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On the Sleeve of the Visual

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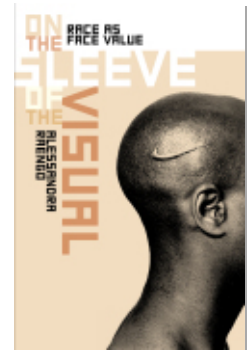
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NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 17.

2. I emphasize the idea of “repetition with difference” after Homi Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

3. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Seeing through Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

4. I am especially referring here to two recent publications: Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), and the already mentioned Mitchell, *Seeing through Race*.

5. In this sense, I share Mitchell’s position that we are not in a post-racial society but rather in a moment in which race is put under erasure. He too discusses race as an ontology but not as an image ontology the way I endeavor here. See Scott Loren and

Jörg Metelmann. "What's the Matter: Race as Res," *Journal of Visual Culture* 10, no. 3 (2011): 397–405; and Mitchell's response "Playing the Race Card with Lacan," *Journal of Visual Culture* 10, no. 3 (2011): 405–9.

6. Here I understand visuality in general terms as the quality of being visual, not in the way Nicholas Mirzoeff does in *The Right to Look* where visuality ultimately indicates a political formation administered through visual means and is connected to the peculiarly Western process of visualizing history, hence "both a medium for the transmission and dissemination of authority, and a means for the mediation of those subject to that authority." Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look*, xv.

7. An important terminological clarification is in order: I use the term "black body" when I want to emphasize the outcome of a historical and epistemological process of suturing race onto the body (in Charles Mills's terminology, the outcome of the embodiment of race as form of political domination), whereas I use the term "raced body" when I intend to call attention to the act of framing such body as the bearer of the self-evident sign of race. Charles W. Mills, *From Class to Race: Essays in White Marxism and Black Radicalism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 168–69.

8. In turn, this is not an attempt to suggest that "black" and "white" in their visual sense should have an ontology, but rather that these two notions operate (rhetorically, semiotically, affectively, and so on) *as if* they did. When the ontological question is posed in relation to the "lived experience" of blackness, as Fred Moten does in "The Case of Blackness," the stakes and repercussions are quite different. There the challenge is to figure out under what practical and theoretical circumstances the black can hold, as Fanon explains, an "ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man." I return to this issue in the conclusion. See Fred Moten, "The Case of Blackness," *Criticism* 50, no. 2 (2008); Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008 [1952]), 90.

9. In "Surface Reading: An Introduction," *Representations* 108 (2009) Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus discuss the notion of surface reading in relation to the long hegemonic practice of symptomatic reading. Their intervention is important in keeping distinct the idea of reading the surface in search for a meaningful depth behind it and the idea of reading the surface as such. I briefly come back to this issue in chapter 4.

10. With the terms "troubled" and "troubling" I evoke the premise for Nicole Fleetwood's book *Troubling Vision: "seeing black is always a problem in a visual field that structures the troubling presence of blackness."* Emphasis in original. Nicole R. Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision. Performance, Visuality, and Blackness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 3. Her book shares a lot of concerns that are similar to mine, but not the focus on the ontological question.

11. I am referring here to what in the late '80s and early '90s Cultural Studies was described as the "burden of representation." See the seminal essay by Kobena Mercer

and Isaac Julien, “De Margin and De Center,” *Screen* 29, no. 4 (1988). For a summary of the question of representation at that time see chapter five on “Stereotype, Realism, and the Struggle over Representation,” in Ella Shohat and Stam Robert, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

12. Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007). This expectation ultimately relies on the understanding of black art as a form of self-portraiture, which, as Kobena Mercer recalls, “in its received sense is a structurally impossible genre for the black artist to occupy,” especially when, in Fanon’s words, the colonized is “constantly struggling against his own image.” Kobena Mercer, “Busy in the Ruins of a Wretched Phantasia,” in *Frantz Fanon: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Anthony Alessandrini (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 203. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 170.

13. We can see the phenomenological lineage beginning with Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks*. It continues through commentators such as Charles Johnson, “A Phenomenology of the Black Body,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 32, no. 4 (1993); Gayle Salamon, “‘The Place Where Life Hides Away’: Merleau-Ponty, Fanon, and the Location of Bodily Being,” *differences* 17, no. 2 (2006); Teresa De Lauretis, “Difference Embodied: Reflections on *Black Skin, White Masks*,” *Parallax* 8, no. 2 (2002); Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others and Post-Coloniality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (New York: Routledge, 2004). More generally, my phenomenological approach to the visual is informed by Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004); Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); Jennifer M. Barker, *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009).

14. See Anne Anlin Cheng, *Second Skin: Josephine Baker and the Modern Surface* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), where she traces how, in the Modern Primitivism that coalesced into Josephine Baker, the skin of the Other meets the modernist ideal of the pure surface.

15. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 91. The insistence on evisceration comes from David Marriott, *Haunted Life: Visual Culture and Black Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007), see especially chapter 1.

16. Johnson, “Phenomenology of the Black Body,” 606.

17. Here, I understand the fold mostly after the phenomenological readings of Fanon mentioned above, in particular Johnson’s essay on the “Phenomenology of the Black Body,” not in relation to the exciting and mostly Deleuzian scholarship on the fold, for example Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*

(Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Anna Munster, *Materializing New Media: Embodiment in Information Aesthetics* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2006); Timothy Murray, *Digital Baroque: New Media Art and Cinematic Folds* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Laura U. Marks, *Enfoldment and Infinity: An Islamic Genealogy of New Media Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010). My sense of the fold is also different from Nyong'o, *The Amalgamation Waltz: Race, Performance, and the Ruses of Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

18. Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 12–13.

19. Morrison describes the “Africanist” presence in American literature as a “dark and abiding presence that moves the hearts and texts of American literature with fear and longing,” and a “haunting, a darkness from which our early literature seemed unable to extricate itself.” Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 33.

20. Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, xi.

21. Emphasis in original. Elizabeth Abel, “Black Writing, White Reading: Race and the Politics of Feminist Interpretation,” *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 3 (1993), 477. My question, however, would not be “how” but, “why.” What authorizes the conflation between a black woman’s biological body and her textual body so that the black text is held up as the mirror of the black woman’s body? Why this conflation and what is really being embodied in each case?

22. Abel, “Black Writing, White Reading,” 471.

23. Abel, “Black Writing, White Reading,” 472.

24. Trudier Harris, “Watchers Watching Watchers: Positioning Characters and Readers in Baldwin’s ‘Sonny Blues’ and Morrison’s ‘Recitatif,’” in *James Baldwin and Toni Morrison: Comparative Critical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. Lovalerie King and Lynn Orilla Scott (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 111.

25. Henry Louis Gates lists, among the critical fallacies that have severely limited the analysis of black literature, the “anthropology,” the “perfectibility” and the “sociology” fallacies. “Because of the curious valorization of the social and polemical functions of black literature, the structure of the black text has been *repressed* and treated as if it were *transparent*. The black literary work of art has stood at the center of a triangle of relations . . . , but as the very thing *not* to be explained, as if it were invisible, or literal, or a one-dimensional document.” Emphasis in original. Henry Louis Gates Jr., “Criticism in the Jungle,” in *Black Literature and Literary Theory*, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Sunday Ogbonna Anozie (New York: Methuen, 1984), 5–6.

26. Lee Edelman, “The Part for the (W)hole: Baldwin, Homophobia, and the Fantasmatics of ‘Race,’” in *Homographesis* (New York: Routledge, 1994). Edelman leverages the idea of synecdoche Homi Bhabha explores in his analysis of the colonial scene of the retrieval of the English Bible, discussed in “Signs Taken for Wonders,”

in *Race, Writing, and Difference*, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

27. Emphasis added. Homi Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity: Frantz Fanon and the Postcolonial Prerogative," in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 64.

28. Audre Lorde, "Eye to Eye: Black Women, Hatred, and Anger," in *Sister Outsider* (New York: Ten Speed Press, 2007), 147.

29. "The white woman's refusal to touch the black child does not simply stand for the expulsion of blackness from white social space, but actually re-forms that social space through re-forming the apartness of the white body" (emphasis in original). Ahmed, *Strange Encounters*, 51.

30. The concept of avisuality comes from Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005). For a discussion of "Recitatif" that is compatible with this notion see also Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks, "What's in a Name? Love and Knowledge Beyond Identity in 'Recitatif,'" in *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race* (London: Routledge, 2000).

31. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 89.

32. In this context, I find it hard to separate effect from affect. My notion of *effect* comes from Roland Barthes's concept of the "reality effect," which he describes as a direct collusion of a referent and a signifier (at the expense of an evacuation of the signified from the sign). Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect," in *The Rustle of Language* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1986), 148. At the same time, and extending some reflections Vivian Sobchack makes in an insightful essay on Barthes, the reality effect can be seen also as an *affect* of referentiality. Vivian Sobchack, "The Insistent Fringe: Moving Images and Historical Consciousness," *History and Theory* 36, no. 4 (1997). Influential is also Massumi's idea of the indexicality of the affective fact as outlined in "The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat," in *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

33. Nicholas Mirzoeff, "The Shadow and the Substance: Race, Photography, and the Index," in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003), 126.

34. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*; Bhabha, "Interrogating Identity"; see also Bhabha, "Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche, and the Colonial Condition," in *Rethinking Fanon the Continuing Dialogue*, ed. Nigel Gibson (New York: Humanity Books, 1999).

35. English, *How to See*, 37. This is a rather shared reading of the passage, see Marriott, *Haunted Life*; Mercer, "Busy in the Ruins"; Kara Keeling, "In the Interval: Frantz Fanon and the 'Problems' of Visual Representation," *Qui Parle* 13, no. 2 (2003).

36. Fatimah Tobing Rony, *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 6.

37. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Random House, 1970), 9.

38. Michel Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, trans. James Harkness (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 19.

39. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

40. Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, 20.

41. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 66.

42. Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, 44.

43. Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, 44.

44. Foucault's initial reading of the function of Magritte's pipe points out that it could be understood as a "calligram." Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, 19–31.

45. English, *How to See*, 204. See also Huey Copeland, "Glenn Ligon and Other Runaway Subjects," *Representations* 113, no. 1 (2011); Glenn Ligon et al., *Glenn Ligon: Some Changes* (Toronto: Power Plant, 2005); Simon Morley, *Writing on the Wall: Word and Image in Modern Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003).

46. English, *How to See*, 212.

47. I develop this idea in chapter 1.

48. Emphasis added. English writes, "A mindset that regards a surface (or appearance) as an end, after all, threatens to reduce the contingencies of an art situation to the sheer materiality of works and their viewers. Ostensibly merely aesthetic, such an 'image' also captures the two-dimensionality governing much of our thinking about culture, and by extension the very model of social relations against which Ligon's work is critically directed. This is why we might regard the most basic formal operation in Ligon's work not as representational but as abstractive." Darby English, "Glenn Ligon: Committed to Difficulty," in *Glenn Ligon: Some Changes*, 38.

49. Curiously, Ligon makes a similar point in an interview with Stephen Andrews. While discussing his Richard Pryor jokes paintings, he claims that "a nigger is a nigger is a nigger. Pardon me, Gertrude." Stephen Andrews, "Glenn Ligon: In Conversation," in *Glenn Ligon: Some Changes*, 185.

50. In *Troubling Vision*, Fleetwood discusses the possibility for black images to act non-iconically, especially in chapter 1 on African American photographer Charles "Teenie" Harris.

51. The idea of photography as an image state comes from Raymond Bellour, "Concerning 'the Photographic,'" in *Still Moving: Between Cinema and Photography*, ed. Karen Beckman and Jean Ma (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Raymond Bellour, "The Double Helix," in *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation*, ed. Timothy Druckrey (New York: Aperture, 1996). A compatible non-medium specific way to think across both moving and still images, photochemical and digital images can be found for example in Kara Keeling's Deleuzian notion

of the “cinematic.” See Kara Keeling, *The Witch’s Flight: The Cinematic, the Black Femme, and the Image of Common Sense* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

52. This notion comes from Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum, 2004).

53. This visual conceit whereby invisibility has visibility at its heart is developed by Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), and Lippit, *Atomic Light*.

54. Even though Afrofuturism is an established artistic, theoretical, and historiographical framework, here I employ the term in a loose sense, especially given Mutu’s rejection of the label. The website afrofuturism.net has an extensive bibliography of critical and literary works that are counted under this umbrella, but two foundational texts are Alondra Nelson, “Afrofuturism: A Special Issue of Social Text,” *Social Text* 20, no. 2 (2002); and Kodwo Eshun, “Further Considerations of Afrofuturism,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 2 (2003).

55. Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Classics, 1990), 167.

56. In my essay “Reification, Reanimation, and the Money of the Real,” *World Picture Journal* 7 (2012) (available at http://www.worldpicturejournal.com/WP_7/Raengo.html), I focus specifically on this pivotal move as both theoretical and stylistic in Ken Jacobs’s *Capitalism: Slavery* (2006), a digital animation of a stereoscopic card picturing slaves at work in a cotton field, and Nick Hooker’s 2008 digital video for Grace Jones’s song “Corporate Cannibal.”

ONE THE PHOTOCHEMICAL IMAGINATION

1. Jacqueline Goldsby explores the authorial claims on lynching photographs usually by professionals and most often with the complicity of law enforcement, such as in the case of the photographs of Jesse Washington’s 1916 lynching in Waco, Texas, which were taken from the town’s courthouse. Jacqueline Goldsby, *A Spectacular Secret: Lynching in American Life and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 133. See also Patricia Bernstein, *The First Waco Horror: The Lynching of Jesse Washington and the Rise of the NAACP* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005); Sam Perry, “Competing Image Vernaculars in the Anti-Lynching Movement of the 1930s” (PhD diss., Georgia State University, 2011).

2. Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade against Lynching, 1909–1950* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1980).

3. Scholars refer to the visuality of lynching in terms of tableau to emphasize its *mise-en-scène*, its theatricality, the pageantry of racial supremacy that needs to perform itself over and over again to maintain its social footing. See for instance,

Robyn Wiegman, *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); Dora Apel, *Imagery of Lynching: Black Men, White Women, and the Mob* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004). Tableau also refers to what James Snead would describe as “metaphysical stasis,” the exhibition of the black (singular) and his/her social position as an unchanging essence. See James Snead, *White Screens, Black Images: Hollywood from the Dark Side* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994). See also Toni Morrison’s retooling of Snead’s categories in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 67–68.

4. Nicholas Mirzoeff, “The Shadow and the Substance: Race, Photography, and the Index,” in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003).

5. The idea of lynching as a cultural logic comes from Goldsby, *A Spectacular Secret*.

6. I borrow the term “artefact” from Akira Lippit, *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 53.

7. Morrison, *Playing in the Dark*, 17.

8. Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); Martin Heidegger, “The Age of the World Picture,” in *Off the Beaten Track* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Nicholas Mirzoeff, “On Visuality,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 5, no. 1 (2006); W. J. T. Mitchell, *Seeing through Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

9. This ethical dilemma is described by Dora Apel, “On Looking: Lynching Photographs and Legacies of Lynching after 9/11,” *American Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (2003).

10. Robyn Wiegman describes this suturing process when she claims that the disciplinary function of lynching was exerted through a “panoptic mode of surveillance and its materialization of violence in public displays of torture and castration [so that] the black subject is disciplined in two powerful ways: by the threat of always *being seen* and by the spectacular *scene*” (emphasis added). Wiegman, *American Anatomies*, 13.

11. Discussed in Abdul R. JanMohamed, *The Death-Bound-Subject: Richard Wright’s Archaeology of Death* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

12. “While we might attribute to the slave system many of the features of the society of spectacle,” writes Wiegman, “for instance, from the dynamic of the auction block to brandings, whippings, and other rituals of public torture, the panoptic can be located in such phenomenon as the organizing layout of the plantation, the ideological elision between slavery and dark skin, and the legalization of miscegenation as an abstracted property relation. The disciplinary power of race, in short, must be read as implicated in both specular and panoptic regimes.” Wiegman, *American Anatomies*, 39.

13. Emphasis added. Wiegman, *American Anatomies*, 81.
14. See also James Allen, *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America* (Santa Fe, NM: Twin Palms Publishers, 2000).
15. Apel, "On Looking"; Apel, *Imagery of Lynching*; Dora Apel and Shawn Michelle Smith, *Lynching Photographs* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008); Wiegman, *American Anatomies*.
16. I am inspired here by literature employing Giorgio Agamben's concept of bare life to discuss the specific disenfranchisement of the African American population becoming once again visible with Katrina — what Henry Giroux calls "the biopolitics of disposability"; that is, the idea that Katrina has created yet another state of exception within which blacks are made present before the law but not represented by the law; blacks are bearers of obligations but not of rights. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Henry Giroux, "Violence, Katrina, and the Biopolitics of Disposability," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 7–8 (2007); Nicholas Mirzoeff, "The Sea and the Land: Biopower and Visuality from Slavery to Katrina," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 50, no. 2 (2009). See also Jared Sexton, "People-of-Color-Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery," *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (2010).
17. Charles W. Mills, "Non-Cartesian Sums: Philosophy and the African-American Experience," in *Blackness Visible Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 6.
18. Leigh Raiford, "The Consumption of Lynching Images," in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003), 270.
19. Mirzoeff, "The Shadow and the Substance," 123, emphasis added.
20. Raiford, "The Consumption of Lynching Images," 267.
21. See essays by Coco Fusco, Nicholas Mirzoeff, and Jennifer Gonzales in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003).
22. Emphasis added. Coco Fusco, "Racial Time, Racial Marks, Racial Metaphors," in *Only Skin Deep*, 16.
23. See also Beth Coleman, "Race as Technology," *Camera Obscura* 24, no. 1 (2009).
24. Emphasis in the original. Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 24; David Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 55.
25. My idea of the regime of image-ness is derived in part from Jacques Rancière, *The Future of the Image*, trans. Gregory Elliott (New York: Verso, 2007).
26. Emphasis added. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 89. See also Stuart Hall, "The After-Life of Frantz Fanon: Why Fanon? Why Now? Why *Black Skins, White*

Masks?,” in *The Fact of Blackness*, ed. Alan Read (Seattle: Bay Press, 1996); Teresa De Lauretis, “Difference Embodied: Reflections on *Black Skin, White Masks*,” *Parallax* 8, no. 2 (2002). I am partly relying on Greg Hainge’s suggestion that photographic fixation is analogous to the process of constitution of normative bodies. Greg Hainge, “Unfixing the Photographic Image: Photography, Indexicality, Fidelity and Normativity,” *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 22, no. 5 (2011).

27. I have a strong desire to read this image in relation to the frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* as similarly offering a representation of the formation of the social contract. But with important differences: whereas in the *Leviathan* the observer is aligned with the look of the citizens, in the NAACP photograph we are unable to see what they are looking at. Instead, we are aligned with the shadow of the body that catalyzes the reenactment of their covenant and, what’s more, we look at the citizens “through” it. Whereas in the frontispiece of the *Leviathan* we are delivered a representation of the moment of contractual agreement in the body of the sovereign, in the NAACP photograph instead we are denied the representation of the outcome of the contractual moment. Rather, we are given its empty shell, the sheer structure of its circularity. Lacking a representation of its successful achievement, the covenant is suspended while its necessary conditions are laid bare. In chapter 2 I return to this in relation to Fred Wilson’s installation *Cabinet Making 1820–1960* and describe it as the “critical use of the missing body.”

28. Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photography on the Color Line: W.E.B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 127.

29. Shawn Michelle Smith, “The Evidence of Lynching Photographs,” in *Lynching Photographs*, ed. Dora Apel and Shawn Michelle Smith (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008), 23. See also Dray, *At the Hands of Persons Unknown*.

30. Homi Bhabha, “Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche, and the Colonial Condition,” in *Rethinking Fanon: The Continuing Dialogue*, ed. Nigel Gibson (New York: Humanity Books, 1999), 186. I discuss this again in chapter 4 in relation to Kara Walker’s work.

31. Mary Ann Doane, “Indexicality: Trace and Sign: Introduction,” *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007), 2.

32. Charles S. Peirce, *The Essential Peirce: Selected Philosophical Writings*, ed. Nathan Houser and Christian J.W. Kloesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 226. Quoted in Mary Ann Doane, “The Indexical and the Concept of Medium Specificity,” *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007): 133.

33. Doane, “The Indexical,” 136.

34. Rosalind Krauss, “Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America,” *October* 3 (1977).

35. Krauss’s goal, claims Doane, was to detach the index from realism: “While realism claims to build a mimetic copy, an illusion of an inhabitable world, the index only purports to point, to connect, to touch, to make language and representation

adhere to the world as tangent — to reference a real without realism.” Doane, “Indexicality,” 3–4.

36. Krauss, “Notes on the Index,” 69.

37. Doane, “The Indexical,” 142. Doane is commenting on Georges Didi-Huberman, “The Index of the Absent Wound (Monograph on a Stain),” *October* 29 (Summer 1984). See also Dudley Andrew’s discussion of the Turin Shroud in, “The Economies of Adaption,” in *True to the Spirit: Film Adaptation and the Question of Fidelity*, ed. Colin MacCabe, Kathleen Murray, and Rick Warner (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

38. Here I am inspired by Bruno Latour’s discussion of the controversy between Hobbes and Boyle partly surrounding the indexicality implied in the idea of the writing of Nature that underpins the empirical method. See Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

39. Deixis in the cinema links to what Metz calls “the actualization” of the image: the fact that the image of a revolver always means “Here is a revolver!” See Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 67.

40. Tom Gunning has made a strong case for the way in which photographic iconicity has traditionally supplied the truth-value to the index understood as trace. See Tom Gunning, “Moving Away from the Index: Cinema and the Impression of Reality,” *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007).

41. This distinction is made by Giovanna Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel: The Archival Life of Film in Transition* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009). See also Francesco Casetti, “Sutured Reality: Film, from Photographic to Digital,” *October* no. 138 (2011).

42. See also Tom Gunning’s essay “What’s the Point of an Index? Or, Faking Photographs,” *Nordicom Review* 25, no. 1–2 (September 2004).

43. Brian Massumi, “The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat,” in *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Hainge, “Unfixing the Photographic Image.”

44. Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 142.

45. A gesture toward this idea is made by Frank Kessler, “What You Get Is What You See: Digital Images and the Claim on the Real,” in *Digital Material: Tracing New Media in Everyday Life and Technology*, ed. Marianne van den Boomen et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009). See also Fossati, *From Grain to Pixel*; Antony Bryant and Griselda Pollock, *Digital and Other Virtualities: Renegotiating the Image* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2010). Bryant and Pollock recognize that the proliferation of modes of virtuality reposes the question of indexicality at the very

least on an ethical level. They also frame one of the relationships between indexicality and virtuality as one from truth to trust, thus suggesting how the index might be also explained as what I have been calling a reality a(e)ffect.

46. This is a reason why “passing” threatens so profoundly the visual epistemology of race, not to mention the confidence in photography’s ability to deliver the truth on its own surface. See P. Gabrielle. Foreman, “Who’s Your Mama? ‘White’ Mulatta Genealogies, Early Photography, and Anti-Passing Narratives of Slavery and Freedom,” *American Literary History* 14, no. 3 (2002). See also Drew Ayers’s insightful discussion of the survival of this epistemological structure in DNA portraits in “Humans without Bodies: DNA Portraiture and Biocybernetic Reproduction,” *Configurations*, 19 no. 2 (2011).

47. Here Geimer refers to the fact that the photograph is of Egyptian monuments which Bazin uses as an example of the mummy complex that inspired the plastic arts to strive to preserve life through a representation of life. See Peter Geimer, “Image as Trace: Speculations About an Undead Paradigm,” *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007); André Bazin, *What Is Cinema?*, trans. Hugh Gray, vol. 1 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967). See also Dudley Andrew and Herve Joubert-Laurencin, *Opening Bazin: Postwar Film Theory and Its Afterlife* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

48. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1981), 80. I capitalize Intractable to refer explicitly to Barthes’s use of the term.

49. Geimer, “Image as Trace,” 15.

50. For a compelling exploration of photographs as material culture objects see the anthology by Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, eds., *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, Material Cultures (London and New York: Routledge, 2004); and, in particular, Bacthen’s essay “Ere the Substance Face.”

51. Smith, “Lynching Photographs,” 20.

52. I use the term “inter-skin” rather than inter-face to underline the haptic properties of this contact. As Elena del Rio puts it, when the image “becomes translated into a bodily response, body and image no longer function as discrete units, but as surfaces in contact, engaged in a constant activity of reciprocal re-alignment and inflection.” Elena Del Rio, “The Body as Foundation of the Screen: Allegories of Technology in Atom Egoyan’s *Speaking Parts*,” *Camera Obscura* 37–38 (1996): 101.

53. Moreover, as Kessler argues, this impulse conflates the necessary distinction between *profilmic* and *afilmic*; that is, what was in fact before the camera and not what exists in the world independently from it. See Kessler, “What you See is What you Get,” 192.

54. Jonathan Auerbach, *Body Shots: Early Cinema Incarnations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007); Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Allan Sekula, “The Body and the Archive,” *October* 39 (1986); Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts*.

55. Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Atomic Light*.

56. Lippit, *Atomic Light*, 52. Emphasis in original.

57. Lippit, *Atomic Light*, 77.

58. A few exemplary titles: Jean-Michel Rabaté, *Writing the Image after Roland Barthes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); Nancy M. Shawcross, *Roland Barthes on Photography: The Critical Tradition in Perspective* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997); Geoffrey Batchen, ed., *Photography Degree Zero: Reflections on Roland Barthes's Camera Lucida* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).

59. Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Siegfried Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means*, trans. Gloria Custance (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006); Damian Sutton, *Photography, Cinema, Memory: The Crystal Image of Time* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

60. There is quite a bit of history of expanding the “photographic” beyond photography. In “Notes on the Index,” Rosalind Krauss mapped 1970s art arguing that the photographic offered a functional model for abstraction every time a conventional sign was turned into a trace — or conceived, received, and felt as such; Susan Sontag claimed that contemporary arts are “logical extensions of the model established by photography,” and “all art aspires to the condition of photography.” See Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 149. Also quoted in Raymond Bellour, “Concerning ‘the Photographic,’” in *Still Moving between Cinema and Photography*, ed. Karen Beckman and Jean Ma (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 269.

61. Raymond Bellour, “The Double Helix,” in *Electronic Culture: Technology and Visual Representation*, ed. Timothy Druckrey (Aperture, 1996), 175. Emphasis in original.

62. Emphasis added. Bellour, “Concerning ‘the Photographic,’” 253.

63. Sybille Krämer, “Was Eigentlich Ist Eine Spur” (paper presented at Spurenlesen: Zur Genealogie von Kulturtechniken, Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, February 10–12, 2005); quoted in Geimer, “Image as Trace,” 16. In *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), Laura U. Marks expresses her dissatisfaction with the idea that a loss of indexicality would necessarily imply a loss of materiality.

64. I am drawing on Mitchell’s influential distinction between picture and image in Mitchell, *Picture Theory*.

65. Victor Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 170.

66. This myth has been influentially evoked in relation to the “desire” of images by W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 66–67.

67. Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*, 12.

68. Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*, 24.

69. Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*, 27. Emphasis in original.

70. Stoichita refers to Piaget’s studies of phases of children’s discoveries of the shadow, in his *A Short History of the Shadow*, 29–31.

71. This idea of the shadow and the ghost in the machine is found most notably in Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man* (New York: Random House, 1982 [1947]), but also in Joel Dinerstein, *Swinging the Machine: Modernity, Technology, and African American Culture between the World Wars* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). A few more samples, influenced in part by Michael Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996): Elizabeth Abel, “Shadows,” *Representations* 84 (2004); Alice Maurice, “What the Shadow Knows: Race, Image, and Meaning in *Shadows* (1922),” *Cinema Journal* 47, no. 3 (2007). The shadow features also in Robert Storr, “Spooked,” in *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, ed. Philippe Vergne (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2007).

72. William Henry Fox Talbot characterized his invention as the “art of fixing a shadow.” See William Henry Fox Talbot, “A Brief Historical Sketch of the Invention of the Art,” in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven, CT: Leete’s Island Books, 1980); see also Mirzoeff, “The Shadow and the Substance,” 114.

73. Here I am paraphrasing Vivian Sobchack’s influential essay, “What My Fingers Knew.” Specifically, I refer to the way Sobchack describes her tactile experience of the shots of Jane Campion’s *The Piano* in which Baines touches Ada’s flesh through the hole in her stocking: “precisely *whose* flesh I felt was ambiguous and vague. . . . That is, I had a carnal interest and investment in being *both* “here” *and* “there,” in being able *both* to sense *and* to be sensible, to be *both* the subject *and* the object of tactile desire.” Vivian Sobchack, “What My Fingers Knew: The Cinesthetic Subject, or Vision in the Flesh,” in *Carnal Thoughts Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 66. Emphasis in original.

74. “Ghostly membrane” is Carol Mavor’s expression in “Black and Blue: The Shadows of *Camera Lucida*,” in *Photography Degree Zero: Reflections on Camera Lucida*, ed. Geoffrey Batchen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), 215.

75. Quoted in De Lauretis. As she summarizes, “the body-ego is a permeable boundary — an open border, so to speak — and a site of incessant material negotiations between the external world, on one side, and on the other side, the internal world of the psyche, the drives, the unconscious, and the ego’s mechanisms of defense — repression, disavowal, projection, and so forth.” De Lauretis, “Difference Embodied,” 57.

76. Gayle Salamon, "'The Place Where Life Hides Away': Merleau-Ponty, Fanon, and the Location of Bodily Being," *differences* 17, no. 2 (2006): 101. Or in Homi Bhabha's words, "The contour of difference is agonistic, shifting, splitting, rather like Freud's description of the system of consciousness which occupies a position in space lying on the border-line between outside and inside, a surface of protection, reception and projection." Homi Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," in *Race, Writing, and Difference*, ed. Gates Henry Louis Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 156.

77. Salamon, "Where Life Hides," 109.

78. Charles Johnson, "A Phenomenology of the Black Body," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 32, no. 4 (1993), 606.

79. Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*, 91.

80. bell hooks, "Eating the Other," in *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1992).

81. This idea of skin is strongly inspired by Jennifer Barker, *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009).

82. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 81 (emphasis added).

83. Kenneth S. Calhoun, "Personal Effects: Rilke, Barthes, and the Matter of Photography," *MLN* 113, no. 3 (1998), 613.

84. Notable exceptions, within a vast literature on *Camera Lucida* are: Mavor, "Black and Blue"; Margaret Olin, "Touching Photographs: Roland Barthes's 'Mistaken' Identification"; and Shawn Michelle Smith, "Race and Reproduction in *Camera Lucida*," all in *Photography Degree Zero: Reflections on Camera Lucida*, ed. Geoffrey Batchen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009).

85. Moten focuses on Barthes's comments on the photographs of Emmett Till and foregrounds the "sonic substance" of these photographs in the alleged whistle (or the "bye baby") that Emmett directed at a white woman and in his mother's moaning (black mo'nin' he calls it) which is restaged, represented, reheard in Mrs. Bradley's reopening of the casket and in the body's photograph. Interestingly for my concern, Moten recalls Barthes's wondering what the parents of Emmett Till would have thought of the universalist pretension of the Family of Man exhibition, which constructed a composite image of humanity by insisting on photographs of deaths and births. In invoking Mrs. Bradley in a critique of the naturalistic and universalizing photography of the bare fact of death Barthes also "fails to recognize her own metaphotographic contribution to that critique," and proves instead his inability to see these photographs as showing an unnatural death, "the *death's* difficulty, the suffering of the mother, the threat of high mortality rate and the seemingly absolute closure of his future." Emphasis in original. Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 209.

86. Olin, "Touching Photographs," 78.

87. Smith, "Race and Reproduction," 245. The structure of sympathy that Hartman finds governing abolitionists' descriptions of scenes of torture — that is, a condemnation of the practice dependent upon the possibility of imagining oneself in the other person's shoes — is at work here as well, with the effect of turning the self-affirmative claim to social visibility of Van Der Zee's sitters and photographic art into, in fact, a "scene of subjection." Saidaya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

88. Mavor, "Black and Blue," 227, 215.

89. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 34. Smith, "Race and Reproduction," 246. We witness, in Barthes's description of the mask of blackness, a reenactment of the transformation of the subject into an object legally sanctioned by the slave system.

90. The way Barthes titles this image further indicates this slippage. The original title for the photograph is not "born a slave," but "born in slavery": *William Casby, born in slavery, Algiers, Louisiana, March 24, 1963*. For the concept of the "historical ontology of slavery" see Bill Brown, "Reification, Reanimation, and the American Uncanny," *Critical Inquiry* 32 (2006).

91. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 34.

92. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 109.

93. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 106.

94. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 110. Emphasis in original.

95. Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 80. Emphasis in original.

96. Roland Barthes, "The Photographic Message," in *Image-Music-Text* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1977), 17.

97. Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003).

98. Mavor, "Black and Blue," 214.

99. As Sobchack explains, the term "cinesthetic" is meant to comprise the way in which the cinematic experience triggers and relies on both synaesthesia (or intersensoriality) and coenaesthesia (the perception of a person's whole sensorial being). At stake is the possibility to explain how meaning emerges from the conjunction of the spectator's bodies and cinematic representation. Sobchack, "What My Fingers Knew," 67.

100. Sobchack, "What My Fingers Knew," 79, 76. Emphasis in original. About the film experience she writes, "my body's intentional trajectory, seeking a sensible object to fulfill this sensual solicitation, will *reverse its direction* to locate its partially frustrated sensual grasp on something more literally accessible . . . *my own subjectively felt lived body*" (emphasis in original).

101. To be sure, Vivian Sobchack argues that only the cinema can provide this reversibility and that unlike the cinema, the photograph cannot be inhabited; it cannot "entertain, in the abstraction of its visible space, its single and static *point* of view, the presence of a lived and living body — so it does not really invite the spectator *into* the scene so much as it invites contemplation *of* the scene" (emphasis in original).

Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts*, 144. However, I argue that this description applies only to the photograph's *studium* and that Barthes was committed to demonstrating just the opposite: the essence of photography for him lies in the way in which it appeals to his living body. The photograph's *punctum* not only registers a bodily response and a process of habitation, but it also restores movement to the stillness of the photograph, life to its corpsing effect. The *punctum* emerges not only from the temporal dimension of our own gaze on the photograph, but it exists — and changes — in our memory of it. Barthes writes, "In this glum desert, suddenly a specific photograph reaches me: it animates me, and I animate it." Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 20.

102. A great discussion of how race is sensorially constructed is found in Mark M. Smith, *How Race Is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006) where he attends to the subtle processes of segregation within one's sensorium. Consider how in slavery and in the Jim Crow South, the prohibition to look and touch for blacks coexisted with black women nursing white babies.

TWO ON THE SLEEVE OF THE VISUAL

1. See Nicole Fleetwood's discussion of blackness and the iconic image in *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality, and Blackness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

2. See Jennifer M. Barker, *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009); Gayle Salamon, "'The Place Where Life Hides Away': Merleau-Ponty, Fanon, and the Location of Bodily Being," *differences* 17, no. 2 (2006).

3. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1.

4. In Richard Schiff's description, "catachresis . . . applies a figurative sense as a literal one, while retaining the look or feel of figurality." Richard Schiff, "Cezanne's Physicality: The Politics of Touch," in *The Language of Art History*, ed. Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), quoted in Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 82.

5. Michel Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, trans. James Harkness (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983). W. J. Thomas Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

6. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977 [1975]).

7. For Seshadri-Crooks, Maggie represents an ending point as well. For her, "Recitatif" offers the opportunity to explore the function of terms such as "black" and

“white” as names. She asks, “When the signifier ‘black’ or ‘white’ points to a specific body, what have we discovered about it?” “[A]re ‘black’ and ‘white’ descriptions, or are they names? Are names descriptions? That is, of course, the more fundamental question.” Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks, “What’s in a Name? Love and Knowledge Beyond Identity in ‘Recitatif,’” in *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 133.

8. For Quintilian, *abusio* describes “the practice of adapting the nearest possible term to describe something for which no actual term exists.” Quoted in Lee Edelman, *Transmemberment of Song: Hart Crane’s Anatomies of Rhetoric and Desire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 10.

9. Indeed, for Pierre Fontanier, catachresis is determined by the “same relations” as are rhetorical figures proper: “correspondence, connection or *resemblance* between ideas; and they operate in the same way: as metonymy, synecdoche, or metaphor.” Emphasis added. Pierre Fontanier, *Les Figures Du Discours* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), quoted in Jonathan Culler, “Commentary,” *New Literary History* 6, no. 1 (1974): 223.

10. Charles W. Mills, “Non-Cartesian Sums: Philosophy and the African-American Experience,” in *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 6.

11. Ernesto Laclau, “Articulation and the Limits of Metaphor,” in *A Time for the Humanities: Futurity and the Limits of Autonomy*, ed. Tim Dean, James S. Bono, and Ewa Olonowska-Ziarek (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

12. Gerald Posselt, “The Tropological Economy of Catachresis,” *Critical Studies* 25 (2005). In chapter 3 I touch on Thomas Keenan’s understanding of the commodity form as catachresis, which has greatly inspired my own desire to think about catachresis as an aesthetic category as well. See Thomas Keenan, “The Point is to (Ex) Change It: Reading *Capital* Rhetorically,” in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, ed. Emily Apter and William Pietz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

13. For the queerness of catachresis see Viviane K. Namaste, “The Use and Abuse of Queer Tropes: Metaphor and Catachresis in Queer Theory and Politics,” *Social Semiotics* 9, no. 2 (1999); Lee Edelman, *Transmemberment of Song*; Lee Edelman, *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Amy Villarejo, *Lesbian Rule: Cultural Criticism and the Value of Desire* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

14. Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

15. As Paul de Man summarizes: “We have no way of defining, of policing the boundaries that separate the name of one entity from the name of another; tropes are not just travellers, they tend to be smugglers and probably smugglers of stolen goods at that. What makes matters even worse is that there is no way of finding out whether

they do so with criminal intent or not.” Paul de Man, “The Epistemology of Metaphor,” *Critical Inquiry* 5, no. 1 (1978): 19.

16. Paul de Man, “The Epistemology of Metaphor,” 21.

17. As he clarifies, “in its most restricted sense, prosopopeia makes accessible to the senses, in this case the ear, a voice which is out of earshot because it is no longer alive. In its most inclusive and also its etymological sense, it designates the very process of *figuration as giving face to what is devoid of it*” (emphasis added). Paul de Man, “The Epistemology of Metaphor,” 26.

18. Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, 47. He concludes: “Magritte’s painting doubtless rests here, where thought in the mode of resemblance and things in relations of similitude have just vertically intersected.”

19. My concept of facialization is loosely inspired by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

20. Kathryn Bond Stockton, *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009). I am grateful to Kristopher Cannon for introducing me to Stockton’s work and the concept of sideways growth.

21. Here, I again refer to the idea that concepts such as DuBois’s notion of double-consciousness and Fanon’s idea of the “triple person” indicate the reflexive position that is afforded to the black subject for the simple fact of being subjected to having to see oneself through the eyes of others.

22. Vivian Sobchack, “What My Fingers Knew: The Cinesthetic Subject, or Vision in the Flesh,” in *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004).

23. Sobchack, “What My Fingers Knew,” 73. Emphasis in original.

24. Luchina Fisher, “Why Some Blacks Prefer ‘Blind Side’ to ‘Precious,’” *ABC News*, December 2009; Armond White, “Pride and Precious,” *New York Press*, November 4, 2009; A. O. Scott, “Two Films, Two Routes from Poverty,” *New York Times*, November 22, 2009; Ron Wynn, “*Precious* and *the Blind Side* Renew the Debate: Where Does an Honest Portrayal of Black Lives Stop, and Exploitation Start?,” *Nashville Scene*, November 19, 2009. For a rich discussion of *Precious* see the special issue of *Black Camera* 14, no. 1 (2012) devoted to the film.

25. Demetria Irwin, “Gabourey Sidibe Is Sweet but Not ‘Precious,’” *New York Amsterdam News*, November 12, 2009.

26. Richard Corliss, “*The Blind Side*: What’s All the Cheering About?,” *Time*, December 3, 2009.

27. For the concept of pornotroping see Hortense J. Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (1987); Alexander G. Weheliye, “Pornotropes,” *Journal of Visual Culture* 7, no. 1 (2008).

28. Interestingly this is noted in the *New York Amsterdam News* review mentioned

in note 25: “The fact that Gabby can be seen in countless magazines (and on at least one cover), television interviews and red-carpet events is truly remarkable. This is noteworthy not just because “Precious” is Gabby’s first professional acting role, but also because of how Gabby looks. In an entertainment industry of size zeros, colored contacts and an emphasis on “exotic” or racially ambiguous beauty, Gabby is definitely a stand out. She has dark, ebony skin that radiates the warmth of her African ancestors, and her plump, round figure is not the type often found on magazine covers.” Irwin, “Gabourey Sidibe Is Sweet but Not ‘Precious.’”

29. See Henry Louis Gates Jr., *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

30. For a discussion of the integrationist imagination see my essay “A Necessary Signifier: The Body as Author and Text in *the Jackie Robinson Story*,” *Adaptation: A Journal of Literature on Screen Studies* 1, no. 2 (2008), where I examine the process of visual accommodation of mainstream visual culture following Jackie Robinson’s integration of baseball.

31. The chiasm, as Sobchack explains drawing on Merleau-Ponty, is the place where the intentional movement of the spectator toward the screen is reversed and brought back to an awareness of the spectator’s own sensible body. See Sobchack, “What My Fingers Knew.”

32. I discuss this structure in *Shadowboxer* in my “Shadowboxing: Lee Daniels’s Non-Representational Cinema,” in *Contemporary Black American Cinema: Race, Gender, and Sexuality at the Movies*, ed. Mia Mask (New York: Routledge, 2012), where I emphasize how, considered together, the two films both address and overcome the representational approach to black cinema.

33. As Sobchack explains, the term “cinesthetic” is meant to comprise the way in which the cinematic experience triggers and relies on both synaesthesia (or intersensoriality) and coenaesthesia (the perception of a person’s whole sensorial being). At stake is the possibility to explain how meaning emerges from the conjunction of the spectator’s bodies and cinematic representation. Sobchack, “What My Fingers Knew,” 67.

34. The cinesthetic subject, Sobchack writes, is the one that “feels his or her literal body as only one side of an *irreducible and dynamic relational structure of reversibility and reciprocity* that has as its other side the figural objects of bodily provocation on the screen.” Sobchack, “What My Fingers Knew,” 79. Emphasis in original.

35. Charles Johnson, “A Phenomenology of the Black Body,” *Michigan Quarterly Review* 32, no. 4 (1993): 606.

36. Chris Lee, “Mariah Carey Shows Her Ugly Side in ‘Precious.’ Yes, That’s the Pop Diva — Deglammed and with Facial Hair — Playing the Dowdy Caseworker,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 6, 2009.

37. Lee Daniels, “A Precious Ensemble,” in featurette for the film *Precious: Based on the Novel “Push” by Sapphire* (Santa Monica, CA.: Lionsgate, 2009), DVD.

38. Jeanne Wolf, "Mariah Carey: 'Music Is Always Where My Heart Is,'" www.parade.com/celebrity/celebrity-parade/2009/1102-mariah-carey-precious.html.

39. Richard Powell, *Cutting a Figure: Fashioning Black Portraiture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

40. For a discussion of the trope of the canvas see Kimberly Lamm, "Visuality and Black Masculinity in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Romare Bearden's Photomontages," *Callaloo* 26, no. 3 (2003), 813–35.

41. Kobena Mercer, "Romare Bearden, 1964: Collage as Kunstwollen," in *Cosmopolitan Modernisms*, ed. Kobena Mercer (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

42. Powell begins his investigation of cutting from the use of the term *sharp* to indicate how an ostentatiously stylish person can "stand out" and be a "cut above" everybody else. Powell, *Cutting a Figure: Fashioning Black Portraiture*, 4, 14. For another compelling elaboration on the cut see Kathryn Bond Stockton, *Beautiful Bottom, Beautiful Shame: Where "Black" Meets "Queer"* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006). Stockton describes the cut in relation to Barthes's notion of the aesthetic wound, as the effect of a compelling detail, which has the ability to attract our attention, trigger our flight of fantasy, and to function as the holding pen for repressed histories.

43. Mercer, "Romare Bearden, 1964: Collage as Kunstwollen."

44. Lamm, "Visuality and Black Masculinity," 821.

45. Johnson, "Phenomenology of the Black Body," 606.

46. This statement is in response to the question posed by Gerald Matt, "You portray almost exclusively black women. To what extent are your figures 'abstract self-depictions'?" See Gerald Matt, "Wangechi Mutu in Conversation with Gerald Matt," in Wangechi Mutu, Angela Stief, and Gerald Matt, eds., *Wangechi Mutu: In Whose Image?* (Wien: Kunsthalle, 2009), 37.

47. See Kristopher Cannon's discussion of the cut in "Cutting Race Otherwise: Imagining Michael Jackson," *Spectator* 30, no. 2 (2010).

48. Mutu says she works alone, hands on. Cutting the pieces of the collages takes time and allows her to reflect. She does not like the Internet as an image database because she is interested in magazines for "the physical presence of the picture: the tactile quality of the paper, the aging processes of the material, the print quality." The end result, as Pierre de Weck notes, is "auratically" charged, if anything, by her labor. See Wangechi Mutu, Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin, and Deutsche Bank, *Wangechi Mutu, Artist of the Year 2010: My Dirty Little Heaven* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2010).

49. Mutu, Stief, and Matt, *Wangechi Mutu: In Whose Image?*, 41.

50. Emphasis added. Isolde Brielmeier, "Interview with Wangechi Mutu Part I: The Body," in *Wangechi Mutu a Shady Promise*, ed. Douglas Singleton (Bologna, Italy: Damiani, 2008), 21.

51. "The only way to keep around this body that is society is by mutating," she

claims. “That’s where these chimeras, these creatures, these women warriors come from — they’re not me, per se, they’re human conditions.” Interview with Barbara Kruger, quoted in Klaus Ottmann, “The Human Form Divine: Wangechi Mutu’s “Enceptual” Art,” in Mutu, Guggenheim Berlin, and Deutsche Bank, *Wangechi Mutu, Artist of the Year 2010*, 64.

52. Wangechi Mutu in conversation with Barbara Kruger, *Interview*, April 2007, quoted in Mutu, Guggenheim Berlin, and Deutsche Bank, *Wangechi Mutu, Artist of the Year 2010*, 60.

53. Pierre de Weck, in Mutu, Guggenheim Berlin, and Deutsche Bank, *Wangechi Mutu, Artist of the Year 2010*, 18.

54. Here I use this formalist concept in a materialist sense and wonder what is the material substance of collage. How can we describe it, characterize it?

55. Angela Stief, “Images of Triumph and Transgression,” in Mutu, Stief, and Matt, *Wangechi Mutu: In Whose Image?*, 15.

56. Fatimah Tobing Rony, *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema, and Ethnographic Spectacle* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 6.

57. Philippe Ricord, “Traité Complet Des Maladies Vénéériennes: Clinique Iconographique De L’hospital Des Vénéériens Recueil D’observations, Suivies De Considérations Pratique, Sur Les Maladies Qui Ont Été Traitées Dans Cet Hopital,” ed. Just Rouvier (Paris: 1851).

58. Tobing Rony, *The Third Eye*, 17.

59. There are at least two other frameworks that are very relevant to understand Mutu’s work that, however, I am not pursuing here. One is post-humanism: see, for example, Nicole R. Smith, “Wangechi Mutu Feminist Collage and the Cyborg” (master’s thesis, Georgia State University, 2009); and the other is Afrofuturism (already mentioned in the introduction), even though Mutu rejects the label because she resents the suggestion that the ideas of “Africa” and “future” would be considered an oxymoron.

60. Jennifer González, “Flesh in the Machine: She’s Egungun Again,” in *Wangechi Mutu: This You Call Civilization?*, ed. David Moos, Wangechi Mutu, and Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010), 72.

61. See for example “The Cinderella Curse” — an installation with dripping bottles and felt: Wangechi Mutu, *The Cinderella Curse*, 2007, Savannah College of Art and Design-Atlanta.; or “Exhuming Gluttony,” where upside down bottles are wrapped with rabbit fur: Wangechi Mutu, *Exhuming Gluttony: A Lover’s Requiem*, 2006, Installation, Salon 94.

62. Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

63. Consider, for instance, *A Fake Jewel in the Crown*, 2007; *The Bride Who Married A Camel’s Head*, 2009; *Fallen Heads*, 2010.

64. “In the hybrids of Wangechi Mutu, the human and animal are collaged as

a tactic for defying the tyrannical, taxonomical order of seeing, that most violent imposition onto the bodies of those made into specimen.” Brielmeier, “Interview with Wangechi Mutu,” 146. My understanding of hybridity in this case comes from Bruno Latour’s work, specifically in Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*.

65. This argument about the temporality of catachresis is developed in Posselt, “The Tropological Economy of Catachresis.”

66. M. M. Bakhtin, “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel,” in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* ed. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981); Robert Stam, *Subversive Pleasures: Bakhtin, Cultural Criticism, and Film* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

67. Lauri Firstenberg, “Perverse Anthropology: The Photomontage of Wangechi Mutu. A Conversation with the Artist,” in Mutu, Guggenheim Berlin, and Deutsche Bank, *Wangechi Mutu, Artist of the Year 2010*, 42.

68. Okwui Enwezor, “Weird Beauty: Ritual Violence and Archaeology of Mass Media in Wangechi Mutu’s Work,” in Mutu, Guggenheim Berlin, and Deutsche Bank, *Wangechi Mutu, Artist of the Year 2010*, 28.

69. Carol Thompson, “Sticks and Stones Will Break Your Bones, but Words Can Also Hurt You: Don’t Let Sleeping Heads Lie,” in *Wangechi Mutu: This You Call Civilization?*, ed. David Moos, Wangechi Mutu, and Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 2010), 48.

70. Emphasis in original. Michael E. Veal, “Enter Cautiously,” in *Wangechi Mutu: A Shady Promise*, ed. Douglas Singleton (Bologna, Italy: Damiani, 2008), 10.

71. Henry M. Sayre, “Scars: Painting, Photography, Performance, Pornography, and the Disfigurement of Art,” *Performing Arts Journal* 16, no. 1 (1994).

72. This photograph is part of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependence*, a photographic diary of Nan Goldin’s immediate community of friends. It is one of the only two photographs in the book that sever the human figure and do not indicate the subject’s name in their title. For a discussion of the community-making nature of Goldin’s photography see Louis Kaplan, “Photography and the Exposure of Community. Sharing Nan Goldin and Jean-Luc Nancy,” *Angelaki*, 6, no. 3 (2001).

73. Henry M. Sayre, “Scars: Painting, Photography, Performance, Pornography, and the Disfigurement of Art,” 65.

74. Hartman develops this specific notion of empathy in reading abolitionist literature, particularly that of John Rankin. There she discovers that “in order to convince the reader of the horrors of slavery, Rankin must volunteer himself and his family for abasement [in an imagined scene of whipping]. Yet if this violence can become palpable and indignation can be fully aroused only through the masochistic fantasy, then it becomes clear that empathy is double-edged, for in making the other’s suffering one’s own, this suffering is occluded by the other’s obliteration.” Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 19.

75. *Mining the Museum* is the first installation Fred Wilson had the opportunity to create within a public museum at the Maryland Historical Society jointly sponsored by the Contemporary Museum, Baltimore, in which he was given access to the historical society's permanent collection. The word "mining," as Judith Stein observes, indicated "excavating the collections to extract the buried presence of racial minorities, planting emotionally explosive historical material to raise consciousness and effect institutional change, and finding reflections of himself within the museum." Judith Stein, "Sins of Omission," *Art in America* (1993): 110; quoted in Jennifer A. González, *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 83. The dates 1820 and 1960 refer, respectively, to the Missouri Compromise, which annexed Missouri as a slave state, and Maine as a free state and to the Civil Rights Voting Act of 1960.

76. A spectacle for which, they seemingly argue, there is still too much tolerance. See Christina Elizabeth Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects, Perverse Modernities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

77. Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007), 165.

78. González, *Subject to Display*, 10.

79. González, *Subject to Display*, 91–92.

80. González, *Subject to Display*, 10. See Robin Bernstein, "Dances with Things: Material Culture and the Performance of Race," *Social Text* 27, no. 4 (2009). Following Diana Taylor, Bernstein observes how interactions are codified in repertoires and things carry the memory of their past usage. Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

81. Philip Fisher, *Making and Effacing Art: Modern American Art in a Culture of Museums* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); quoted in Bernstein, "Dances with Things," 82.

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1. Dick Gregory, *From the Back of the Bus* (New York: Avon Books, 1962), 48.

2. Nicholas Mirzoeff, "The Shadow and the Substance: Race, Photography, and the Index," in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003).

3. Cheryl I. Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993).

4. Emphasis in original. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Some Concept Metaphors of Political Economy in Derrida's Texts," *Leftwright/Intervention* 20 (1986); Peter Stallybrass, "Marx's Coat," in *Border Fetishisms: Material Objects in Unstable Spaces*, ed. Patricia Spyer (New York: Routledge, 1998), 183.

5. The title, of Mirzoeff's essay is taken from the caption for a *carte-de-visite* produced and circulated by emancipated slave Sojourner Truth: "I sell the shadow to support the substance," which comments precisely on this dynamic of exchange. "Here the emancipated woman," observes Mirzoeff, "makes her image the object of financial exchange in place of the substance, her whole person, which had once been for sale," Mirzoeff, "The Shadow and the Substance," 117.

6. Jean-Louis Comolli, "Machines of the Visible," in *The Cinematic Apparatus*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980); Allan Sekula, "The Traffic in Photographs," in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Coco Fusco and Brian Wallis (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003); Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991). In more recent film studies, there are at least three crucial titles: Jonathan Beller, *The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2006); Sean Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004); Steven Shaviro, "Post-Cinematic Affect: On Grace Jones, *Boarding Gate*, and *Southland Tales*," *Film-Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2010). Influential in my early thinking about this subject has been also Matthew Tinkcom, *Working Like a Homosexual: Camp, Capital, Cinema* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

7. Sekula, "The Traffic in Photographs," 82.

8. Said differently, I conceive of these last two chapters as a way to look at photography as the passage of the image through race and capital, a claim that I address in two steps. Firstly, this chapter examines race as a form of appearance of capital. Secondly, chapter 4 discusses photography as a form of appearance of race.

9. Giovanni Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times* (New York: Verso, 1994); Fredric Jameson, "Culture and Finance Capital," *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 1 (1997).

10. The "Black Atlantic" is a geographical and historiographical cultural unit instituted by the transatlantic slave trade, which has been employed in Cultural Studies and Art History, as well as more widely, to conduct a global, yet nuanced, examination of the arts and culture of the African diaspora. See Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Tanya Barson and Peter Gorshluter, eds. *Afro Modern: Journeys through the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool, England: Tate Publishing, 2010).

11. Baucom's synthesis: "[the book's] historiography partially corresponds to what is sometimes called the New British history and sometimes Atlantic history. Its cultural theory emerges from a range of recent works in black-Atlantic, trans-Atlantic, and circum-Atlantic cultural studies. Its philosophy of history . . . derives from Benjamin. Its time consciousness is hauntological. . . . And Liverpool is one of [the Long Twentieth Century's] capitals, the voyage of the *Zong* one of its 'arcades,' the *Zong*'s

insurance contract one of its allegories.” Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 31.

12. Lyndon Barrett, *Blackness and Value: Seeing Double* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999). He writes, “*Seeing Double* is a suggestive subtitle for this study for several reasons. First, duality suggests the binarism by which the concept of value most routinely attempts to present itself. To ‘see’ value is in some sense to ‘see’ double. Another sense of the phrase ‘seeing double’ implies a state of impaired, unreliable, or faulty perception, and this sense of the phrase is captured by the yoking of racial blackness with the concept of value. [I]n U.S. cultural logic the abstract entities ‘value’ and ‘race’ keenly reflect one another, even to the point at which they might be considered isomorphic” (1). Barrett continues a reflection on value which began in Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value: Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). And, of course, Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*, trans. Mark Poster (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975); Jean Baudrillard, *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1981).

13. A similar idea is pursued also by the recent by book George Yancy, *Look, a White!: Philosophical Essays on Whiteness* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012).

14. “The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails appears as a ‘monstrous collection of commodities,’ the commodity as its elemental form.” Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume 1: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin Classics, 1990), 125; see Thomas Keenan, “The Point Is to (Ex)Change It: Reading *Capital*, Rhetorically,” in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse*, ed. Emily Apter and William Pietz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

15. Emphasis added. Marx, *Capital*, 138–39.

16. Marx, *Capital*, 163–64.

17. Stallybrass, “Marx’s Coat.”

18. According to Keenan’s close reading of the tropological structure of *Capital*’s first chapter exchange entails first a synecdochical reduction of the commodity to its elementary components in order to show what it has in common with other commodities so that it can be exchanged and, second, an abstraction, which shows that what is congealed in each and every commodity is human labor, that humanity is abstracted and yet still spectrally present in each and every commodity. Keenan argues that the exchangeability of the commodity is fundamentally a catachrestic process because it ultimately entails that the sphere of the human exchanges for nothing in return. Keenan, “Reading *Capital*, Rhetorically,” 181.

19. It is this pivotal function of form that enables Marx to begin *Capital* from the analysis of the commodity form; that is, with the confidence that the entire structure

of capitalism can be read in the commodity. It is the structure of embodiment of the commodity — again its *form* — that creates, as it attempts to resolve, one of *Capital's* fascinating but also challenging hermeneutic questions: how does the commodity reflect/represent the entire system? This is ultimately possible because the commodity form is the germ of the money form, which, in turn, is the locus of generalization of capital's logic of exchange.

20. Marx, *Capital*, 143. Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997). For Kantorowicz, the medieval doctrine of political theology that he described as the “King's Two Bodies” developed to explain the continuity of kingship beyond the mortality of individual kings. Because the natural (biological) body of the king is constitutively inadequate to represent his kingship, it had to be supplemented by another, immortal, and sublime body, not subjected to biological deterioration. According to this doctrine, which in turn is a repurposing of St. Paul's notion of the *corpus Christi* into a more flexible concept of the *corpus mysticum*, for the king to “function as the general equivalent of subjects in his realm . . . his being had to undergo, as if by some necessity in the logic of symbolic authority, a kind of doubling or ‘germination’” resulting in the production of the “abstract physiological fiction of a sublime, quasi-angelic body, a body of immortal flesh that was thereby seen to enjoy both juridical and medical immunity, to stand above the laws of men and the laws of perishable nature” (emphasis added). Eric L. Santner, *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011), 35. Jameson too points out how Marx's language anticipates Kantorowicz's work. He describes this moment as a “political mirror stage.” Jameson, *Representing Capital: A Commentary on Volume One* (London and New York: Verso, 2011), 37.

21. Igor Kopytoff, “The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

22. In *The Fugitive's Properties*, Stephen Best traces the afterlife of slavery in the aesthetics of legal representation and, in particular, the continued presence of slavery's ontological scandal in the systematic confusion between person and property. Stephen Best, *The Fugitive's Properties: Law and the Poetics of Possession* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

23. For a discussion of the relationship between political and visual representation in the *Leviathan* see Horst Bredekamp, “Thomas Hobbes's Visual Strategies,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Eric Alliez, “Body without Image: Ernesto Neto's Anti-Leviathan,” *Radical Philosophy*, no. 156 (2009). On representations of the body politic see also Nicholas Mirzoeff, *Bodyscape: Art, Modernity and the Ideal Figure*

(London and New York: Routledge, 1995). For a reading the Leviathan in relation to race and citizenship see Danielle S. Allen, *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship after Brown V. Board of Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

24. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York and London: Routledge, 2006). In *Capital's* chapter on the working day Marx attempts to counteract the abstractive logic of capital by "showing the workers" with his prose. This attempt, Ann Cvetkovich argues, is at the root of his employment of the gothic imaginary and the sensationalist language of the Victorian novel. His display of the deformed worker's body is made to carry, to poetically mirror, the weight of Marx's critique of equation. Ann Cvetkovich, *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture, and Victorian Sensationalism* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992). See also Jameson, *Representing Capital*, 25.

25. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value," *Diacritics* 15, no. 4 (1985).

26. "The table continues to be wood, an ordinary, sensuous thing. But as soon as it emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than if it were to begin dancing of its own free will." Marx, *Capital*, 163–64.

27. Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 1–24. Moten focuses on Aunt Hester's scream as an example of aural resistance of/from the object that Marx was able to imagine only in the subjunctive mode ("if these commodities could talk, they would say . . ."). "The speaking commodity thus cuts Marx; but the shrieking commodity [i.e. Aunt Hester's scream] cuts Saussure, thereby cutting Marx doubly: this by way of an irruption of phonic substance that cuts and augments meaning with a phonographic, rematerializing inscription" (14).

28. Bill Brown, "The Tyranny of Things (Trivia in Karl Marx and Mark Twain)," *Critical Inquiry* 28, no. 2 (2002), 454.

29. Gyorgy Markus, "Walter Benjamin Or: The Commodity as Phantasmagoria," *New German Critique*, no. 83 (2001).

30. Walter Benjamin, "Central Park," *New German Critique* 34 (1985): 42. Stephen Best's discussion of this passage first brought it to my attention. Best, *The Fugitive's Properties*, 2.

31. *A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, An African Prince, As Related by Himself*. The trope of the Talking Book assumes various forms and expresses different readings of the linguistic economy of slavery in the different slave narratives Gates examines, written between 1770 and 1865. Henry Louis Gates Jr., *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-*

American Literary Criticism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). See also the seminal Houston Baker, Jr., *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature: A Vernacular Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

32. Gates, *Signifying Monkey*, 137.

33. Commodity fetishism works in two different directions here: the book and the slave are both speaking commodities, but the former is so as a result of commodity fetishism, understood as the animation and personification of the commodity, while the latter is so as a consequence of a commodification of the person. While the book possesses a merely phantasmatic persona, the slave, as Kopytoff points out, is literally a commodity with a biography. Kopytoff, "Cultural Biography of Things."

34. Charles W. Mills, "Non-Cartesian Sums: Philosophy and the African-American Experience," in *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 9.

35. Jameson, *Representing Capital*.

36. Jacques Derrida and F. C. T. Moore, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," *New Literary History* 6, no. 1; Allen Hoey, "The Name on the Coin: Metaphor, Metonymy, and Money," *Diacritics* 18, no. 2 (1988), 35.

37. Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*, 31.

38. This is Kant's terminology developed in "An Old Question Raised Again: Is the Human Race Constantly Progressing?" which Baucom also adopts. Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*, 116.

39. Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*, 139.

40. Bill Brown, "Reification, Reanimation, and the American Uncanny," *Critical Inquiry* 32 (2006).

41. See also Robyn Wiegman, *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).

42. Charles W. Mills, "European Specters," in *From Class to Race: Essays in White Marxism and Black Radicalism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003).

43. My thinking about blackface has been informed by Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Michael Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996); Susan Gubar, *Racechanges: White Skin, Black Face in American Culture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); W. T. Lhamon Jr., *Raising Cain: Blackface Performance from Jim Crow to Hip Hop* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). And obviously Ralph Ellison, "Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke," in *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison* (New York: Modern Library, 1995). See also Tavia Nyong'o, *The Amalgamation Waltz: Race, Performance, and the Ruses of Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

44. Minstrelsy, Lott argues, is born from an act of fascination with what is perceived

to be black culture and gesture at the same time as it effects an expropriation of the markers and cultural trappings of blackness itself. See Lott, *Love and Theft*, especially chapter 2.

45. As Susan Gubar similarly points out, “Not simply mimetic, racechange is an extravagant aesthetic construction that functions self-reflexively to comment on representation in general.” Gubar, *Racechanges*, 10.

46. Emphasis added. Dick Gregory, *Nigger* (E. P. Dutton, 1964), 144.

47. Among the publications from this period there are two biographies, two photo books, a political campaign book and two books of political analysis: Dick Gregory, *Nigger*; Gregory, *Up from Nigger* (New York: Fawcett, 1977); Gregory, *From the Back of the Bus*; Gregory, *What’s Happening?* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1965); Gregory, *Write Me In!* (New York: Bantam Books, 1968); Gregory, *The Shadow That Scares Me* (Pocket Books, 1968); Richard Claxton Gregory, *No More Lies: The Myth and the Reality of American History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971). Important is also his more recent memoir, Dick Gregory and P. Moses Sheila, *Callous on My Soul: A Memoir* (Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 2000).

48. For a discussion of the relationship between Gregory’s comedy, his dietary philosophy, and political views see Doris Witt, *Black Hunger: Food and the Politics of U.S. Identity* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)..

49. Here, I am obviously referring to Stuart Hall’s influential claim that race is a free-floating signifier made at a lecture at Goldsmiths’ College, New Cross, London, in 1997.

50. I discuss the counterfactual as a legal form underlying the doctrine of separate but equal in chapter 4.

51. Attention should be given to Gregory’s astute use of visual and material culture. Not only was he never segregated as a stand-up comedian, but he also consistently published photo books in which his jokes laid alongside photographic images of him either playing in clubs or performing a series of black-on-black impersonations. For this last idea see Gubar, *Racechanges*.

52. The idea of the nightclub as an abject space comes from John Limon, *Stand-up Comedy in Theory, or, Abjection in America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

53. “When the white man steps behind the mask of the trickster,” he wrote, “his freedom is circumscribed by the fear that he is not simply *miming* a personification of his disorder and chaos, but *that he will become in fact that which he intends only to symbolize*.” Emphasis added. Ellison, “Change the Joke,” 107.

54. Markus, “Commodity as Phantasmagoria”; Walter Benjamin, “Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century. 1935,” in *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999); Margaret Cohen, “Walter Benjamin’s Phantasmagoria,” *New German Critique*, no. 48 (1989).

55. Tom Gunning, “Illusions Past and Future: The Phantasmagoria and Its Specters,”

MediaArtHistoriesArchive, 2004, <http://hdl.handle.net/10002/296>; Laurent Mannoni and Richard Crangle, *The Great Art of Light and Shadow: Archaeology of the Cinema* (Exeter, England: University of Exeter Press, 2000); Marina Warner, *Phantasmagoria: Spirit Visions, Metaphors, and Media into the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). For a discussion of the connection between racial encounters, permeable bodies, and racially unstable ontology and its connection to the minstrel show see Daphne A. Brooks, *Bodies in Dissent: Spectacular Performances of Race and Freedom, 1850–1910* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).

56. As a second-degree racial signifier, blackface makeup was the expression of minstrelsy's claim to be imitative of black culture even though early minstrel acts, as Eric Lott writes, participated in "an exchange system of cultural signifiers that both produced and continually marked the inauthenticity of their "blackness"; their ridicule asserted the difference between counterfeit and currency even as they disseminated what most audiences believed were black music, dance, and gesture." Eric Lott, "Love and Theft: The Racial Unconscious of the Blackface Minstrelsy," *Representations* no. 39 (1992): 39. Similarly, Ralph Ellison claimed that the counterfeiting of the black image is the result of "America's Manichean fascination with the symbolism of blackness and whiteness," and, therefore, its referent is not black and white people, but rather the process of signification of race itself. Ellison, "Change the Joke," 103.

57. See Lawrence Weschler, *Boggs: A Comedy of Values* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

58. Weschler, *Boggs: A Comedy of Values*, 23.

59. The defetishization of the commodity money (that is, the realization that its value resides only in the transaction it allows), though, is only a temporary stage within a cycle of value production which culminates in a refetishization of the transaction that dismantled money's fetishism in the first place, once its material traces and their representations are put on sale in the art market. Money, as a system of representation, is only temporarily freed, slowed down.

60. U.S. Code Section 474 and 475 of Title 18, cited in Weschler, *Boggs*, emphasis in original. Weschler chronicles a number of run-ins with the law. Since the book was published in 1999, however, more than ten years of legal troubles are unaccounted for.

61. Kara Keeling argues that the show's stars' puzzled and disappointed reaction to the animated puppets mirrors the earlier reaction to the 1940s film footage and, therefore, suggests retroactively that the black image was always already an animation. Kara Keeling, "Passing for Human: *Bamboozled* and Digital Humanism," *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 29, no. 15 (2005). The puppets share a similar invitation to tactile engagement that Jennifer Barker describes in relation to *Toy Story*. Except that here the Fisher Price toy quality of the puppets brings the spectator to realize, on the one hand, a desire to touch the "cool and smooth" skin of the film but, on the other, to disavow its content and reject its racism. Jennifer M. Barker, *The*

Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 45.

62. *Bamboozled* has been read also in relation to its strategic and subversive employment of stereotypes with a focus on its generic status in between tragedy and satire, by leveraging minstrelsy as an allegory of exploitative relations of blackness in the entertainment industry, the commerce of blackness, as raising questions about the ownership and self-definition of blackness, as an example of the aesthetics of the grotesque, as a reflection on post-humanism and so on. See “Living Color: Race, Stereotype, and Animation in Spike Lee’s *Bamboozled*,” in W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Brown, “Reification, Reanimation”; Keeling, “Passing for Human”; Harry J. Elam, Jr., “Spike Lee’s *Bamboozled*,” in *Black Cultural Traffic Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture*, ed. Harry J. Elam Jr. and Jackson Kennell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005); Beretta Smith-Shomade, “‘I Be Smakin’ My Hoes’: Paradox and Authenticity in *Bamboozled*,” in *The Spike Lee Reader*, ed. Paula J. Massood (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007); Tavia Nyong’o, “Racial Kitsch and Black Performance,” in *The Spike Lee Reader*; Susan Gubar, “Racial Camp in *The Producers* and *Bamboozled*,” *Film Quarterly* 60, no. 2 (2006); Gregory Laski, “Falling Back into History: The Uncanny Trauma of Blackface Minstrelsy in Spike Lee’s *Bamboozled*,” *Callaloo* 33, no. 4 (2010); Ed Guerrero, “*Bamboozled*: In the Mirror of Abjection,” *Black Contemporary American Cinema: Race, Gender and Sexuality at the Movies*, ed. Mia Mask (New York: Routledge, 2012).

63. For another focus on the recursive historical temporality of the film as well as the idea of uncanny trauma of slavery see the already-cited essay by Laski, “Falling Back into History.”

64. Brown, “Reification, Reanimation,” 185.

65. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?*, specifically chapter 14, “Living Color: Race, Stereotype, and Animation in Spike Lee’s *Bamboozled*.” For Homi Bhabha, in turn, the stereotype can only be disempowered when regarded not as the object of desire, but its setting; not as an ascription of a priori identities, but rather their production. The stereotype is a scene of subject formation and, more to the point, it operates like a fetish. It responds to multiple desires — to make present, to make visible, to make knowable, and to fixate. Homi Bhabha, “The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism,” in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

66. Brown, “Reification, Reanimation,” 197.

67. Brown, “Reification, Reanimation,” 200.

68. For an insightful discussion of Levinthal’s photographs of Sambo art see Manthia Diawara, “The Blackface Stereotype,” in David Levinthal and Manthia Diawara, *Blackface* (Santa Fe, NM: Arena Editions, 1999). See also W. T. Lhamon Jr.,

“Optic Black: Naturalizing the Refusal to Fit,” in *Black Cultural Traffic: Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture*, ed. Harry J. Elam Jr. and Kennell Jackson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

69. Emphasis added. Lhamon, “Optic Black,” 115, 113.

70. This could be possibly read as an instance of “rude aesthetics.” See Hugh S. Manon, “Rude Aesthetics in the Digital Mainstream,” (paper presented at the World Picture Conference, Oklahoma State University, October 24–25, 2008).

71. Keeling, “Passing for Human,” 244.

72. Blackness, Keeling points out, is involved in passing, whether it is commodity circulation or capital’s financial flows. Keeling, “Passing for Human,” 248.

73. Schudson, “Advertising as Capitalist Realism.” *Advertising & Society Review* 1, no.1 (2000), 53.

74. Schudson, “Advertising as Capitalist Realism,” 11.

75. Rene de Guzman, “Nothing Better,” in *Pitch Blackness*, ed. Hank Willis Thomas (New York: Aperture, 2008), 95–96.

76. Rene de Guzman, “Nothing Better.”

77. Benjamin, “Central Park,” 42.

78. For the idea of the metaphysical stillness of racial images see James Snead, *White Screens, Black Images: Hollywood from the Dark Side* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994).

79. The logbook of the *Zong* does not survive, but other ships’ logbooks do. Baucom reprints one of them (recording the purchase and trading of slaves in exchange for rum and gold, as well as a host of corollary transactions involving food, water, and firewood), but, before doing so, he sets the terms under which this document needs to be encountered. He asks the reader to resist the list’s “reiterative predictability” and its flattening pathos, which solicits “indulgence for horror banalized, horror catalogued.” He urges: “So, I ask, do not skim, read.” See Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic*, 11.

80. Jacques Derrida, “Différance,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, transl. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982). The adoption of the Derridean notion of *différance* to understand the (literary) writing of race is due to Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s book, *Signifying Monkey*.

81. For the “matter” of the visual see the special issue of *Representations*, edited by Huey Copeland and Krista Thompson, “Perpetual Returns: New World Slavery and the Matter of the Visual,” *Representations* 113, no. 1 (2011). There are various accounts of the history of the term *postblack*, initially employed by Robert Farris Thompson and then popularized by Thelma Golden in occasion of the 2001 exhibition *Freestyle* at the Studio Museum of Harlem. See Robert Farris Thompson, “Afro Modernism,” *Artforum* 30 (1991); Thelma Golden et al., *Freestyle* (New York: The Studio Museum in Harlem, 2001); Barson, *Afro Modern*; Mary Schmidt Campbell, “African American Art in a Post-Black Era,” *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory* 17, no. 3

(2007); Paul Taylor, "Post-Black, Old Black," *African American Review* 41, no. 4 (2007). See also Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007); Derek Conrad Murray, "Hip-Hop vs. High Art: Notes on Race as Spectacle," *Art Journal* 63, no. 2 (2004); April J. Sunami, "Transforming 'Blackness': 'Post-Black' and Contemporary Hip-Hop in Visual Culture" (master's thesis, Ohio University, 2008); Cathy Byrd, "Is There a 'Post-Black' Art?," *Art Papers Magazine* 26, no. 6 (2002).

82. Mills, "European Specters," 168–69.

83. Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America 1780–1865* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 16–40.

84. Michael Kaplan, "Iconomics: The Rhetoric of Speculation," *Public Culture* 15, no. 3 (2003).

85. Furthermore, the logo, Coombe claims, is a signature of authenticity. Through the logo, the emotional attachment and the loyalty to the brand are congealed in the exchange value of the sign. Rosemary J. Coombe, *The Cultural Life of Intellectual Properties: Authorship, Appropriation and the Law* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 175.

86. The idea of tasting the other is vividly discussed in bell hooks, "Eating the Other," in *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1992).

87. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1.

88. The idea of the advertising tableau is explored in Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985).

89. The work's title ventriloquizes advertising rhetoric but introverts its mode of address. Rather than pitching the product to the consumer, it provocatively asks if she is "right" for it. The "it," in turn, condenses the instability of the picture because its many possible referents effect what "right woman" might mean in this context.

90. Harry J. Elam Jr., "Changes Clothes and Go. A Postscript to Postblackness," in *Black Cultural Traffic. Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture*, ed. Harry J. Elam Jr. and Kennell Jackson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005); Jennifer A. González, "The Face and the Public: Race, Secrecy, and Digital Art Practice," *Camera Obscura* 70, no. 24 (2009); Coco Fusco, "All Too Real: The Tale of an on-Line Black Sale. Coco Fusco Interviews Keith Townsend Obadike," 2001, www.blacknetart.com/coco.html. Keith and Mendi Obadike, "The Black. Net.Art Actions: *Blackness for Sale* (2001), *The Interaction of Coloreds* (2002), and *The Pink of Stealth* (2003)," in Mary Flanagan and Austin Booth, eds. *re:skin* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006).

91. "Because ayo invites people to wish for her object status without actually delivering herself as such . . . ayo is the object-less art piece, but the audience,

rendered vulnerable once they expose a desire to appropriate blackness that goes unconsummated in the relationship ayo establishes, become objectified by their lack of agency. [T]he resistance to psychic and socioeconomic violence emerges . . . from the inversion of the ways in which the subject/object relationship is traditionally racialized, both in the realm of the arts and in everyday social experience.” Brandi Wilkins Catanese, “How Do I Rent a Negro?: Racialized Subjectivity and Digital Performance Art,” *Theater Journal* 75 (2005): 704. Obadike’s tenth warning ironically addresses these fantasies: “The Seller does not recommend that this Blackness be used by whites looking for a wild weekend.”

92. González, “The Face and the Public,” 57.

93. Fusco, “All Too Real.” Ultimately, as Jennifer Gonzalez argues, Obadike’s failure to sell his blackness shows that race is not a property but rather a “*relation of public encounters*” taking place under the *form* of a commodity. Emphasis in original. González, “The Face and the Public,” 56.

94. Elam, “Change Clothes and Go,” 386.

95. Elam, “Change Clothes and Go,” 386.

FOUR THE LONG PHOTOGRAPHIC CENTURY

1. Seshadri-Crooks offers a Lacanian reading of the film that has partly informed my thinking. Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks, “Looking Alike: Or the Ethics of Suture,” in *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000).

2. The controversy initiated by Betye Saar is summarized in Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw, *Seeing the Unspeakable: The Art of Kara Walker* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). It is also the impetus behind the recent publication of Howardena Pindell, *Kara Walker-No, Kara Walker-Yes, Kara Walker-?* (New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 2009). Discussion of controversial work such as Walker’s necessarily raises ethical questions: the charge of obscenity, in fact, expresses moral concerns with the propriety, efficacy, and ownership of a certain racial imagery. These issues are made all the more acute by the extraordinary success she has had with white collectors. The impossibility to determine the proper affective response to her work (pain, pleasure, shock, outrage, and so on) in fact, importantly foregrounds how such affects carry different ethical repercussions along racial lines. The approach I adopt here is to regard her as a visual theorist of the foundational role of blackness in the ontology of the image.

3. As previously mentioned I derive the idea of the “historical ontology of slavery” and its relationship with the American uncanny from Bill Brown, “Reification, Reanimation, and the American Uncanny,” *Critical Inquiry* 32 (2006). I will cite as appropriate from most supporters of Walker’s work, but for now here are some key publications: Robert Reid-Pharr, Annette Dixon, and Thelma Golden, eds., *Kara*

Walker: Pictures from Another Time (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Museum of Art and D.A.P.P, 2002); Ian Berry et al., eds., *Kara Walker: Narratives of a Negress*, 2nd ed. (New York: Rizzoli, The Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, Williams College Museum of Art, 2007); Philippe Vergne, ed. *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, 1st ed. (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2007); Kara Elizabeth Walker, *Kara Walker: After the Deluge* (New York: Rizzoli, 2007); Joan Copjec, "Moses the Egyptian and the Big Black Mammy of the Antebellum South: Freud (with Kara Walker) on Race and History," in *Imagine There's No Woman: Ethics and Sublimation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002); Psyche A. Williams-Forsen, "Flying the Coop with Kara Walker," in *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

4. For Best and Marcus, the idea of pursuing surface readings is intended to provide an alternative to the still hegemonic practice of symptomatic readings. Here are some notions of surface their special issue addresses: surface as materiality; surface as the intricate verbal structure of literary language; embracing surface as an affective and ethical stance; attention to surface as practice of critical description; surface as location of patterns that exist within and across texts; surface as literal meaning. Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus, "Surface Reading: An Introduction," *Representations* 108 (2009).

5. For background on the film see Roy Grundmann's interview with the filmmakers, which early on inspired me to think about face value in relation to race. Roy Grundmann, "Identity Politics at Face Value," *Cineaste* 20 (1994).

6. Manthia Diawara, "Noir by Noirs: Toward a New Realism in Black Cinema," in *Shades of Noir*, ed. Joan Copjec (London: Verso, 1993); Eric Lott, "The Whiteness of Film Noir," *American Literary History* 9, no. 3 (1997); Dan Flory, "Black on White: Film Noir and the Epistemology of Race in Recent African American Cinema," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 31, no. 1 (2000); Dan Flory, *Philosophy, Black Film, Film Noir* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008). My understanding of the relationship between blackness and film noir is profoundly influenced by Michael Boyce Gillespie, "Significations of Blackness: American Cinema and the Idea of a Black Film" (PhD diss., New York University, 2007), especially chapter 3, "Darker Than Blue: *Deep Cover* and the Noir Modal of Blackness."

7. Brian Price, "Color, the Formless, and Cinematic Eros," in *Color: The Film Reader*, ed. Brian Price and Angela Dalle Vacche (New York: Routledge, 2006), 78.

8. Shawn Michelle Smith, among many others, connects the advent of photography and specifically of the photographic archive alongside disciplines such as criminology, racial biology, phrenology, and eugenics, to a new nineteenth-century focus on the body that created this split model of subjectivity: "If interiority was the essence imagined to be stable as external signs fluctuated, it was stabilized only through the proliferation of *surface signs*, of representations of the body, called upon to make such essences *readable*, apparent, knowable. The photographic sign invited one to

participate in a *leap of faith* whereby the body might serve as *index* to an imagined essence. And by the same leap of faith, by the same process of *metonymy*, individuals could imagine themselves linked to others similarly represented, and thereby mutually affirm an imagined essence.” Emphasis added. Shawn Michelle Smith, *American Archives: Gender, Race, and Class in Visual Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 5.

9. Annie Howell, personal conversation with the filmmakers, 2005.

10. Marcie Frank, “The Camera and the Speculum: David Cronenberg’s *Dead Ringers*,” *PMLA* 106, no. 3 (1991), 459.

11. Susan Elizabeth Earle and Renée Ater, *Aaron Douglas: African American Modernist* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007). See also Amy Kirschke, *Aaron Douglas: Art, Race, and the Harlem Renaissance* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995). I thank Eddie Chambers for having discussed with me some of these ideas about Aaron Douglas.

12. Among the rich literature on passing, consider at least Lauren Berlant, “National Brands/ National Body: Imitation of Life,” in *Comparative American Identities: Race, Sex, and Nationality in the Modern Text*, ed. Hortense J. Spillers (New York and London: Routledge, 1991); P. Gabrielle. Foreman, “Who’s Your Mama?: ‘White’ Mulatta Genealogies, Early Photography, and Anti-Passing Narratives of Slavery and Freedom,” *American Literary History* 14, no. 3 (2002); Susan Gubar, *Racechanges: White Skin, Black Face in American Culture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

13. I refer to Michael Harris’s discussion of Motley in Michael D. Harris, *Colored Pictures: Race and Visual Representation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

14. Ellen McBreen, “Biblical Gender Bending in Harlem: The Queer Performance of Nugent’s *Salome*,” *Art Journal* 57, no. 3 (1998); Seth Clark Silberman, “Lighting the Harlem Renaissance Afire!!: Embodying Richard Bruce Nugent’s Bohemian Politic,” in *The Gratest Taboo: Homosexuality in Black Communities*, ed. Deloy Constantine-Simms (Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 2001). See also Amy Kirschke, *Art in Crisis: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Struggle for African American Identity and Memory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007).

15. As Lyndon Barrett puts it, the “perplexity” of value is the “impossibility to determining “whether value is understood primarily in regard to the dynamics of *distinction* or of *exchange*.” Lyndon Barrett, *Blackness and Value: Seeing Double* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 12.

16. Yet, underneath the film’s surface, Clay’s body is phenomenologically fleshed out. The film strives to fashion for him a coherent living body that experiences things and objects independently from his “racial” identity. When Dr. Shinoda takes Clay home from the hospital, he tells him: “Try to feel what it is like to be home. Help your body to remember.” He mentions staying open and receptive to the “free association

of body and memory.” “There are triggers here. Memory triggers . . . Your memory is here. I promise you.” The idea is that the body will find its soul (its conscience and identity, in this case) by experiencing its relationship to objects and that the skin is not just a chromatically marked surface but also the border that feels — the site at which the body interacts with the social space and becomes conscious of itself. The film is in keeping with the phenomenology of the surface of psychoanalysis, described by Lippit as a search for depth on the surface of things. Akira Mizuta Lippit, *Atomic Light (Shadow Optics)* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005). Deprived of memory and continuity, Clay has to re-create the ground on which his experiences are going to land, the pad in which they will be written. Dr. Shinoda’s Freudianism does not only manifest itself in his therapeutic strategies — free association, dream analysis, and so on — and in his quotes (“dreams appear like a coded puzzle,” he tells Clay), but also visually: the surface (of the dream, of the body, of the film image) is presented as a Rorschach test, samples of which hang from walls in Dr. Shinoda’s office.

17. Stephen Best, *The Fugitive’s Properties: Law and the Poetics of Possession* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 210–11.

18. Best, *The Fugitive’s Properties*, 227.

19. For the idea of whiteness as property see the seminal essay by Cheryl I. Harris, “Whiteness as Property,” *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993).

20. Emphasis in original. Amy Robinson, “Forms of Appearance of Value: Homer Plessy and the Politics of Privacy,” in *Performance and Cultural Politics*, ed. Elin Diamond (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 248.

21. “A statute which implies merely a legal distinction between the white and the color races — a distinction which is founded in the color of the two races and which must always exist so long as white men are distinguished from the other race by color — has no tendency to destroy the legal equality of the two races. . . .” Justice Henry Billings Brown, “Majority Opinion in *Plessy v. Ferguson*,” in *Desegregation and the Supreme Court*, ed. Benjamin Munn Ziegler (Boston: D.C. Heath and Company, 1958). Quoted in Coco Fusco, “Racial Time, Racial Marks, Racial Metaphors,” in *Only Skin Deep: Changing Visions of the American Self*, ed. Brian Wallis and Coco Fusco (New York: International Center of Photography, 2003), 15.

22. Quoted in Robinson, “Forms of Appearance of Value: Homer Plessy and the Politics of Privacy,” 223–24.

23. Harris, “Whiteness as Property.”

24. Best, *The Fugitive’s Properties*, 228.

25. Christian Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema*, trans. Michael Taylor (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), and *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

26. Christina Sharpe notices how white critics tend to recognize, identify and describe in gritty details, only the recognizably black characters; how the blackness

of the silhouettes is often imagined to refer only to diegetically and stereotypically recognizable black characters, while the white ones — who are never really shown in these types of contexts, compromising situations and certainly have no recognizable stereotype belonging to the same sociohistorical context — go unnoticed. This is an acute commentary on white disavowal, of course, but also on the ontological audacity of Walker's silhouettes, who, by coating everybody in black, gains the ability to equalize their treatment and therefore prod deep seated and disavowed scenes of monstrous intimacies. Sharpe also notices that Walker has increasingly begun to make silhouettes in different color, possibly in order to address this profound critical imbalance. Christina Elizabeth Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

27. I owe this observation to Eddie Chambers. Personal conversation.

28. John P. Bowles continues: "Walker creates quasi-cinematic scenes in which perpetrators are the victims of their own fantasies. . . . Her figures are apparitions who resemble the normative white subject but who are instead difference itself made manifest. They represent, on some level, who white viewers fear they might be. . . . They seem credible but are fantasy, and they are too horrible to be real." John P. Bowles et al., "Blinded by the White: Art and History at the Limits of Whiteness," *Art Journal* 60, no. 4 (2001): 39.

29. Noël Burch, *Life to Those Shadows*, trans. Ben Brewster (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990).

30. DuBois Shaw, *Seeing the Unspeakable*.

31. This is the criticism summarized in Pindell, *Kara Walker-No*. Against this position, very recently W. J. T. Mitchell praised her work alongside Spike Lee's *Bamboozled* for bringing back the plantation as the setting through which to reassess contemporary U.S. history. W. J. T. Mitchell, *Seeing through Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2012).

32. Steven Shaviro, "Post-Cinematic Affect: On Grace Jones, *Boarding Gate* and *Southland Tales*," *Film-Philosophy* 14, no. 1 (2010), 5–6.

33. Anne M. Wagner, "Kara Walker: 'The Black-White Relation,'" in *Kara Walker: Narratives of a Negresse*, ed. Ian Berry, Darby English, Vivian Patterson, and Mark Reinhardt (New York: Rizzoli, 2007), 94.

34. On the isomorphism between fetish and stereotype see the already cited essay by Homi Bhabha, "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism," in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

35. Joann Caspar Lavater, *Essay on Physiognomy for the Promotion of the Knowledge and the Love of Mankind*, vol. II, 90, quoted in John B. Lyon, "'The Science of Sciences': Replication and Reproduction in Lavater's Physiognomics," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007), 262.

36. This paradigm continues into the twentieth century as evidenced by studies

such as Ida McLearn, G. M. Morant, and Karl Pearson, "On the Importance of the Type Silhouette for Racial Characterisation in Anthropology," *Biometrika* 20B, no. 3–4 (1928). The study's conclusion places Englishmen and Africans at opposite extremes of the Great Chain of Being, with English women occupying a middle position. Or consider a 1930 study in the *American Journal of Psychology* to determine: (1) what relation exists between the silhouetted features of a man's face and the judgment of observers as to his character? (2) What qualities of character are usually linked together in the judgments of an observer? (3) Are certain features of the silhouette perceived more clearly than others? The underlining idea is the possibility of using the silhouette to measure like and dislike. R. K. White and Carney Landis, "Perception of Silhouettes," *American Journal of Psychology* 42, no. 3 (1930). For a discussion of Walker's critical engagement with the paradigm of the social sciences see Mark Reinhardt, "The Art of Racial Profiling," in *Kara Walker: Narratives of a Negresse*, ed. Ian Berry, Darby English, Vivian Patterson, and Mark Reinhardt (New York: Rizzoli, 2007), 108–29.

37. "Primitive" is one of the terms Walker uses to evoke a female persona, modeled after Josephine Baker's exotic *sauvage*, which sometimes she adopts for herself to underscore the expectations of her patronage.

38. Homi Bhabha, "Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche, and the Colonial Condition," in *Rethinking Fanon: The Continuing Dialogue*, ed. Nigel Gibson (New York: Humanity Books, 1999), 186; Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (1986).

39. Bhabha, "Remembering Fanon."

40. Victor Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 27.

41. The relationship to landscape painting is specifically addressed by Darby English in "This Is Not About the Past: Silhouettes in the Work of Kara Walker," in *Kara Walker: Narratives of a Negresse*, ed. Ian Berry, Darby English, Vivian Patterson, and Mark Reinhardt (New York: Rizzoli, 2007); Darby English, *How to See a Work of Art in Total Darkness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

42. Wagner, "Black-White Relation," 95.

43. David Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

44. Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier*.

45. See Jonathan Auerbach, *Body Shots: Early Cinema's Incarnations* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007). In particular, consider the reference to Marey's practice of dressing people in black to emphasize the recording of movement. See also Mary Ann Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

46. Trond Lundemo, "The Colors of Haptic Space," in *Color: The Film Reader*, ed. Brian Price and Angela Dalle Vacche (New York: Routledge, 2006).

47. See Jennifer M. Barker, *The Tactile Eye: Touch and the Cinematic Experience* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 157–61; Auerbach, *Body Shots: Early Cinema's Incarnations*.

48. Best, *The Fugitive's Properties*: 228–37. Briefly, the plot: a white woman travels on a train with her black maid. A white man sitting behind her initiates a flirtatious series of exchanges. Then the train enters a tunnel (signified by a fade to black) and as it exits the tunnel, the white woman and the maid have exchanged seats so that the white man, who had taken advantage of the darkness to make his move, discovers he had been kissing the maid. The two women laugh, amused by the success of their scheme and the film ends. On *What Happened in the Tunnel* see also Jane Gaines, *Fire and Desire: Mixed-Race Movies in the Silent Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). The duck-rabbit effect of Walker's silhouettes can be said to invoke similar counterfactual stakes.

49. Akira Lippit has the following to say about X-ray photographs: "With the appearance of the X-ray, the subject was forced to concede the limits of the body. Erasing one limit against which it claimed to be outside, the X-ray image, with its simultaneous view of the inside and outside, turned the vantage point of the spectator-subject inside out. The point of view established by the x-ray image is both inside and out." Lippit, *Atomic Light*, 42.

50. English, "Not About the Past," 156.

51. Emphasis in original. Barker, *The Tactile Eye*, 136. See also Vivian Sobchack, "Animation and Automation, or, the Incredible Effortfulness of Being," *Screen* 50, no. 4 (2009). The argument that digital cinema indicates a move toward animation is made by Lev Manovich, "What is Digital Cinema?," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (New York: Routledge, 2002), and Sean Cubitt, *The Cinema Effect* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004).

52. Robert Storr, "Spooked," in *Kara Walker: My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, ed. Philippe Vergne (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2007), 65.

53. Storr, "Spooked," 65.

54. David Marriott, *Haunted Life: Visual Culture and Black Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 4.

55. This is a social ontology that for Osborne has become now more visible with digital images, where "digital" for him describes first and foremost the form in which images exist and circulate. Peter Osborne, "Infinite Exchange: The Social Ontology of the Photographic Image," *Philosophy of Photography* 1, no. 1 (2010).

56. Think about the difference it would make to see one of these images hanging on a gallery wall, projected on a classroom screen, seen at a bus stop, printed on photographic paper and held in our hands, or worn on a T-shirt. In this last case especially, one would become keenly aware of one's own raced embodiment. How does it feel to wear it? Who can wear it? When and where?

57. For a similar way of discussing blackness as a form of rendering see Nicole

R. Fleetwood, *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality, and Blackness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

58. Sybille Krämer, “Was Eigentlich Ist Eine Spur,” (paper presented at Spurenlesen: Zur Genealogie von Kulturtechniken, Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, February 10–12, 2005); quoted in Peter Geimer, “Image as Trace: Speculations About an Undead Paradigm,” *differences* 18, no. 1 (2007): 16.

59. See Laura U. Marks, *Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

60. In other words, part of the photochemical imagination relies on the phantasy that the world can be touched through a photographic image. Part of the digital imagination constructs a world of code, of translatability, circulation, equalization. For an account of this phantasy of translatability see Drew Ayers, “Vernacular Posthumanism: Visual Culture and Material Imagination” (PhD diss., Georgia State University, 2012).

61. Emphasis added. Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 138, 143.

62. On the cut, see again Richard Powell, *Cutting a Figure: Fashioning Black Portraiture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). See also Kristopher L. Cannon, “Cutting Race Otherwise: Imagining Michael Jackson,” *Spectator* 30, no. 2 (2010).

CONCLUSION IN THE SHADOW

1. Fred Moten, “The Case of Blackness,” *Criticism* 50, no. 2 (2008); David Marriott, *Haunted Life: Visual Culture and Black Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007).

2. This is in reference to Fanon’s famous claim that the black man “has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man. [. . .] For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man.” Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), 90.

3. Emphasis added. Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 10.

4. “Excess flesh” is Nicole Fleetwood’s term in her *Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality, and Blackness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).