasra performed gender expectation through the text analysis in the data collected from news articles, published in *The Bangkok Post* regarding her victory in July 1965.

Mapping National Pride on the Female Body

In this section, I propose that Judith Butler's (1988) concept of performative acts is fitting here to be employed in analyzing the embodiment of ideal femininity embedded in beauty pageants. Butler argued that performing gender can be compared to performance or acting in a theatrical sense. She emphasized one of the speech gestures–illocutionary speech act–that is characterized by speech filled with effects on the deeds at the precise moment when the speech

[10]Suphatra (1993) wrote that Abhasra's victory signifies two things which were: first, respectability for Thai women and their beauty; and second, Abhasra, as a visual code, was presented to the Western Other to demonstrate recognition for and create a revered image for Thailand internationally. Lt. Gen. Chalermchai commented on the fact that the Miss Universe could enhance international relations better than sending diplomatic delegates abroad as follows: Miss Universe "has done the work of ten goodwill missions… [the Americans] are now all interested in Thailand" ("Miss Universe Supplement," 1965, "Pook's win", para. 3).

was performed. Butler wrote that not only do John Searle's 'speech acts,' "refer to speaking relationships, but [they also] constitute a moral bond between speakers" (1988, p. 519). With speech act theory as her foundation, Butler extended her concept to explain how "social reality" (p. 519) can be constituted when least expected by simple speeches, etiquettes, or manners that govern ourselves.

I suggest that Abhasra performed and delivered the state-mediated ideal of Thai femininity on the Miss Universe stage. On the path to becoming Miss Universe, *The Bangkok Post*'s special supplement section wrote, she was chaperoned by M.L. Kamala Sukhum who coached Abhasra on how she was to perform Thai femininity and visually represent Thainess "through a *stylized repetition of acts*" (Butler, 1988, p. 519). The ideal of Thai femininity she was to enact through her body included physical appearance as "[t]here were plenty of ups and downs as many interested persons tried to show Thailand's representative the best way to win" ("Miss Universe Special Supplement," 1965, "It wasn't easy," para. 2). Her performance of subtlety, grace, and humility was finely executed on the world stage. The ideal Thai femininity that she embodied met the conditions of "performative accomplishment" (Butler, 1988, p. 520): when she won the title Miss Universe, *The Bangkok Post* (1965) presented the news in a section entitled "'Pook's win stirs new interest for nation'", suggesting that her portrayal of femininity went beyond personal grace and encompassedthat of the women of Thailand as a whole. It stated that "Abhasra won mainly because of her femininity and other qualities of 'Thai women.' ... These stood out in this contest for young, modern, beautiful women" ("Miss Universe Special Supplement," 1965, "Opinions," para. 2).

Why did the body of a woman become so much more than a female body? Her performance was clearly restricted in the scope of what was expected as part of the Thai gender normativity. Her body became one with the nation. Abhasra's performance was able to determine the face of Thailand as it was scrupulously constructed for the world audience. In this way, a woman's body is political because it bears meanings over time in specific socio-cultural contexts. The body that performs its gender correctly and in accordance with its essentialist view of biological sex is considered natural and socio-culturally sanctioned. When Butler argued that "gender identity is a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo" (1988, p. 520), this suggested that the nature of gender that is socio-culturally expected by our cultures is restricted to performance alone.

Peter Digeser (1994) wrote in response to the theory of performativity that Butler's ideas raised the problem of continuity and the unity of experiences within her theory. In contesting Butler's theory, Digeser pointed out that speech acts are not only constituted by the performative effect of utterances. J. L. Austin's speech act theory also includes the notion of the "constative" (Urmson & Sabisà, 1975, p. 3). Constative utterances deal with the qualities of being descriptive, truthful, false, and even historical at times (Urmson & Sabisà, 1975), though we tend to make the mistake of taking as "straightforward statements of fact utterances which are *either* […] nonsensical or *else* intended as something quite different" (p. 3). Thus, Digeser's response to performativity theory makes us question the subversion of the natural or essentialist notions of the correlation between sex and gender and whether or not we should discard these essentialist notions entirely. As he suggests, "Butler assumes that the constative elements, found in prediscursive conception of the body, can be overcome once we see that even the sexed body is merely a performative" (Digeser, 1994, p. 663). Butler's argument that the mundane performances, manners, and actions carried out by social subjects are what make up their gender–similar to that of the performative utterance–was what Digeser found most polemic.

It is significant for us to consider the realm of truth and falsity – constatives – as Digeser wrote in response to performativity theory. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* explains an indivisible tie between the constative type and performative type of utterances that we often "assume without realizing that for many purposes the outward utterance is a description, *true or false*, of the occurrence of the inward performance" (Urmson & Sabisà, 1975, p. 9), which means that we cannot only consider the circumstance in which gender is successfully or unsuccessfully performed because the successful gender performance must be believed by the socio-cultural formation i.e., as truthful or false according to one's sex. For if with Butler we theorize the performative sequence of gender acts and expectations alone, this would lead us to believe that performativity theory manifests the neglect of gender normativity of each society at a certain time regardless of its constructedness in nature.

Because the construction of gender expectations relates with the historicity that is believed and upheld over time, it is then sadly inevitable that men and women are expected to perform and act out their gender in a certain way where their actions are socially accepted. The implication is that both constative and performative characteristics should be acknowledged in order to recognize, criticize, and ultimately move beyond this gender constructedness. Similarly, Thai femininity incorporates certain truthful and false actions as expected by society. Especially during the particularly chaotic time in both external and internal politics in the 1960s, women were expected to take part and play their role to bring respectable recognition to the country, as Suphatra (1993) and Callahan (1998) described. Both constatives and performatives attest to the analysis of Abhasra's body as a site where the politics of beauty and the embodiment of gender expectations through the performance intertwine. Her Thainess, including the constructed ideal of Thai femininity, was projected through her body as being both representative of modern and traditional Thai woman.

Ideal Thai femininity was arbitrary where modern and traditional gender aspects were concerned. To what extent can a woman's body be "modern" and how much should she remain "conservative"? Similar to the Siam in the nineteenth century, this Thailand kept up with the attraction of the American world order. Abhasra's expected gender role of an obedient daughter was acutely expressed in *The Bangkok Post* (1965). Her sexuality was finely scripted within the socio-culturally accepted norm of maintaining one's virtue of virginity. *The Bangkok Post* wrote, "Pook and Akadej [her boyfriend] have never been out together alone. They usually meet at each other's house, or take along their brothers or sisters on dates." ("Miss Universe Special Supplement," 1965, "Study," para. 4). The performativity theory allows us to analyze the performance and construction of gender through the performance and embodiment of such expectations in women.

Butler wrote "because gender is a project which has cultural survival as its end, the term '*strategy*' better suggests the situation of duress under which gender performance always and variously occurs. Hence a strategy of survival gender is a performance with clearly punitive consequences" (1988, p. 522). The "duress" Butler explained clearly as relating to what the society accountedas "correct" performance. It puts pressure on women to perform, thus fulfilling their gender expectations; because Abhasra met such social expectations, the news stated that the "reception would make the welcome home official and signify recognition of all the people of Bangkok's beautiful daughter" ("Miss Universe Special Supplement," 1965, "Big Welcome," para. 4).

By studying performativity theory and applying the concept of constatives, we can see that Abhasra's performance was "embodied and disguised under duress" (Butler, 1988, p. 522), the duress of Thai socio-cultural discourse on gender that was closely related to Thainess. Digeser's (1994) claimed, that "constative statements are obstacles to our ability to break free from the prevailing dichotomous roles of gender and sex" (p. 663), confirmed the socio-cultural sanction of gender and what acts were deemed culturally correct and vice versa. We must remember that acceptance, judgments, and criticisms arise from the descriptive nature of constatives, for if Abhasra did not perform in line with gender expectations, she might be faced with punitive consequences. Thus, such constatives mean so much and are historically relevant.

In sum, the historical Siam map and the representation of the 1965 Miss Universe's victory functioned culturally and politically. This was brilliantly stated by Phaka: "[I]n the invention of the 'body' of the nation came the movement to raise 'consciousness' (*jit-samneuk*) of that body, one which the notion of 'woman' (*phuying*) was gradually related to 'nation' (*chat*), as mediated by various social and political provisos" (p. 181). Both visual representations of the map and beauty pageant were contingent in time; yet despite the historical period difference, I argue that in both national identity and Thainess were projected for the Other. Once the visual was constituted, it interpellated labyrinthine discourses of national pride, the modern state, and the uniqueness of being Thai. The textual analysis in this paper explains and raises questions regarding the state's justification for creating such discourses. Its representation and proliferation engenders "redundancy [that] has an important function" (Winichakul, 1994, p. 160) of causing Thai people to identify with the representation, provoking nationalistic feelings and compelling them to protect their national pride.

Conclusion

The analysis of both the historical Siam map and the 1965 Miss Universe reveal the particular relations Siam/Thailand had with the West and its preoccupation with its self-image. Such relations were time and space contingent and affected the ambivalence of Thainess. Dominant discourses such as nation-building, anti-imperialist power, and modernity can be theoretically examined from the circulation of the historical Siam map and the news of Abhasra's victory. The notion of Thainess, I suggest, is fluid, unstable, and time and space contingent. Socio-economic factors played an integral part in its construction regardless of how the ruling elites' anxiety regarding "surface effects" (Jackson, 2004, p. 220) may intervene in such a the possible hybrid identity. Yet, the elites strategically negotiated elements in their asymmetrical power relations with the West so as to protect their independence, royal dignity, and gain acceptance. Hence, the construction of Thainess seemed valid and justified with "internal history" (Rhum, 1996, p. 351) but, at the same time, it represented itself as modern due to "reference to other societies" (p. 351).

Analysis of the discursive knowledge that constructed Thainess and Thai femininity shows the ambivalence and in-between space of such discourses (Thongchai, 1994). The recognition and disavowal process had a deep root in Siam/Thai mentality and epistemology. However, we cannot deny that it was the presence of the real and imaginary West that contributed to the constitution of Thainess. Both the map and the embodied Thai femininity were transcultural products. It is crucial that we do not view these cultural products as merely honest representations. Siam/Thailand's demarcation between private and public images (Jackson, 2004) is one such point that needs thorough analysis. The relationship between outward appearance and interior knowledge is part of the Thai polity's uniqueness, where the state has always acted as a strong monitor over what was deemed representable and vice versa. This was

clearly manifested in the manner in which women's bodies were restricted and connected to the nation. Thus, analyses of cultural products can reveal much about the Thai polity and its ability to conduct its performative Thainess on the world stage.

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Black Women's and Girls' Return to Joy: Addressing Trauma, Healing, and Educational Opportunity

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Abstract

The concept of thriving amidst trauma receives minimal attention when addressing negative life experiences of Black women and girls. This work examines strategies employed and recommended by Black women and girls that prompt thriving amidst traumatic circumstances. Radio broadcasts from the National Girls and Women of Color Council serve as data for the topic. Findings reveal the strength of Black women and girls in dealing with trauma, holding the potential to move beyond coping with circumstances, towards potential thriving in education and beyond.

Keywords: trauma, healing, Black women, Black girls, PEPS Syndrome, radio broadcasts, thriving

Social Contributors to Black Female Trauma

Scant attention has been paid to the concept of thriving amongst Black women and girls. Nevertheless, reframing discussion of coping with trauma for the population, to that in terms of thriving prompts movement beyond victimization, towards triumph and healing. The following reviews related literature to set the work's context, then examines radio commentary on Black women and girls dealing with forms of trauma using thriving as a conceptual framework.

Research has thoroughly documented how negative stereotypes, negative perceptions, and standards of beauty that do not value Black girls and women. Devaluing Black girls and women with respect to their voices, emotional needs, quality in the workforce, in society, abilities, and physical attributes (hair, skin color, body image, and other phenotypes) collaboratively affect the psychological, emotional, physical, and social (PEPS) happiness and well-being of this population (Culbreth, 2014; Lane, 2014; Williams, 2013; Dowtin, 2012; Hodge, 2011; Smith, 2010; Rhodes, 2009; Wilder. 2008; Thomas, 2006; Waller-Lomax, 2005; Gordon, 2004; Keith, Jackson & Gary, 2003). High levels of self-worth, self-love, self-esteem, self-identity, self-pride, and self-respect are crucial for the happiness and overall well-being of Black girls and women. When self-worth is affected by negative societal issues, PEPS Syndrome, a condition that manifests itself in the form of negative thought processes, negative attitudes and negative behaviors which in turn significantly affect self-worth, traps Black girls and women in psychic prisons of negativity. PEPS Syndrome defers dreams, diminishes hopes, and stagnate happiness and well-being. Women of color disproportionally suffer from stress related and environmentally induced illnesses, such as breast cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity (Comas-Diaz & Greene, 2013). For instance, cardiovascular disease leads the list in terms of the most common cause of death for Black women (Gonzales & Zea, 2013). In addition, they are more likely than White female peers to be single mothers with less social and economic support. Understanding causes, effects, and strategies for countering trauma would promote greater well-being for this population and promises to expand life spans, while improving the quality of life for Black women and their families.

This work features analysis of the National Girls and Women of Color Council Radio Broadcasts, which examine various forms of trauma amongst Black women and girls. Summaries of select broadcasts follow analysis using the concept of thriving as a conceptual framework. The purpose of this work centers upon examining strategies used by Black women and girls in terms of thriving amidst trauma. The work features exploration of two radio broadcasts centered on these topics as cases to analyze using the concept of thriving as a conceptual frame.

Methods

Collection of data centers upon discourse analysis of two specific radio broadcasts via the National Girls and Women of Color Council:

> *Factors Impacting the Development of Black Girls*
> *Being Black (and Blue): African American Women and Intimate Partner Abuse*

This work's approach to discourse analysis focuses upon "ideas, issues, and themes as they are expressed in talk and writing" (Gee, 2014, p. 1). The work seeks to address the following questions in analyzing talk within these broadcasts: How do Black women thrive amidst life

trauma? What strategies are employed to prompt mental and emotional healing? The researchers employed discourse analysis in summarizing and reflecting upon the featured radio shows. The conceptual framework of thriving provides a lens to further analyze the data.

Conceptual Framework

In his work *Resilience and Thriving: Issues, Models, and Linkages*, Carver describes thriving as being:

> …(physical or psychological and) reflect decreased reactivity to subsequent stressors, faster recovery from subsequent stressors, or a consistently higher level of functioning. Psychological thriving may reflect gains in skill, knowledge, confidence, or a sense of security in personal relationships. (2010, p. 1)

The concept of thriving, rather than merely coping during trauma, serves as the conceptual framework for this work.

Radio Broadcast #1: The Development of Black Girls

Factors Impacting the Development of Black Girls aired live one week following the recent incident of the "use of excessive force" in a South Carolina High School. Included in the discussion with Dr. Culbreth were social work scholar and clinician, Dr. Denise Davis-Maye and author and media specialist, Ms. Kymberly Keeton. The purpose of the show was to address the multiple factors which are thought to impact the status of Black girls in the United States, including racism, colorism, sexism, and social class. The focal point around which this discussion centered was the physical assault on an African American high school student by a school resource officer in South Carolina, and as such, the structural and direct violence which Black girls face.

Transitioning to a discussion of Black girls, allows us to highlight the factors which influence their identities, and the intersections of socioeconomic factors, race and racism, and the opportunities to address the gender and racial inequities that exist for Black girls in schools and communities. Lindsay-Dennis (2015) and others promote the contextualizing of Black girls' experiences in ways that reframe how they are characterized and socially understood (Evans-Winters & Esposito, 2010; Crenshaw, Ocen, &Mamda, 2015). While we agree with Crenshaw and colleagues (2015) that Black girls face a multitude of historical, institutional, and social factors which impede their chances of achieving academically, economically, and socially, we also believe that Black girls in the U.S. have consistently been laden with stereotypical characteristics that diminish their value and worth, emphasizing being 'loud,' 'brash,' ghetto, defiant, and sexually promiscuous among(Morris, 2007). Simultaneously, they are ascribed with traits that create an almost herculean repute, including "strong," "proud," "outspoken," and "resilient." (Brown, 2008; Bulanda & Majumdar, 2009; Carlson, et al, 2000; Jackson & Lassiter, 2003). That these traits could exist concurrently seems irrational and ignorant at best. How can they, Black girls, be all? How do they, Black girls, manage the divergent expectations that society has for and ascribes to them?

As the discussion ensued there were several themes which emerged: 1) Responses to and recognition of the impact of trauma; 2) Resignation to victimization and marginalization; 3) Creating spaces for support and uplift; 4) Blaming girls for logical responses to the violence; 5) Addressing community internalization of external views of Blackness and girlhood; and 6)

Methods to enact community responsibility for Black girls. These themes align with and further illuminate the significance of the findings of Crenshaw (2015) and her colleagues that the structures governing the schools, communities, and broader society in which many Black girls operate in the U.S. are racialized and gendered and as a result leaving an often undiscernible toll on their psyches, self-concepts, and souls. In fact, Davis-Maye, Davis, and Bertrand-Jones (2013) argue that the excessive focus on Black youth broadly, and Black girls specifically, as social problems serves as a barrier to strategically considering, engaging, and nurturing the competence, cognitive productivity, and aspirations of Black youth.

Responses to Contemporary Exemplars of Excessive School Discipline

Dr. Culbreth began by engaging the panel around an incident occurring in the Fall of 2015, wherein a School Resource Officer (SRO), a deputy of a local sheriff's department, was videotaped by students as he violently attempts to remove a 16-year-old girl from her seat and subsequently hurls her across the classroom. Davis-Maye responded by emphasizing the micro and structural issues present in this incident. First, she discussed the impact of the assault on the victim's self-concept and socioemotional health. The student was looking down at her desk as she responded to the officer. At no point did she appear to be a physical threat which would result in the level of vitriol with which the SRO responds. She further situated her discussion around what appeared to be resignation on the part of the student's peers. The level of acquiescence on their parts suggest a regular exposure to the kind of violence which was depicted in the videos. In other words, the students likely regularly saw this level of hyper-violent responses to Black students and girls.

Structural Challenges Impacting Black Girls

Next, structural concerns were demonstrated through what appeared to be ineffective and overreaching classroom and behavior management. The White House Council on Women and Girls (WHCWG) (2015) report the necessity of implementing supportive discipline strategies as opposed to methods based on corporal ideologies. It appears that excessive response to Black girls who are perceived as non-compliant extends beyond New York and Boston as reported in 2015 Black Girls Matter Report (Crenshaw et al, 2015). The South Carolina occurrence serves as a perfect exemplar of the punitive discipline leveled against Black girls. Further, the teacher and principal's apparent lack of sensitivity to what reportedly were multiple losses on the part of the student is even more startling. Were they unaware of the change in the student's family status? The same report additionally delineates how girls view environments where discipline appears to supersede learning as "…neither safe nor nurturing settings within which to learn. To the contrary, the emphasis on discipline turns some girls off from school, leading them to become disengaged from the learning process and subject to separation from school altogether" (Crenshaw et al, p. 28).

Interestingly, the SRO's response nor the principal's inaction were in accordance with the National Association of School Resource Officer's (NASRO) best practices or mission. In fact, according to the organization's 2012 report, *To Protect & Educate: The School Resource Officers and the Prevention of Violence in Schools,* SROs should refrain from engaging in discipline which falls in the realm of the responsibility of school administrators – namely the principal and educators responsible for student compliance. The NASRO's "Triad of SRO Responsibility" implores the SROs to "contribute to the safe-schools team by ensuring a safe and secure campus, educating students about law-related topics, and mentoring students as

counselors and role models." On the surface, the SRO mission seems laudable, and would be if it were equitably applied and Black girls were considered as worthy of protection.

Ms. Keeton even suggests persecution of Black girls and women, noting that girls in general and the 16-year-old at the center of this discussion are "come for." This anecdotal observation is supported by Crenshaw and colleagues (2015) as they suggest that Black girls are at greater risk than their White counterparts of being suspended and expelled for behavioral infractions. Scholars (Crenshaw et al, 2015; Lindsay-Dennis & Cummings, 2014) report that educators actually fail to discipline White girls for the very same infractions that Black girls are not only disciplined for but for which Black girls receive suspensions and expulsions.

Interestingly, as the discussion proceeds it relegates the solutions to the past and places responsibility on the broader "Black community." Dr. Culbreth brought up "the village" by introducing the adage often attributed to a West African proverb: "It takes a village to raise a child." This aphorism is an idea which is central to many African proverbs and many other communalistic societies. As panelists began to reframe the discussion, the closing thoughts centered on whose responsibility it is to keep Black girls' soul, psyches, and physical selves safe? Is it the imagined community or village? More importantly, who belongs to the village? Even in the context of a discussion of panelists, all of whom identify as woman-centered, there was a sentiment that somehow the 16-year-old's plight was the result of some lack on the part of her community. This internalization of messages of want, both subliminally and direct, negatively impact how communities can stand for Black girls (Orfield & Lee, 2005). Parents and communities have put their trust in institutions and expect them to care for, protect, and educate Black girls. However, one will not actively protect what one does not value. Devaluation of Black girls is weaved into the very fabric of the institutions which Black communities have entrusted to care for them. According to Crenshaw (2015), the girls know how much they are devalued and stereotyped. The WHCWG identifies one of their goals as supporting school discipline practices that promote safe, inclusive, and positive learning environments. Focus on uncovering causes of existing disciplinary disparities is urgent as suggested by the WHCWG report. However, these inquiries, policy, and practice developments require programmatic responses which take into account the community contexts in which these girls reside. Programs like KEMET Academy (Davis et al, 2011) encourages a set of twelve (12) competencies which includes an adult investment that requires a deeper level of concern and intentionality not present in many settings where Black girls frequent. The investment of parents, teachers, school resource officers, police, and others recognizes the interconnection between success in their lives and the lives of the young women for whom they are responsible. Such a connection may require a large scale reset and reframing how the Black community perceives, values, and understands girls.

Radio Broadcast #2: Being Black (and Blue): African American Women and Intimate Partner Abuse

> "Intimate partner abuse is any type of behavior that another intimate partner uses to gain power, … control, and put fear in that other person". – Dr. Hillary Potter

According to the National Intimate Partner and Violence Survey, intimate partner violence includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats of physical or sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner. Intimate partner violence may occur among cohabiting or non-cohabiting romantic or sexual partners as well as among opposite or same sex couples (National Intimate Partner

and Sexual Violence Survey, 2010). The featured radio broadcast focused on physical, emotional, and psychological abuse.

This topic holds importance for four reasons. First, the number of female victims of violence is staggering. More than one-third of women in the United States (35.6% or approximately 42.4 million) have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. One in three women (32.9%) have experienced physical violence by an intimate partner and nearly 1 in 10 (9.4%) has been raped by an intimate partner in her lifetime (American Psychological Association, 2015). Approximately 5.9%, or almost 7.0 million women in the United States, reported experiencing these forms of violence by an intimate partner in the 12 months prior to taking the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey in 2010. In addition, nearly 3 in 10 women in the United States (28.8% or approximately 34.3 million) have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner and reported at least one measured impact related to experiencing these or other forms of violent behavior in that relationship (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2015).

Second, victims of intimate partner abuse experience diminished life outcomes. Several studies have found survivors of intimate partner abuse frequently report psychological distress, increased rates of aggression, diminished physical health, and additional challenges in their parental roles (Follette, Briere, Rozelle, Hopper, & Rome, 2015; Jenkins, 2002; Sabri et al, 2013).

Third, the unique socio-historical experiences of Black women may make them less likely than women of other racial and/or ethnic groups to report intimate partner violence. In particular, the Strong Black Woman (SBW) Syndrome is a culturally salient ideal prescription that Black women must always render a guise of self-reliance, selflessness, and psychological, emotional, and physical strength (Baker, Buchanan, Mingo, Roker, & Brown, 2014). Therefore, the SBW Syndrome may make these women less likely to recognize abuse and/or report it (Dow, 2015; Potter, 2014; Richie, 2012). Finally, since the reasons why women enter into and/or remain in abusive relationships are multi-faceted, and many cases of violence go unreported, one must recognize the barriers that make it difficult for many Black women to leave abusive relationships.

Contemporary Examples of Intimate Partner Abuse

Dr. Culbreth specifically mentioned two high-profile incidents in the media that involved Black women and intimate partner abuse. The first incident involved Marissa Alexander, the 31-year old African American woman and mother of three in Florida that served three years for merely firing a warning shot at her abuser (Prupis, 2015). Although Alexander initially faced 20 years in prison under Florida's "10-20-life" rule, many regarded her sentence as a gross miscarriage of justice as well as an attempt to minimize the power of Black female victims of intimate partner abuse. According to Ayanna Harris, co-organizer of the Chicago Alliance to Free Marissa Alexander, "One of the biggest issues and injustices Marissa's prosecution and incarceration illuminates is the criminalization of women who defend themselves" (Prupis, 2015). The second incident involved a 28-year-old African American professional sports player and his 27-year-old African American fiancée. When surveillance video of the assault of Janay Palmer by her then-boyfriend, now husband, former Baltimore Ravens running back Ray Rice

on February 15, 2014 went viral on February 19, 2014,[1] it immediately created a media storm regarding the prevalence of intimate partner abuse in society as well as critique regarding why Palmer would remain in a relationship with a man that many perceived as unpredictable, calloused, and violent. The public condemnation of Palmer intensified after she married Rice in an elaborate ceremony on March 28, 2014 (Nathan & McCormick, 2014), which coincidentally was one day after he was indicted for third-degree aggravated assault for knocking her unconscious.

The Reasons Why Women Tolerate Intimate Partner Abuse

Dr. Potter revealed several reasons why many Black women enter into and/or remain in abusive relationships. One reason why some women tolerate abuse is generational. During the broadcast, she mentioned an 18-year-old African American female that "did not want to date Black men because that is who abused her mother." Sadly, this young woman eventually became romantically involved with two males that were abusive toward her. A second reason why many women tolerate abuse is due to being financially dependent on their abusers as well as religious institutions that tell women, "You just need to be a better wife," which further encourages women to remain in abusive relationships and/or marriages. A third reason why many women tolerate abuse is because the abuser and the abused are members of a low socioeconomic status, and thus, have a higher level of interaction with law enforcement than more economically advantaged couples. Due to the fact that many African American men have negative interactions with the legal system, Black woman may be reluctant to report abuse because they fear that their abuser will be jailed or lose his employment. A fourth reason why many women tolerate abuse is because they are socialized to believe they provoke their partner to act in violent ways. Case in point: When she publicly said, "I do deeply regret the role that I played in the incident," Janay Palmer insinuated that she (the abused) and her husband Ray Rice (the abuser) were equally responsible for her being knocked unconscious. According to Potter, oftentimes the victim feels that she must apologize for "putting him in that position where he has to be abusive toward her." A fifth reason why many women tolerate abuse is because they love their partner. However, these women must recognize that "love, fear, power are also reasons why women stay." It is imperative that African American women in abused relationships realize "this isn't love when someone is doing this [being abusive] to me." While Black women in toxic relationships may have strong love for abusers, these abused women must accept that "fear, power, and control" ultimately drive these relationships. The final reason why many women tolerate abuse is because the blame is not put on the proper person. Unfortunately, for many female victims of abuse (and particularly those that have been in many abusive relationships), the blame is squarely placed on their shoulders, yet *the focus needs to be on the men*. For individuals that may be inclined to blame the woman for the abuse, it is important to recognize that regardless of race, abusive men typically possess certain mindsets and display certain types of behaviors. As Potter poignantly stated: "Batterers go through the same school...they use the same tactics, the same language" (i.e. "If I can't have you, no one can."). They are oftentimes very charismatic, and sadly batterers are looking for certain types of individuals they can have power over.

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[1] For more in-depth coverage of this incident, see the ESPN (September 19, 2014) story, "Rice Case: Purposeful Misdirection by Team, Scant Investigation by NFL," by Don Van Natta and Kevin Van Valdenburg.

The Negative Effects of Intimate Partner Abuse

Dr. Culbreth then posed the question, "So, if a little boy sees his mother being abused, will he be more likely to abuse himself when he becomes an adult?" According to Potter, there are several negative effects for the African American abused woman and her children. Research that looks at life course and generational outcomes suggests males of abused mothers are more likely to be abusive (starting in adolescence) and the females are more likely to be attracted to abusive men. A deep internal struggle exists for boys whose role models are abusive males, yet are simultaneously deeply inclined and compelled to protect their mothers. An additional negative effect are the deleterious psychological effects of intimate partner violence on the self-esteem and self-doubt of Black female victims. Many of these women wonder, "Can I choose a man who's not going to beat me?" In her work, Dr. Potter has spoken extensively with Black women that were on the verge of being in an abusive relationship in their current relationship. However, several of these women were in prior relationships marked by abuse. Because many of these Black women did not trust themselves to be in a relationship with a man that would not abuse them, they purposefully remained celibate or made the conscious decision to focus on rearing their children. Another negative effect of intimate partner abuse for women is the associated stigma of being a single mother. Even though Black women are part of a "working legacy," many abused Black women's desire to be in a relationship with a Black man may be so strong that regardless of whether they have biological children or are part of a blended family, they "just want to look like a normal family, so if I have to put up with a little abuse, I will deal with that." The last negative effect of intimate partner abuse for Black women is the legacy of strength from which they come. Although Black women are part of a history where they worked outside of the home and were forced to be strong, particularly during slavery (i.e., protecting themselves from abusive slave masters and men in the fields with whom they worked and lived), many in society may find it difficult to believe that Black women can be victims of abuse. Outsiders may believe, "There's no way this woman could have been the victim….she's just too strong for that!" The Battered Women's Syndrome [which was mentioned during the trial of Marissa Alexander] "was never really helpful for Black women because they [Black women] never fit the ideal victim."

Recommendations for Women in Abusive Relationships

Given the high number of women in abusive relationships are not reflected in the current statistics, Dr. Culbreth posed the important question, "What should women do to protect themselves and their children?" Since it takes a woman approximately seven times to leave her abuser before she leaves for good (Potter, 2014), it is essential that a woman has a firm plan in place. Furthermore, since a woman has a greater chance of harm immediately after she leaves the relationship, Dr. Potter advised that women be keenly aware of how a man behaved when she first tried to leave and that she has a solid plan in place *before she leaves the relationship*. Dr. Potter has advised women in abusive relationships to not write down their plan as this can be dangerous, especially if the abuser has a habit of frequently checking her telephone or monitoring her daily activities. Given the likelihood of violence is substantially heightened immediately after the abused tries to leave, Black women in abusive relationships are encouraged to memorize or think through (by role-playing in their mind) where they will go, who their support systems will be (sadly, some women lose valuable support systems when they leave their abuser and ultimately return to him), and who can assist them. Toward the end of the broadcast, Dr. Culbreth recounted a situation with a young woman who was being physically abused. This young woman eventually got pregnant by her abuser and was being physically abused during this time. She said, "He really loves me. He only does this because

he gets upset with me." Even though many people "don't want to get involved," Dr. Culbreth stressed the importance of being responsible for ourselves and others, and as such, to not stand by idly when a woman is being abused. Although some individuals object to getting personally involved in situations involving abuse, Dr. Culbreth encouraged her audience, "You don't have to get involved. Just make a phone call."Hence, individually and collectively we have a responsibility to help minimize the physical, emotional, and psychological abuse of Black women.

Findings

In light of the conceptual framework of thriving, the broadcast on the use of excessive force upon Black girls, centered upon the role communities play in promoting the well-being and safety of Black girls. While no direct strategies were offered to promote thriving of Black girls, the repeated idea of increased "adult investment" in promoting success for Black girls serves as a component of how communities may move towards thriving for this important group.

Similarly, the broadcast on Black women in abusive relationships centered upon both collective and individual action in improving the safety and well-being of women. The most noteworthy recommendation was the importance of women in abusive unions forming plans to leave such relationships. Should this plan entail not only leaving, but also healing, it may serve as an component towards ultimately thriving. However, the underlying current centered upon coping rather than thriving.

Conclusion

Racism, low expectations, and as discussed here, a lack of safety in schools presents barriers to learning, academic engagement, and ultimately achievement for Black girls. University and college campuses are not immune from the threat of abuse, particularly stemming from dating relationships. Such experiences hinder the personal well-being and academic experiences of abused students.

The results of this study suggest continued need for understanding strategies towards thriving and healing of trauma amongst Black women and girls. Future work in this area may delve deeper into this topic by studying Black women and girl exemplars who healed from and thrived amidst trauma. Examining best practices of individual exemplars and of programs geared towards promoting the success and well-being of this important population would complement the work. Future research in this area might further explore how intersectional identities shape the experiences of Black women and girls in schools, the workplace, and society as a whole. Exploring the complexity of the group's identities and how they influence outcomes promise to raise understanding of their challenges so that they might be ameliorated.

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