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The Use of Black People in British Advertising

or

A Man Should be Judged

by the Colour of His Shirt

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Abstract

The Use of Black People in British Advertising
or A Man Should be Judged by the Colour of His Shirt

The aim of this research is to examine the use of those defined (politically, socially and chromatically) as Black people in British advertising. Advertising has been chosen as a focus, because it does not disguise its use of stereotypes, protest morals, nor deny its requirement for immediacy in the marketing of goods. Because of its directness and the absence of other agendas, advertising presents contemporary social attitudes toward race in unusually stark form.

The thesis probes the continuing reality and importance of race as a social signifier. It investigates the role of ambivalence (the contradicting attraction and repulsion possible within a subject for an object ) and refuted desire (the inability of a subject to admit to particular longings even as they manifest in behaviour) as practised by the mass media. It also studies the construction and reification of blackness as an advertising commodity.

Advertising campaigns produced in the period 1991 and 1999 forms the focus of the research. In the process, the investigation establishes a historical and cultural review of changing emphases within the decade. The advertisements which receive particular attention are those which have drawn public attention to their use of race. These include: Ford Motors; Commission for Racial Equality; Nestlé Milky Bar; Benetton; and Royal Insurance, among others.

The thesis is divided into six sections. The first chapter introduces key terms in recent discussion of modern concepts of blackness, investigates the power relationships and designating paradox inherent in naming, and charts blackness' translation into contemporary culture. The criteria for establishing chromatic race are presented in the second chapter, and the problematic of visual representation concern the third chapter. Chapter four charts a decade (1990 to 1999) of blackness in popular mass advertising. Using Slavoj Zizek and Mieke Bal as starting points, theoretical models for understanding the use and reading of the advertised black body are presented in chapter five. The final chapter offers possible strategies for using the black body without falling into the trap of ambivalent stereotypes of previous advertisements.
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Dedication

Fun Awon Iya Wa.
1. **Naming Blackness**

or From Robinson Crusoe to Jackie Brown

From The Black Album

Chad's seriousness became very serious indeed, with a glance at Riaz, he rose and went to the counter to fetch his food. Shahid waited for him to return. Riaz seemed to be humming to himself. Shahid was trembling. "My mind was invaded by killing-nigger fantasies."

"What kind of thing are we talking about here?" Chad asked.

"What kind of thing? Of going about abusing Pakis, Chinks, Irish, any foreign scum. I slagged them under my breath whenever I saw them, I wanted to kick them up the arse. The thought of sleeping with Asian girls made me sick. I'm being honest with you now - "

"Open your heart," Chad murmured, he didn't touch his food.

"Even when they came on to me, I couldn't bear it. I thought you know. Wink at an Asian girl and she'll want to marry you up. I wouldn't touch brown flesh, except with a branding iron. I hated all foreign bastards."

Riaz cried softly "How is this done?"

"I argued - why can't I be a racist like everyone else? Why do I have to miss out on that privilege? Why is it only me that has to be good? Why can't I swagger round pissing on others for being inferior? I began to turn into one of them. I was becoming a monster" . . .

"I am a racist."

Chad smacked the table. "I already said you are a vessel!"

"I have wanted to join the British National Party."
"You have?"
"I would have filled in the forms - if they had forms." Shahid turned to Riaz. "How does one apply to such an organisation?"

From Cratylus

SOCRATES: And now suppose that I ask a similar question about names. Will you answer me? Regarding the name as instrument, what do we do when we name?

HERMOGENES: I cannot say.

SOCRATES: Do we not give information to one another, and distinguish things according to their natures?

HERMOGENES: Certainly we do.

SOCRATES: Then a name is an instrument of teaching and of distinguishing natures. . . .

Shahid, responding to Riaz's prodding, investigates who he is with Chad and Riaz; Socrates investigates what a name is with Hermogenes countering Cratylus' claim that a name is "natural and not conventional [and is] not a portion of the human voice which men agree to use, but that there [is] a truth or correctness in them. . . ."

I have been made aware that the material I am presenting is of a nature prone to point in accusation, it is not meant to be. Some issues are awkward to talk about in public and are often reserved for the safety of privacy and familiarity.

Public airing causes embarrassment for the 'accused', and brings about what

3 ibid. p. 422.
appears to be a kind of hysteria. 'Hysteria' being a reaction generated when one feels accused as part of a group, but lacks defence as an individual.

This dissertation, creates a paradox for me, because I with the paper will stand complicit in the hysteria that might be generated by not being able to provide answers to the questions raised. The dilemma is, in order to face the racial question of language, I have to rely on the objects of language. Any attempt to grasp language in itself soon makes it clear that 'language' is in a state of flux. That which predominates are fluctuations; power acting on objects, acting on things. I, the subject, have to question the objects of language and in this questioning I am implicated. 

Mieke Bal, in her book *Double Exposures*, analyses the problems of listing. She explains that listing and thereby the re-production of any material has the effect of restating the material and as such reinforces the problematic of its initial incarnation. So when articulating even a few guises of 'negro/nigger' I am aware of inherent problems. Yet this is a case where there is hardly a way of facing the phenomenon without listing its realities. As Bal puts it 'You can show and critique, but the gesture of showing itself is constantive and bears no modal qualifications, it cannot say no to its own object'.

On being a nigger

In 1997, American black activists petitioned the publishers of the *Meridian-

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4 I will . . . address a strategy of argumentation which is fundamentally expository; the question of evidence, especially visual images used as illustrations, This strategy will be discussed in view of the speech act of exposing, which entails a problematic of the expository agent, the subject doing the pointing. Bal, Mieke. *Double Exposures*. Routledge, London. 1996. p. 196.

5 ibid. p. 197.
Webster Collegiate Dictionary, for defining ‘Nigger’ as ‘a black person - usually taken to be offensive.’ The main objection was ‘that the definition suggests that the word might be an acceptable synonym for black people’.

Yet for most people, ‘nigger’ is synonymous with blackness, just as negro is. The question is not whether the word means a black person, but whether one is prepared to use it as a synonym. The issue with definitions is as they provide an explanation, they tie meaning to words. If the definition had said ‘a term commonly used to describe black people by white people - usually taken to be offensive’, there would have been no outcry, because it would have been accurate. This alternative definition would however cause discomfort by implicating that part of the community the dictionary is aimed at. (One can rest assured that it was not a black person that arrived at Meridian-Webster’s definition.) The dictionary makers argue that the original meaning of the word as used in sixteenth century United States meant a black person and that it is this definition the dictionary is willing to uphold.

Bill Bryson, the travel writer, attempts an etymological survey of ‘negro’ and by inference ‘nigger’. In his book, Made in America. He makes much of the Spanish influence on the language of race in the United States of America, crediting it with the creation of ‘mulatto’ which was used to describe people having one white and one negro parent. ‘Mulatto’, a small mule, is loaded with meaning when one considers that the children of slaves were automatically slaves, even if they allegedly received better treatment from their parent/owner than those that did not bear signs of whiteness.

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5 The assumption that a dictionary is an objective and unbiased collection of definitions is one that belies the very nature of language as convention.


7 ibid.

Bill Bryson, in his etymology, states:

Finally, a word needs to be said about descriptive terms for black people. Negro is Spanish and Portuguese for 'black' and first noted in English in 1555. Nigger appeared in 1587 and was not at first a pejorative term, but simply a variant pronunciation of Negro. Sambo, a Nigerian word meaning 'second son', was not originally pejorative either. Blacks were generally called 'blacks' (or more politely, coloureds) until the 1880's when negro became the preferred term. It wasn’t usually capitalised until the 1930’s. Uncle Tom comes of course from Harriet Beecher Stowe's popular novel 'Uncle Tom's Cabin', though its use in the general sense of a servile black hasn't been found earlier than 1922.¹⁰

It is interesting to read the list of excuses for the transitions in language, with the explanation that the words in question were not meant to offend, yet one wonders how words that were set aside to describe slaves - individuals denied all known rights, and seen as no better than animals - were able to stand for anything positive. Naming is a conscious action: the name carries a great deal of the feeling towards the object of classification.

There have been other etymological studies of such words; Paul Obinna, a teacher and lecturer in Manchester, sees 'nigger' as having a slightly more malevolent basis:

Nigger is a corruption of negro, the word European invaders of Africa in

the Middle Ages used to describe the indigenous people they found there. . . . Negro derives from the Greek word ‘necro’ which means dead. So Europeans were in effect saying we were a dead people. Calling us by a name which meant we had no souls helped to justify their activities during the slave trade.11

This section will investigate the use of names in the creation of difference, the possibility or impossibility of a benign transformation of words that remain violent and forceful. It will examine gentrification attempts of words that carry transgression with every utterance, that retain their energy as racial slur. The attempts to mould language and sensibilities to terms available for use by anyone willing to pretend the non-existence of a pejorative past and present history. It will attempt to understand the contemporary and compulsory coexistence of the insult and the endearment within the language of difference. A collapse that relies more on the act of ‘insult’ than on ‘endearment’ for its success as alternative expression. The desire to reintroduce slurs into colloquial utterances will also be questioned, especially when those that want to use the terms are fully aware of their valency.

To name something is to own it. To name something is to place your stamp of authority over it for as long as the given identity is used. To name a person or a group is no different: at the point of naming, one gains ownership and authority. Until the named is able to defang the designation, the namer through the name retains power.

‘Nigger’ is the name given to a black population by a white one. The history of the term for blackness vis à vis negro has varying versions as pointed out

above, but the element that holds them together is the quality of the relationship that existed and exists between black and white people. That they are merely words and bastardisations is one explanation, but this does not explain the self-appointed right to name.

The authority implicit in naming is demonstrated well in the *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, written by Daniel Defoe in 1719. *Robinson Crusoe* is loosely based on the exploits of a Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk, who stayed alone on an Island called Robinson Crusoe, for almost five years [between 1704 and 1709]. The Island forms part of a three island grouping called Juan Fernandez situated in the Pacific Ocean to the southeast coast of South America. Juan Fernandez now forms part of Chile.

Robinson Crusoe saves a man from cannibals and names him Friday. Crusoe names him because he ostensibly feels he owns the man's life. He names him because he clearly does not feel the man's name is worth knowing, he names him because he wants to rename himself. He names the rescued man 'Friday' and names himself 'Master'. It would be more accurate to state that it was a process of dual renaming, except that only one person is renamed, the other acquires a position. Robinson Crusoe does not want to know the man's name, and he does not want to give his. Exchanging names would render them both men, they would be swapping identities as equals. But the rescued man is not a full man to Robinson Crusoe, and a semblance of order needed to be established right from the start.

Robinson Crusoe saved the man because he wanted a servant, a slave: Friday's salvation is based on his use value, not on his humanity. Robinson Crusoe, considering the possible danger to himself, predicates his action
It came now very warmly upon my thoughts, and indeed irresistibly, that now was my time to get me a servant, and perhaps a companion or assistant; and that I was called plainly by Providence to save the poor creature's life; I immediately ran down the ladders with all possible expedition, fetched my two guns... and getting up again... clapped myself between the pursuers and the pursued.\(^{12}\)

Let us not forget the reason for Robinson Crusoe's seafaring in the first place; he was off to get slaves to work his plantation in the Brasils.

I had frequently given them [fellow planters] accounts of my two voyages to the coast of Guinea, the manner of trading with the negroes there, and how easy it was to purchase upon the coast for trifles, such as beads, toys, knives, scissors, bits of glass, and the like, not only gold dust, Guinea grains, elephants teeth &c., but negroes, for the service of the Brasils, in great numbers...

... three of them came to me in the next morning, and told me they had been musing very much upon what I had discussed with them of, last night, and they came to make a secret proposal to me; and after enjoining my secrecy, they told me they had a mind to fit out a ship to go to Guinea, that they all had plantations as well as I, and were straitened for nothing as much as servants; ... and in a word, the question was, whether I would be their super-cargo in the ship to manage the trading part upon the coast of Guinea. And they offered me that I should have

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my equal share of the negroes without providing any part of the stock.\textsuperscript{13}

Robinson Crusoe's racial and social relationship had been set before he embarked on his journey, and twenty-three years of living on the island had not dulled his sense of order. A year and a half before the appearance of Friday, Crusoe had dreamt he rescued a 'savage' that became his slave, but on waking to his lack of servile natives he considered the possibility of acquiring a few for his use. Weighing his chances Crusoe ponders:

\ldots I fancied my self able to manage one, nay, two or three savages, if I had them, so as to make them entirely slaves to me, to do whatever I should direct them, and to prevent their being able at any time to do me any hurt.\textsuperscript{14}

Crusoe had already determined what the other was, he already saw himself as lord of the island, regardless of the natives' obvious prior claim. He had already conceptually placed the indigenous population under his feudal control, seeing them as anything but full people. This perception is made clearer when he learns through Friday that there are Europeans on neighbouring islands, and immediately relates to \textit{them} as full human beings. The European's status as a full person is made more apparent when Crusoe and Friday save a Spaniard from being eaten, Crusoe does not for one moment consider the debt owed in exchange for his life and press him into slavery. He rather enters into a 'serious discussion with the Spaniard.'\textsuperscript{15}

Naming abounds in the book; Robinson Crusoe is named after the island,

\textsuperscript{13} ibid. p. 59.
\textsuperscript{14} ibid. p. 204.
\textsuperscript{15} ibid. p. 241.
making him the master of all he sees. But which came first in the imagination, man or island? If it be the man, he has simply named the desolate island in order to own it, if the island, it merely fits the practice of taking on the name of land to establish ownership and control, a removal of the separation between land and man.

Friday, in total antithesis to the grandeur of Robinson Crusoe, is named after the day his life is saved. His name is a constant reminder of his debt to Robinson Crusoe. He is named after a moment, there is nothing to own, nothing to hold on to, nothing to establish him as man within a code that places the value of man in his colour and possessions. Unfortunately for Friday, he is not white and consequently a slave, automatically rendering all he may acquire, Crusoe’s.

The dynamic that exists between the speaker and the spoken to, when ‘nigger’ is used, mirrors the island relationship between Robinson and Friday. For what does one call the person that refers to another as nigger? There is not a befitting response to the naming, there is not an equivalent name for whiteness. The weight of politics and society supports the speaker, except when the speaker can be called ‘nigger’ in return, attempting a neutralisation of the slur. The traditional response coded on racial power relationship based on skin colour; is master, massa, sahib, or bwana depending geographically where the name is given.

Defoe through Crusoe refers to the natives as cannibals,\textsuperscript{16} savages,\textsuperscript{17} as

\textsuperscript{16} ibid. p. 200.
\textsuperscript{17} ibid. p. 200.
having merciless hands, wretched creatures, poor creature until he names one of them Friday. Even then he establishes that Friday too is a cannibal who will not be allowed to indulge in this culinary preference at pain of death at the hands of Crusoe.

The process of naming within Robinson Crusoe becomes even more important when one considers the popular siting of the book. It is often represented as the exploits of an Englishman on an African tropical island, and not in South America. It is not that the mistake is of great significance in itself; after all both continents were seen as dark places and mere sources of raw material, and as a popular cover of the book shows [fig 1], Friday has a home far away from the Caribbean. The idea of the savage and the popular charges of cannibalism are the sort generally made about Africans, so the 'mistake' is not too surprising.

Peter Hulme's essay 'Robinson Crusoe and Friday' is one attempt to correctly place the book, but even then, there is the realisation that Robinson Crusoe has transcended the pedantic deliberations of the original adventure:

Crusoe's island is situated by the text in the estuary of Orinoco within sight of Trinidad, and the Amerindians that feature in the book, including Friday, are all referred to as Caribs. Yet oddly despite the degree of geographical specificity, Robinson Crusoe is not usually seen in any significant sense as a Caribbean book. It is 'a Puritan fable', the first true work of 'realism', the novel of 'economic

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18 Ibid. p. 201.
19 Ibid. p. 201.
20 Ibid. p. 206.
individualism' or most popularly, simply the story of a man on an island.\textsuperscript{22}

If a ‘Puritan fable’, how better to show the social relationships than through language, that which is best at describing and retaining. To quote Frantz Fanon on the issue of blackness, other places and the colonial imagination;

For colonialism, this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstition and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God, a country of cannibals - in short, the Negro's country.\textsuperscript{23}

**Who can say ‘nigger’?**

There will always be a question of familiarity and affection in language. English is notable for its lack of explicit deference in colloquial use. There are forms such as ‘their’ which is used to indicate respect for a person, and the use of the plural first person to show regard, but mainly there is a general absence of position in speech. This is peculiar when one considers the subtle, but often clear markers of status in British society. It can be seen as an attempt to deny implicit practical and social differences. Thus where nuances of language are disingenuously discounted, it sanctions the creation of positions and titles in segmenting populations.

These considerations are relevant when one reviews the argument that ‘nigger’ should be available for use by anyone because some black people


have been heard to use it in reference to one another. Now this may be the case, but I believe that people should have the right to use a private language, that has its energy and meaning within a given context. However the obsession with all things black, by a white trendy set, has meant that almost all that is said, done or worn is rapidly picked up and neutered by mass distribution and incorporation. The resultant impact being that if the dress is worn and the music is listened and danced to, then the private language can be spoken as well. The adoption of a 'style' becomes the means of paying dues for the appropriation of culture. "(A)s Ice-T points out: 'People in rap have the Elvis fear; watching something they created get taken away from them.'\(^{24}\)

**Black on Black**

Various explanations have been put forward for the incorporation of 'nigger' or 'nigga' into black slang. One explanation has been that it is a form of self definition, an attempt to identify the black radical edge during the heady days of the 60's civil rights movement. Another explanation is that it expresses a form of black self hate, Paul Obinna sees it as 'part of the legacy of slavery [and] (that) most African (black) people today are suffering from a form of post-traumatic slavery disorder, which is why they feel so comfortable while using the word to describe themselves.'\(^{25}\)

A third reason is suggested by Ralph Ellison in his essay "Change the Joke, Slip the Yoke"; the strategy being, if one makes fun of oneself enough using the others' jibes, then the other will no longer be able to use the same jibe, as the meaning and sting of the joke will have been spent. Describing the jokes

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of race as a mask, Ellison explains:

Very often the negro's mask is motivated not so much by fear as a profound rejection of the image created to usurp his identity. Sometimes it is for the sheer joy of the joke; sometimes to challenge those who presume, across the psychological distance created by race manners, to know his identity. . . . [The mask is worn] for purposes of aggression as well as for defence, where we are projecting the future and preserving the past. In short the motives behind the mask are as numerous as the ambiguities the mask conceals.

A final possibility can simply be the desire of the black body to transgress social codes, and through this transgression to place itself outside the qualifications that have been given as containment.

Apologetics

Lovers call each other things that would cause embarrassment if heard by a different set of ears. Women have been heard to socially call each other names that I will not even consider repeating. Yet I do not hear them being carried forth as a banner to enlighten the populace on the possibilities of language. This is in spite of claims that 'bitch' is being usurped by female rappers, and unsurprisingly, this appropriation is race specific.

‘Nigger’, what a word. It is hard on the ear, and even harder on the heart. For a

word that nobody wants to say, let alone write down, it seems to have a good deal of currency. Seeing it written on album covers and in newspapers, it has joined the hallowed roll of the starred words: C**T; F**K; B***H, need I carry on. The ranks of the unspeakable enlarges as the sensibilities of the decision makers are altered.  

'Nigger' plays the same role that 'negro' plays in the colonial imagination. It entails a process of dehumanisation. It places the black person outside the realm of the human by giving a name that cannot be collapsed into anything else but back into blackness. De La Soul plays with the ability of the black image to represent 'humanity' on their album Buhloone Mindstate. On the track "Patti Dooke", a short drama is presented

[In white record company executive voice, to band]:

We have decided to change the cover a bit, because we see the big picture.

Negroes and white folks are buying this album.

Negroes and white folks are buying this album.

Everybody's gonna know who this group is, we just felt that the picture wasn't as important as it was that we succeed in crossing over.

[In black rapper voice, to listeners]:

Tell me something huh, How many of them cross over to us? huh?

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29 Radio 1 has the practice of censoring 'fuck' but leave 'nigger' playing on their rap music programs. As words are disallowed, they increase in potency and become even more visible. The fatuous attempts to stop them being written or being 'bleeped' out on the radio and television alerts us to their presence even more. The words are not leaving the language, merely a pretence at control.

I never seen five niggers on Elvis Presley’s album cover.\textsuperscript{31}

‘Nigger’ is icon, index and symbol all in one. It is placed on the black person’s shoulders like a shroud. The alienation of the black body/self is represented in the choice of words. Within the dialogue, replacing ‘negro’ with ‘nigger’ causes an awareness of what the executive is in fact saying: that the black body is marginalised. As a word it presents a complex picture of the imaginative construction of blackness. If one person is called a negro, then every other person is. It functions as more than an isolated insult, it acts as a description of blackness.

Fanon mimics:

Understand, my dear boy, colour prejudice is something I find utterly foreign . . . But of course, come in, sir, there is no colour prejudice among us. . . . Quite, the Negro is man like ourselves. . . . it is not that he is black that he is less intelligent than we are. . . .\textsuperscript{32}

Fanon asks:

Where am I to be classified? Or, if you prefer, tucked away?

“A Martinician, a native of ‘our’ old colonies.”

Where shall I hide?

“Look at the nigger! . . . Mama, a Negro . . . .”

My body is given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recoloured, clad in mourning in that white winter day. The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is mean, the Negro is ugly, look a nigger, it’s cold, the
nigger is shivering, the nigger is shivering because he is cold, the little boy is trembling because he is afraid of the nigger, the nigger is shivering with cold, the cold that goes through your bones, the handsome little boy is trembling because he thinks the nigger is quivering with rage, the little white boy throws himself into his mother's arms: Mama, the nigger's going to eat me up.\textsuperscript{33}

Within the post-colonial imagination the 'nigger' is a catch all, it has become a shorthand for that which is abhorrent and peculiar, and significantly 'nigger' has become the very fact of blackness. This is highlighted when one looks back to the manner in which 'negro' functions. The way that 'negro' places the 'other' outside while pretending to invite them into the space reserved for the self.

At times this Manichaeism goes to its logical conclusion and dehumanises the native, or to speak plainly it turns him into an animal. In fact the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms. He speaks of the yellow man's reptilian motions, the stink of the native quarter, of breeding swarms, of foulness, of spawn, of gesticulations. When the settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to the bestiary. The European rarely hits on a picturesque style; but the native, who knows what is in the mind of the settler, guesses at once what he is thinking of. Those hordes of vital statistics, those hysterical masses, those faces bereft of all humanity, those distended bodies which are like nothing on earth, those mobs without beginning or end, those children that seem to belong to nobody, that laziness stretched out in the sun, that vegetative

\textsuperscript{33} ibid. pp. 113 - 114.
rhythm of life - all that forms part of the colonial vocabulary, . . . The native knows all this, and laughs to himself when he spots an allusion to the animal world in the other’s words.\textsuperscript{34}

The moment ‘nigger’ crosses the threshold, there is a movement in the psyche of the hearer, if the listeners are black then there is immediate awareness of their blackness, if white, they become complicit in the manipulation of race and suffer displacement. Like Fanon’s reaction to the colonial’s racial/bestial language, the racial/colonial language of the modern European\textsuperscript{35} tells so much of the understanding of power relationships carried out within language.

Speech, of the band Arrested Development\textsuperscript{36}, plays with these codes in the story of his (Speech’s) escapade in the park; finishing with the line “That’s the story y’all of a Blackman acting like a nigger and being stuffed by an African”\textsuperscript{37} Speech takes the listener through the transition of a ‘brother’ to ‘nigger’, back to ‘brother’ to ‘African’ then to ‘Blackman’. There is not a juncture in this fast moving narrative when there is any ambiguity, clear meaning lies in the varying references to blackness.

And there is a difference between Blackman, ‘Nigger’, ‘African’, ‘Brother’, ‘Coloured’, ‘Black’ and the range of words yet to flow into popular parlance to describe and designate blackness. After Saussure and Barthes it is


\textsuperscript{35} The phrase ‘modern European’, in this instance, includes black and white people. In those countries that show a clear European domination where one language functions on various levels for all, the influence and impact of the meta-language does not conveniently stop at racial boundaries. Both black and white users of language are aware of the codes they are setting out and putting to use.

\textsuperscript{36} Arrested Development is a significant hip hop band that has managed to ‘cross over’ in spite of their ‘radical’ stance. They featured on the music for Spike Lee’s filmic biography of Malcolm X; X.

impossible to take a particular emotive word, and argue that it is not loaded with meaning, when it suits the speaker that the chosen word be benign. If language is bound by convention, and the conventions have not changed to the point where a word has lost its meaning, then designators' unchallenged use has to be queried. Furthermore, the pre-eminence of myth where the black body is concerned, means every manifestation of 'nigger' politicises blackness by default.

Two films of some cultural importance, *The Birth of a Nation* and *Jackie Brown*, have a bearing on this chapter. In their own ways, both films raised a debate about the black person's presence in cinema and their relationship to whiteness. By presenting the black person as essentially criminal, ruthless and manipulative. In *The Birth of a Nation*, all of the black men (if one is willing to accept blackface as black) are presented as flawed, and in *Jackie Brown* the characterisation is repeated. Ordell is not an anomaly, Ordell is black, Ordell is violent, Ordell is a criminal, and Ordell uses 'nigger' (or is it nigga) a great deal. Ordell uses 'nigger' to be 'authentic', because 'authentic' black criminals spice their dialogue with the one word they know will fraternise their black victims and titillate their white observers, hunters, adjudicators, and keepers. As Ellison explains 'In the Anglo-Saxon branch of . . . the entertainment industry, the Negro is reduced to a negative sign that usually appears in a comedy of the grotesque and the unacceptable.'

The absence of 'nigger' in *The Birth of a Nation*, apart from the fact that the film is silent, is to do with the historical place of the black population. When the film was made, it was quite clear that the black population lacked a voice.

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40 Ellison, Ralph. 'Change the Joke, Slip the Yoke.' p.48.
Those that went to the cinema to watch the film (the film was clearly not aimed at the black section of society), knew that they could call their local black population anything they liked. There was no point in stating the obvious. But by the time *Jackie Brown* was made, there was a lively debate as to whether the word ought to be in a dictionary, let alone gloriously used in a mainstream film.

Violent use of language results in undeniable potency. It is a weapon of choice in the arsenal of all writers that want to transmit strong emotion. It should be that way, and it is not the intention of this paper to curtail creative possibility through censorship in the name of decency. It is, however, its ambition to unravel the fascination with race as a marker for difference, and a particularly violent difference at that.

Fanon pointed to this violence when he laid out the requirements of the black intellectual:

> The native intellectual who takes up arms to defend his nation’s legitimacy and who wants to bring proofs to bear out that legitimacy, who is willing to strip himself naked to study the history of his body, is obliged to dissect the heart of his people. . . . Colonialism, which has not bothered to put too fine a point on its efforts, has never ceased to maintain that the Negro is a savage; and for the colonist, the Negro was neither an Angolan nor a Nigerian, for he simply spoke of ‘the Negro’.

Therefore to question the name, one has to remove its ability to designate,

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which if one takes Fanon literally, means a shedding of the name as one would shed clothing. One would have to scrutinise that which lies behind the facade of a name parading as an act of purported gentility. It is thereby impossible to question a name without renouncing it, since to retain the name in this process, means undertaking an unachievable process of self-scrutiny. The act of questioning a name must be initiated by distancing the self from the given name.

The first step to recognising the scope of ‘negro’ is the realisation that the naming process carries more than mere designation, that within the process or act of naming, representation resides. After all a name is merely a conceptual representation of a thing, and it is often the thingness of a thing that is intended to be captured within a name. As Slavoj Zizek points out in *The Sublime Object of Ideology*:

> Thus ‘things that mean nothing at all of a sudden signify something but in a different domain’. What is a ‘journey into the future' if not this ‘overtaking’ by means by which we suppose in advance the presence in the other of a certain knowledge - knowledge about the meaning of our symptoms - what is it then if not the *transference* itself? This knowledge is an illusion, it does not really exist in the other, the other does not really posses it.  

Colonialism did not have to make names for all it encountered, and neo-colonialism does not bother either, one name was sufficient, the relationship was one of containment, to name each encounter would be superfluous; the nature of each new meeting was easily treated as an extension of the last.

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The essence of those with black skin was summed up in 'negro'. To be reduced to skin colour has a paralysing effect on the one reduced, but has a liberating effect on the one cataloguing. The liberation comes from deciding exactly where the other person resides within the catalogue, deciding how to deal with them, charting where boundaries lay, knowing where the other stops and the self begins, and with these boundaries establish the 'chosen'.

And a negro is not one of the 'chosen', and the 'chosen' is not a negro.

From the mouth of babes

Ten little nigger boys went out to dine;
One choked his little self and then there were Nine.
Nine little nigger boys sat up very late;
One overslept himself and then there were Eight.
Eight little nigger boys rambling in Devon;
One said he'd stay there and then there were Seven.
Seven little nigger boys chopping up sticks;
One chopped himself in half and then there were Six.
Six little nigger boys playing with a hive;
A bumble bee stung one and then there were Five.

So read the first five couplets of the nursery rhyme Ten Little Niggers written in 1869 and credited to Frank Green, quoted in Agatha Christie's novel of the same title. Well, it is not called that any more; the title has moved from the beginning to the end of the rhyme. The book is now titled And Then There Were None. It is amazing what can be learnt in the nursery. Harper Collins, England, changed the title of the book, which it had carried since 1939, in the
early 1980's, when the former title was deemed politically incorrect. In the United States the book was published, by Dodd Mead, as *Ten Little Indians* as the other option was deemed inappropriate. It took a further ten years for the title to change in the United States.  

Christie created a perfect crime revolving around a counting rhyme, and before accusations of unwarranted bias or defences that she was a product of her time come flying in, the tone of the book tells without a doubt that Christie had a good idea of what she was doing with 'nigger'. She starts off by naming the site of her carnage 'Nigger Island'. This outcrop derives its name from 'its faint resemblance to a giant negro's head.' If that was not enough she went on to state, 'There was something sinister about it.' The use of 'nigger' and 'negro' become significant from this moment. Agatha Christie wrote the book in 1936 and realised, even then, the potent difference between both words. 

If 'nigger' is allowed in the nursery, where it functions as a precursor for receipt of praise and reward when getting the rhyme right, and simultaneously exists as the bogeyman, adult fascination with the word should come as no surprise. Then demand that the same word be expunged from the child's vocabulary as it grows older in 'polite society' and render it taboo, that its use is wrong in decent company: there is no wonder that there is a fixation with the word and what it connotes. 

It is also not surprising that white people want to be niggers, note not negroes. They do not want to change the colour of their skin, like black people

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45 Ibid.
46 Burrell, Ian. 'Young are the 'New Racist Generation.' *The Independent* 5 May 1999. p.10.
seem bent on doing.\textsuperscript{47,48} But they do want the right to use words that they see as the property of black people and so enter the idealised world of blackness, where they will be able to cross the 'line' with the confidence of their darker acquaintances. This fascination is understandable in a world where the transgressively cool is invariably black, and the desire to trespass, or at least to be seen as trespassing, is the thrust behind practically all popular culture. This obsession with the cool has led to the appropriation of 'street' colloquialisms into mainstream radio and television, where the well placed phrase can lead to strident street credibility.

There must be a particular fascination of young white people with 'nigger'. The repeated use of the word by young white men, particularly in film is interesting and alarming. Interesting because there is a claim of affinity when the word is used, and alarming as it does not do anything to question the use of the word, nor attempt to mollify it.

In the film \textit{GO}\textsuperscript{49} a young white man calls his black friend 'nigger' as a gesture of cultural solidarity: the black man is enraged, and indicates his intention to punch the man. He, the white male, who by this point had been established as a liar, attempts to bravely soldier on and save face by not backing down by saying that his great, great, grandmother was black, giving him the right to use the word. One cannot help but feel for him.

In another film, \textit{Gridlock'd},\textsuperscript{50} a white drug user calls a black dealer 'nigger' and almost gets shot for it. He is cautioned by his fellow drug user not to use the

\textsuperscript{47} Breesford, David; Bright, Martin. 'UK Firm Sells Skin Lightener to Africans.' \textit{The Observer} 29 Aug. 1999. p. 5.
\textsuperscript{48} Sawyers, Pascoe; Taylor, Diane. 'When Black isn't Beautiful.' \textit{The Guardian} G2 7 Sep. 1999. p. 16.
word in public, but again he attempts to defend his use of the word by claiming that he is 'close'.

It might appear obtuse to approach language from the focal point of one word, but this is one word that is heavily inscribed onto the black body, and the inscription of a word on to the body is a painful affair, especially if the inscription is in the form of judgement, as 'negro' or 'nigger' is. They have an embodiment, just like Kafka’s justice giving machine that the officer of the penal colony knew would dish out its macabre justice, even onto death.

"Does he know his sentence?" “No!” said the officer. . . . “There will be no point in telling him. He'll learn it on his body.”

"It's no calligraphy for school children. It needs to be studied closely. I'm quite sure that in the end you will understand it too. Of course the script can't be a simple one, it's not supposed to kill a man straight off, but only after an interval . . . So there has to be lots and lots of flourishes around the actual script; the script itself runs around the body in a narrow girdle; the rest of the body is reserved for the embellishments.  

For your edification, or in case you were wondering what happened; here are the next five couplets of the rhyme

Five little nigger boys going in for law;
One got in chancery, and then there were Four.
Four little nigger boys going out to sea;

A red herring swallowed one, and then there were Three.
Three little nigger boys walking in the zoo;
A big bear hugged one, and then there were Two.
Two little nigger boys sitting in the sun;
One got frizzled up, and then there was One.
One little nigger boy living all alone;
He got married, and then there were None.

Agatha Christie made a slight alteration, not allowing for the production of any more little nigger boys;

One little nigger boy left all alone;
He went and hung himself, and then there were None.

There is a similar rhyme called *Ten Little Indians* written by Septimus Winner in 1868. I guess what is good for the goose is good for the goose.

**Well made names**

‘Nigger’ has a particular endurance. It has outlived a good number of possible contenders, constantly remaining in the popular imagination, staying on when words like ‘coloured’ no longer function. Similarly other words for blackness, apart from ‘black’ itself have not been embraced by a militant youth as a self-reflecting marker or as self-definition.

Self definition is at the heart of the combative use of ‘nigger’ by the militant youth to control their own representation. The right of black people to use the word while explicitly denying any other group its use is the strategy which
makes the word heavy in the mouth. Its incorporation into black slang however ensures that it remains in the public mind, and it is the very creation of an in-crowd which increases the desire of those ‘outside’ to use of the word.

It is not that there are not names given to whiteness, ‘snowflake’, ‘grays’ or ‘ghost’ are some that come to mind. There is, however, something about whiteness that disallows the names to reach the depth a designator needs to function properly. They remain on the surface as insults or simple device of alienation/differentiation. A name that relies on purity, ‘as pure as the driven snow’, cannot adequately demean. Maybe ‘cracker’ does something, but that fails too, One needs the weight of history and power to adequately support a name, and it does not exist behind ‘cracker’. ‘Cracker’ which apart from signifying a biscuit or fireworks has been defined within United States English dialect as ‘a poor white person living in the hills or backwoods of Georgia, Florida, or other Southern state’ and is often used in an unfriendly way’. It can only be used as an isolated insult, but not as a definition of everyone that is seen as white; the operative words are ‘poor’ and ‘stupid’ after all. What is there for the white person to become?

Here Norman Mailer steps in.

Be all you can be

So there was a new breed of adventurers, urban adventurers who drifted out at night looking for action with a black man’s code to fit their facts. The hipster had absorbed the existentialist synopses of the

52 In Britain ‘cracker’ even has positive connotations, after Robbie Coltrane starred as a criminal psychologist that ‘cracked’ crimes. Other ‘white’ racial slurs are always something other than pigmentation; ghost and snowflake, to take just two examples, are words in their own right, and they have not lost their ‘normal’ use because of their incorporation into the language of race.
Negro, and for practical purposes could be considered a white Negro. The negro as outsider, the negro as dead, the negro as black. It plays the role of an adequate foil. It is the opposite side of the lightness of whiteness, being the darkness of blackness. It also acts as the innermost fears of life; that which is death. Norman Mailer investigates this fascination within his essay 'The White Negro', where he presents a scenario of total social and political disillusionment for the white population, that forces a search for new meaning. Meaning that was eventually found in copying the life and style of the Negro, but not by becoming one, never crossing the line, always remaining just outside the pale of darkness. Mailer writes:

There is a depth of desperation to the condition which enables one to remain in life only by engaging death, but the reward is their knowledge that what is happening at each instant of the electric present is good or bad for their cause, their love, their action, their need.

There is a problem here: not to be black and therefore hip would be to die the death of the square, and yet to slip too far, 'to go native' as the colonials would put it, would also mean to die the death of pigmentation. Fortunately for the hipster, the cool ones, it is not possible to slip that far, they will always remain human, they will always retain their badge of whiteness.

It is this knowledge that provides the curious community of feeling in the world of the hipster, a muted cool religious revival to be sure, but the element which is exciting, disturbing, nightmarish, perhaps, is that

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54 ibid. p.287.
incompatibles have come to bed, the inner life and the violent life, the orgy and the dream of love, the desire and the desire to create, a dialectical conception of existence with a lust for power, a dark, romantic, and yet undeniably dynamic view of existence for it sees every man and woman as moving individually through each moment of life forward into growth or backwards into death.\textsuperscript{55}

The hipster for Mailer is self-admittedly white, and the desire to be a white Negro is an attribute of whiteness, yet the attributes accredited to the white Negro are the essential elements of what Fanon calls Negro-isms.\textsuperscript{56} By appropriating these Negro-isms, Mailer defines the Negro and the Negro ceases to be or has never been man. The Negro is a force of nature, energy, a resource for change, a means of salvation, a thing.

If there is a white Negro then there is logically room for a black Negro, for here the Negro is a thing, not a person or a race, but a figment of the imagination. Yet there is no such thing as the black Negro, because all that is collapsed into the thing/word ‘Negro’ is borne and represented by the pigmentation of the black person. It could therefore be said and be grammatically correct that there is such a thing as the ‘white Black’; that elusive element that is constantly in search of its own soul, appearing in the guise of one and speaking with the tongue of another. The ‘white Black’ is not like the black person of Fanon’s \textit{Black Skin, White Masks}, because s/he does not hate what they are and are able to recognise who and what they are in reflection and representation. The white Negro may be constructed as a psychopath, but it is only after a long analysis of the psychopath’s nature that Mailer eventually

\textsuperscript{55} ibid. p.287.

\textsuperscript{56} ‘The concept of Negro-isms, for example, was the emotional, if not the logical antithesis of that insult which the white man flung at humanity. This rush of Negro-isms against the white man’s contempt showed itself in certain spheres to be the one idea capable of lifting interdictions and anathema.’ Fanon, Frantz. \textit{The Wretched of the Earth}. p.171.
works up the courage to say what he had been hinting at all along: whiteness is sane, it is blackness which is marred, with "It is therefore no accident that psychopathy is most prevalent among the negro".57

The psychopathy is defined as follows:

like the neurotic, he is looking for the opportunity to grow up a second time, but the psychopath knows instinctively that to express a forbidden impulse actively is far more beneficial to him than merely to confess the desire in the safety of a doctor's room.58

Mailer continues:

Hated from outside, and therefore hating himself, the Negro was forced into a position of exploring all those moral wildernesses of civilised life which the square [read 'white'] automatically condemns as delinquent or evil or immature or morbid or self destructive or corrupt.59

Mailer then contrasts the 'Negro' with the square who has been taught from childhood that which is right from wrong. It must be noted at this point, that for Mailer, the square is always white. The mere fact of blackness makes the negro something else than the square, even if Mailer were to see the possibility of the uncool black person.

. . . the Negro not being privileged to gratify his self esteem with the heady satisfaction of categorical condemnation chose to move instead

58 ibid. p. 291.
59 ibid. p. 292.
in the other direction where all situations are equally valid, and in the worst of perversion, promiscuity, pimpery, drug addiction, rape, razor slash, bottle break, what-have-you, the Negro discovered and elaborated a morality of the bottom.\textsuperscript{60}

Paradoxically, becoming a white Negro does not make the white person insane or psychopathic, the incorporation of the other just seems to balance out their psyche.

For to swing is to communicate, it is to convey the rhythm of one's own being as a lover, a friend or an audience and - equally necessary - to be able to feel the rhythms of their response. To swing with the rhythms of another is to enrich oneself - the conception of the learning processes dug by Hip is that one cannot really learn until one contains within oneself the implicit rhythm of the subject or the (other) person \textsuperscript{61}

Of interest in Mailer's 'Negro' is that it does not seem subject to the history that white people have encountered. I use the term Negro because Black Africans are similarly deemed to live outside history. One would expect that a concept created for salvation will recognise the passage of time. Yet maybe it is the fact that this is a creation for salvation that means it cannot take on history. The Negro has to remain an unaware foil, a foil that can be used with ease, one that will not demand its own place, its own being. This lack of historical reference makes the Negro ready to provide redemption for whiteness. The ravages of two world wars, the Atlantic trade and colonialism have been survived unscathed on both sides of the Atlantic. These experiences have not had any impact according to Mailer, who knows that the

\textsuperscript{60} ibid. p.292.
\textsuperscript{61} ibid. p.294.
'lowest' is instinctive to the Negro, and the 'highest' is the birthright of the white person.

This lack of substance is summed up rather well by one of Mailer's critics at the time, Ned Polsky - not that Polsky is not open to criticism of his own - when he wrote in response to 'White Negro':

Even in the world of the hipster the Negro remains essentially what Ralph Ellison called him - an invisible man. The white Negro accepts the real Negro not in his totality, but as a bringer of a highly specialised and restricted 'cultural dowry' to use Mailer's phrase. In so doing he creates an inverted form of keeping the nigger in his place.  

Mailer's attempt to pretend 'hip' is new and appropriate to the phenomenon of whites who want to make the most of their whiteness by being black for a while, resembles the coarse animated films created by Hollywood. In the film, *Clean Pastures* of 1937, 'hep angels' are black and include caricatures of musicians like Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller.  

The crisis of language is not not being questioned by those that have the most at stake for the battle of the mind over the thingness that the negro was lastingly formulated as. Black writers have doggedly confronted the role of words face on. Scott Lee Heron wrote *The Nigger Factory*, Ralph Ellison wrote *The Invisible Man*, Toni Morrison has tackled the very nature of race in language in all her writing, Walter Mosley has created characters that question the very essence of the black male as criminal, using the crime

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62 ibid. p. 313.
64 Kotlarz, Irene. 'The Birth of a Notion.' *Screen* Vol. 24, No. 2, Mar./Apr. 1982. p. 28.
novel as his vehicle, following fast on the heels of writers like Chester Himes and Iceberg Slim. Maybe it is only possible to deal with an object of the imagination and language through the imagination and language. Hence fiction has become an essential ally in the scrutiny, re-creation and renaming of blackness

Socrates - how appropriate - one of Walter Mosley's creations faces up to the reality of words

Denther's Bar and Grill was a cop café in Normandie. It had wood frame windows, old time metal Venetian blinds and a cursive neon sign that said Café in blue and Open in red. Only cops and the women who dated them went to Denther's...

Socrates entered the door at one thirty exactly. He was still wearing his Bounty blue-and-green T-shirt but that wasn't enough to fool these cops. The Jukebox was playing disco but the conversation nearly stopped...

At the bar he asked 'Kenneth Shreve in here?'
The bartender, a small man, didn't answer.

Socrates asked his question again.

'What do you want?' a white man seated at the bar asked him.

'I want Kenneth Shreve.'

'What for?'

'You his mother?' Socrates asked, almost pleasantly.

'You better watch it . . . .' The unspoken word dangled at the end of the white man's sentence. It was an integrated bar. Black cops and white ones patronised Denther's. You could not call a man nigger unless you
were a nigger yourself.\textsuperscript{65}

Reinvention of the hipster

‘Outrage at Tarantino’s Language’, ‘Alarm at Tarantino’s Language’, ‘Don’t mention the N Word’,\textsuperscript{66} ‘Tarantino’s main man: You can call him ‘nigga’ . . . Just don’t call him ‘nigger’.\textsuperscript{67} The headlines cried; the media loved it. Here was a valid reason to splash the N-word all over the media. The mythical jar has been opened and the ills have escaped.

The current debate on the right to use the N-word can be single-handedly credited to \textit{Jackie Brown}; Tarantino’s last film, released in December 1997 in the United States and in April of the following year in Britain. This is not to conveniently forget the contributions of gangsta rap, gangsta films (a mutation of blaxploitation). It is just that \textit{Jackie Brown} allowed a mainstream (read respectable white) discourse of ‘nigger’.

The film tells the story of Ordell, a small time arms dealer who becomes involved in the world of cash smuggling. Ordell is placed in a set cultural position right from the start of the film; he is depicted as an outcast, his language and antics present him as a psychotic cold blooded killer. He contacts an acquaintance, Beaumont, whom he has just bailed out of jail, convinces Beaumont to crawl into the boot of a car, drives to a secluded spot, opens the boot and promptly shoots him. To show that the execution is premeditated, Ordell then goes to his own car, parked nearby, and drives


away. This is not to forget Ordell’s subsequent use of Beaumont’s corpse as a trophy by, to impress and warn Louis Gara, Ordell’s friend and latest accomplice.

Through *Jackie Brown*, Tarantino becomes Mailer’s ‘hipster, Mailer’s ‘white Negro’. Tarantino has absorbed blackness and he knows it, the music for the films is from his personal collection, he settles into his symbolic black baggy jeans, he knows the nigger, he is not afraid of the big, bad word. Likewise Griffith, who would probably abhor being called a hipster, through *The Birth of a Nation* makes his claim of knowing the negro. He too has absorbed the negro’s essence and is able to represent it on screen.

Tarantino’s *Jackie Brown* heralds a new age of the Blaxploitation genre, and by definition Blaxploitation film, which needs a white person writing and directing the antics of black life. Pam Grier and Samuel L. Jackson play the roles and Tarantino directs the actions. In typical style the black people are criminal and the central character is criminal to the core. Like the makers of Blaxploitation films of the past, Tarantino has realised that people will go to the cinema to just watch people being black. This is the creation of a safe place from which to observe the black population being themselves, and for most people this will be the closest they get to a real ‘flesh and blood’ black person, hence the desire that there be an ‘authenticity’ to the performance, that the black people be as close to the ‘real thing’ as possible.

*Jackie Brown* is an adaptation of Elmore Leonard’s crime novel, *Rum Punch*, which is about an air stewardess called Jackie Burke caught up in illegal gun

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sales and money smuggling. While the story line is similar to the film, Jackie Burke in the book is white, and Jackie Brown of the film is brown. The transition from Burke to Brown is simple, it allows a classic replay of black on black violence. The pimp and the prostitute scenario made commonplace by the Blaxploitation genre can be re-presented to a new audience in what can

71 The use of Brown as the Surname for Black people in Hollywood is no accident; the ‘Scarface like’ drug lord is called Nino Brown in ‘New Jack City and Roseanne Brown in ‘To Live and Die in L.A.’, who is a patient in Santa - Fe hospital, she is not seen, but we learn a great deal about her from the hospital intern.

“Roseanne Brown is a black woman. She's recuperating from a fall she took from a bicycle near USC, she's married, her husband is listed as serving time for armed robbery at Saint Louis Prison.”


be read as a complex rerendering. 

This transition from white to black has not escaped the media. It is a fairly unique situation, the reverse being the norm; when the amount of black roles that have been played by white people in blackface is considered, from Shakespeare’s *Othello* to D. W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation*. Predictably the machinery of apologia, stepped in swiftly, Andrew Anthony, attempts to explain this racial switch with:

> For starters Leonard’s heroine has metamorphosed from white to

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72 There is a need to contrast Elmore Leonard's 'Ordell' with Tarantino's. While the argument that Tarantino has created a version of Rum Punch stands, the changes that Ordell goes through are too severe to ignore. The redeeming factors of the book are gone; that Beaumont is shot in 'self defence' is removed, that Ordell is proud and walks through a white power rally is dispensed with.

The creation of an authentic black experience is problematised if one considers that Ordell can almost be called a 'Race Man' (in spite of his criminality, he seems to 'know who he is') in the sense that Du Bois uses the phrase. See the arguments of the 'talented tenth' that are analysed by Gates Jnr, Henry Louis; West, Cornel. *The Future of the Race*. Vintage Books, New York. 1997.

Ordell swaps his racial/national credentials with Max Cherry, the bail bondsman,

> "I need your name too, and your address."
Ordell told him it was Ordell Robbie, spelled it for him when the man asked, and said where he lived.
> "That a Jamaican name?"
"Hey, do I sound like one of them? You hear them talking that island potwah to each other, it's like a different language. No, man, I'm an African-American. I used to be Neegro, I was cullud, I was black, but now I'm African-American. What're you, Jewish, huh?"
"You're African-American, I guess I'm French-American," Max Cherry said "with maybe some New Orleans Creole in there, going way back."


Note the similarity between Ordell’s monologue and Gates’ "My ‘Personal Statement’ for my Yale application began "My grandfather was colored, my father was Negro, and I am black." (Gates Jnr, Henry Louis. *Colored People*. Penguin Books, London. 1994. p. 201.)

Ordell is not singular in his approach to race, he is willing to be seen at a white power rally, is an acquaintance to 'Gerald the white supremacist/ gun freak', and sees the covering of race as irrelevant when considering the value of a man, while recognising the social construction of skin colour. He points this out to Louis Gara when they discuss the necessity of killing Gerald, his next robbery victim, "Louis? You only think you're a good guy. You're just like me, only you turned out white." (Leonard, Elmore. *Rum Punch*, p.64.)

Tarantino however tidies up Max, avoids the sexual relationship between Max and Jackie, as this will complicate his presentation of Max as selfless (even if he does take his 'cut'). This makes Max the antithesis to Ordell and restores racial balance in the film, the very simplicity the Andrew Anthony, the critic, says is not in play.
black. Tarantino is no politically correct reductionist, but the swap enables Jackson to explore Ordell’s ruthless nature without falling prey to a simple ‘good guys white, bad guys black’ reading of the action.3

If Tarantino is not being ‘politically correct’, if he does not want to present black and white binarisms to his predominantly white audience, and creates the strangely ‘complex’ black on black violence, then he is simply being conservative. He is merely supporting the status quo by reinforcing the ‘pimp and prostitute’ myth of black criminality, and stereotyped black criminality at that. Notably, the chromatic morphing has not made Ordell any less ruthless and the one ‘good’ person in the film, Max, is white.

It is at this point that the language within the film starts to make sense, Tarantino has publicly argued that he using ‘nigga’ and not ‘nigger’; ‘nigger’ being the offensive manifestation, ‘nigga’ being the acceptable form. It does not take a genius to work out that ‘nigga’ is a bastardised form of ‘nigger’, Tarantino can still knowingly feign innocence, providing a secure cultural safety valve.

This confidence is expressed during the ‘Guardian Interview’ at the National Film Theatre in January 1998. Tarantino was questioned after a pre-release showing of the film. All was going well, his fans were adoring, until

A questioner, a young black male threatened to spoil the love-in. “Why are there so many uses of the word nigger? You won’t get away with it.”

“Yes I do.” Tarantino said, attracting a round of applause.4

Applause is always telling, it is like laughter. It tells the speaker that the audience appreciate what is being said. Like laughter, it can also be an expression of nerves, a means of showing discomfort at the situation at hand. But the claim by Tarantino, is also revealing: he knows he gets away with provocatively using racially offensive language, not that he will, not that he has made a new and unique statement. This 'stand' produces applause. This kind of applause can be read as support for Tarantino and a silencing of the young black questioner. Or it could indicate the audience's discomfort.

The young black male is aware each time 'nigger' is used, hence the question, and it does not matter that Tarantino claims he is saying 'nigga'. Not that this is a salient consideration for Tarantino, he declares 'I'm a white guy who is not afraid of that word. I just don't feel the white guilt and pussyfooting around racial issues.' So 'nigga' for 'nigger' is really an excuse, and not a convincing one at that.

Even Samuel L Jackson the star of the film and one of Tarantino's most vociferous apologists on Jackie Brown has publicly stated on the Oprah Winfrey Show, that while it is acceptable for him (Jackson) to use 'nigger', if Tarantino were to call him one, he would knock his head off. It must be hard for Jackson, he must have found himself in a tight spot. He liberally defends Tarantino while reinforcing his own blackness, only to find himself called 'negro of the month' by Spike Lee.

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17 Sawyers, Pascoe. 'Don't mention the N Word.' The Guardian 20 Mar. 1998. p. 6. Not that Spike Lee can play the saintly one, after all he gave Tarantino a cameo role in 'Girl 6' where Tarantino, playing a film maker berates a black woman on every conceivable level.

We are not yet at that point where mainstream advertisers or television are ready to use 'nigger' or 'nigga' depending on which side of Tarantino you stand, but as Tarantino has revealed this does not mean there is not an eager collective waiting to let the word loose onto a racially conscious audience.

I would like to end with a joke by Chris Rock, a man who has made a name for himself using 'nigger' and every other piece of offensive language to drive his point home. Some have likened him to Richard Pryor, who linguistically mirrored America, forcing it to acknowledge the awkwardness of race and language. Pryor has since renounced the use of 'nigger', but Rock is still doing his thing to great effect.

Mommy? Can I say Nigger?

I just said 'nigger' a whole lot. You probably think I shouldn't use the N word, but that rule is just for white folks. Any black person can say 'nigger' and get away with it. It's like calling your kid an idiot. Only you can call your kid that. Someone else calls your kid an idiot, there's a fight.

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Yet some white people still wonder why black people can say 'nigger' and they can't. Believe it or not, it's a very common question, I hear it all the time.

(...)

‘Nigger’ is one of those words like ‘fuck’ that means different things depending on how you use it.

‘I love you nigger.’ Good.

‘You’re my nigger.’ That’s nice.

‘Shut up nigger.’ Not so good.

‘I’m going to kill you nigger.’ You better run

Of course ‘nigger’ is just a word. White people could call us anything, like ‘butter’ ‘Hey, you fucking butter! Pick that cotton butter’. The Problem is that then they wouldn’t be able to use the word ‘butter’ for anything else. But they’ve got to use something. Next thing you know, white folks are sitting around the breakfast table with their eggs and toast saying ‘You’re kidding, I can’t believe it’s not nigger.’

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2. Racing Blackness

or Sublimating the Nightmare

‘Race’ as a meaningful criterion within the biological sciences has long been recognised to be fiction. When we speak of the ‘white race’ or the ‘black race’, the ‘Jewish race’ or the ‘Aryan race’ we speak in misnomers, biologically, and in metaphors, more generally. Nevertheless, our conversations are replete with usages of race which have their sources in the dubious pseudo-science of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.®

Carl Joseph is a twenty seven year old butcher from Bromford Bridge in Birmingham. He does not have a conviction for any crime, has a clean driving licence and owns a car fit for the road. He is also black. The last attribute, however, seems to be of the most importance in ‘The Guardian’ newspaper, and not without reason. He has been stopped about 34 times in two years for no discernible reason. He eventually resorted to suing the police for racial harassment. Amid threats that illegal drugs will be planted on him, and being told “You lot are bloody all the same”, Carl Joseph is pressing charges and making legal history in the process.§

His legal counsel, Peter Herbert said, “officers had targeted Mr. Joseph not only for his colour, but because he complained and went to the media with his story.”

ibeid.
Mr Joseph is shown in the photograph accompanying the article, his arms folded across his chest, his eyes non-threatening with his ‘one love metro’ behind him. It is possible to see a ring on his ‘wedding’ finger, making him even more ‘respectable’. Any attempt to make him more than his skin fail in the article, he is constantly reduced to one element of his person.

The title of the report, ‘Black motorist stopped 34 times sues police’, primes the reader for another issue based around skin colour and consequently about race. The newspaper is not dealing with the supposed inherent characteristics attached to race, but a single quality: skin colour. While the ramifications of skin colour run deeper than the immediately visible, “You lot are bloody all the same”, reduces the individual to part of an indistinguishable morass, this ‘lumping’ of all black people being a hallmark of racial stereotyping. The threat, “… the next time there would be drugs in his car and they would not be his”\footnote{ibid.} is not only possible within British culture, it fits in neatly with the criminal image of the racialised black male youth. This leaves the policemen secure in their understanding of racial stereotypes and popular conceptions.

It is noteworthy that this story made it to the front page of the newspaper. Police harassment of black men has been documented many times before.\footnote{Duncan, Campbell Police Stop Blacks Five Times as Often as Whites The Guardian 9 Dec. 1998. p. 9. BBC News. ‘UK Blacks Stopped More Often By Racist Police.’ BBC Online 15 Oct. 1998. 17:28 GMT. http://news2.thls.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/uk/newsid%5F194000/194290.stm. 20 Jan 1999.} The sharpening of racial awareness caused by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry can be seen in the treatment and placing of the article. It reflects the accusations of institutional/institutionalised racism in the police force; so
firmly denied by Paul Condon, commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, though admitted to by his colleague Chief Constable David Willmot of the Greater Manchester force.

This public face of race in Britain appears in the meeting between the public and the police, the public and the courts, and the public and the state (in the form of elected parliamentarians). The 'public' might be misleading in this context, as it is the non-white section of the population that forms the bulk of this 'public'. While the police, courts and government appear to be able to hand out impartial treatment to the white public, they appear to fail on encountering blackness. Skin colour and phenotype, in one word 'race', becomes an integral part of this unsatisfactory meeting.

Looking through recent news reports, most of them easily point towards the police as cultural scapegoats, from the deliberate assaults and injustices preferentially carried out along racial lines, to the turning of a blind eye to the attacks and crimes that are carried out against a non-white public. If the police can be seen as a representative sample of the British public, institutional racism or not, then race as an active force in Britain takes on a more disconcerting image than the presented polarised picture in the press.

The police, have become a cipher for a British response to race and its meaning to a British public.

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87 The deflection of society's racial attitudes on to the police makes it appear that it is the 'police' that have a problem, and society can sit back assuming that racial misadventure is an attribute of the 'Far Right' and the 'Police'.
Carl Joseph's experiences and subsequent legal action are testaments to the power of the visual representation of race, since it is this visual manifestation that determined the relationship between him and the police. Carl Joseph's lawyer, in this instance, can easily construct a relationship between race and power, seeing the case as being between "... those with power and those without power." 88

May I speak now?

This chapter intends to question the separation of the idea of race from visual difference that confronts people and forms the basis of most racial prejudice. 89 It will analyse the method/theories of designating race and attempt to illustrate the problems associated with speaking of race when race is denied. It will look at the American influence on British thought, with the structural similarities between Jim Crow and Colonial settlement. The impact of nationality will also be dealt with. It will also show how blackness has been formed and holds an oppositional racial position, in spite of attempts to rationalise difference into non-existence.

Patricia J. Williams, Professor of law at Columbia University, has written extensively on the persistence of the idea and impact of race. Williams explains how hard it is to deal with race as a living reality, with an implied mandate that it is 'time to move on'.

I recently guest lectured... As I spoke of the about shifting demographics and the phenomenon of 'white flight', the class grew

89 The question of racial prejudice is the active face of race. This need not be in the form of violence only. Representation of 'race' reflects this prejudice as well.
restless, the students flipping pages of newspapers and otherwise
evidencing disrespect. Afterward, two or three black students
congratulated me . . . for using the words 'black' and 'white'. I later
asked the professor, How is it possible to teach cases on racial
discrimination without mentioning race? "I just teach the neutral
principles" he replied, "I don't want to risk upsetting the black
students".  

That it is 'black students' likely to be upset by discussing race makes 'race' a
black issue, the resident professor sees discussing 'race' impinging on black
students because he sees them as the ones that are 'raced'. To this end,
'race' is going to be deliberately approached as a question of 'type'. It
represents the mark of difference that the public at large use as a means of
separating one group of people from another. 'Type' conveniently reduces
'race' to the visible, not an imaginary elusive element dragged out through
pseudo-scientific exploration. It is the 'thing' that now strikes people as 'race',
it is not invisible.

Looking at blackness as it pertains to advertising, means an emphasis on the
visual nature of race and how it comes to function as an effective signifier.
Skin colour is the attribute that points to the 'complete' racial package. Visual
difference, often the starting point for racial conjecture, in lacking an
acceptable explanation provides room for various theories to fill the mental
gap between what is factual: skin colour of individual or group, and the
fictitious: inherent qualities of the individual or group.

90 Williams, Patricia J. The Rooster's Egg: On the Persistence of Prejudice. Harvard
28-64.
In advertising, it is the visible and definable element that is important. The 'woman' has to be feminine (preferably sexually attractive), the 'mother' has to be motherly (even if this means using somebody else's child as a prop). The 'man' has to be masculine (unless he is a caricature of something else, such as the 'wimp' in the 'Mr. Muscle' advertisements), and the 'black' has to be black, undeniably so. In all the above situations 'type' functions, not as an accident of the viewer's imagination, but constructed to do so. It is the 'type' of race that will be the focus of this paper, a clear division between that which is, and is not, black.

Visible Blackness

'Visible blackness' is not an accident of nature, it is the aspect of blackness that is the immediate, and therefore acts as the most reliable marker of difference. Racial difference, however, is a created phenomenon, that can only be resolved by human intervention. While waiting for this intervention, blackness will not go away, it will remain, functioning as a dominating racial signifier. Blackness has evolved to become a convention for applying 'race' to any given situation; black music and black culture to name two examples. As Henry Louis Gates Jnr. put it: “Race has become a trope of ultimate, irrefutable difference between cultures, linguistic groups, or practitioners of specific belief systems, who more often than not have fundamentally opposed economic systems.”

This is not fundamentally a negative reductionist strategy, it also provides a form of positive empowerment for blackness. This is because 'blackness'

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presently provides the non-white individual with a clear means of desirable self identification, the kind of identification brought about by the imposition of 'blackness' as the most important element of their person. No matter how debased 'black' becomes, it forces an identity linked to blackness into being. William Strickland tells of a strong negative response to 'black' in the late 1950's with: 'Back then, whoever might call us “Black” or “African” would almost surely have a fight on his or her hands'.

The consequence of 'colour' as 'race', or at the least as a means of defining race, is that the language that arises from 'race' has in turn been defined by the 'colour' used to classify difference. Colour, is visual and emotive in language outside the discourse on race, and allows classifications that would be impossible to sustain over time as tangible differences (other than colour) wear away. But 'colour' possesses the notion of racial origin.

Taking a look at 'colours' put to use historically, Red was and is still used to define the Native inhabitants of the Americas, to differentiate them from Asian Indians and is frowned upon as a designation. ‘Red Indian' has since been replaced by ‘Native American'. ‘Yellow', apart from meaning coward, no longer carries the connotation of a clear racial group. It was used to define those that were from China and Japan. 'Brown' was traditionally used to separate Asians from Africans. Being too close to excrement, was not held very dear,

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Ralph Ellison's 'Change the joke and Slip the Yoke.' analyses responses to the trope of blackness represented in minstrelsy with:
Down at the deep bottom of the melting pot, where the private is public, and the public private, where black is white and white black, where the immoral becomes moral and the moral is anything that makes one feel good (or one has the power to sustain), the white man's relish is apt to be the black man's gall.
It is not at all odd that this black faced figure of white fun is for Negroes a symbol of everything they rejected in the white man's thinking about race, in themselves, and in their own group.

and has waned in popularity. 'Brown' people have since found themselves incorporated into 'Black'. 'Black' has been in operation from the early days of racial designation, the opposite (not the chromatic complementary of) 'white'. 'Black' has courted disapproval, but manages to survive as a term to use. It carries negative connotations on almost all linguistic levels, but on emerging as a political marker, has received new life. 'White' too has been in use as a racial signifier, stoutly remaining in service. Uniquely, it is a self-conferred designator which has not surprisingly managed to retain its position as a politically, socially and economically privileged 'colour'. This in spite of the current interrogation of whiteness.

It is this visible blackness (and whiteness) that allowed the sustenance of lynching and Jim Crow in the United States. In Britain it facilitated the tracking down of runaway slaves and the placing of “No Blacks, No Coloureds allowed” signs in English boarding house windows. It is this visible nature of pigmentation that facilitates the practice of ‘passing’. Where the fundamental decider is the visual, the visual can and does become the basis of masquerade. Visible difference is the element that causes a recoiling in people, the entity that is ‘race’ - the position of 'type' in the hierarchy of mankind.

**Visual demographics**

In the 1999 *Whitaker's Almanack*, Britain's population is set out by age and

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96 See Dyer, Frankenberg and Daniels.


98 When I was a child and young teenager, there were those that would not touch me, as they were recoiled by my white skin. This happened with people who were black and those that were white.
Ethnicity is set out using visible difference. As the designators show, the categories that people are placed into have more to do with colour of skin and political land masses (as defined by Britain's colonial heritage), than any notion of ethnicity. What is most telling is the placing of white as one ethnic group, while defining the others in such varied, if unclear terms. The question of visibility is made even clearer when one considers the categories of 'other black' and 'other Asian'. It becomes apparent that we are dealing with a tripartite scheme of understanding Britain's resident population.

One can go to the extent of arguing that these categories are not ethnic at all, that they are merely cloaked visible racial divisions along the established, yet spurious ideas of three racial groups.

However, before there is a return to race being an unquestioned notion, it is necessary to determine the manner in which race has been articulated in national demographics. If race and ethnicity are not important elements in the

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**RESIDENT POPULATION**

**BY ETHNIC GROUP (1991 CENSUS (GREAT BRITAIN))**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Estimated population</th>
<th>percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>212,000</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Black</td>
<td>178,000</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>840,000</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>477,000</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>161,000</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>157,000</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>198,000</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td><strong>280,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.6%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total ethnic minority groups</td>
<td>3,015,000</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>51,874,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Ethnic groups</td>
<td>54,889,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Stationery Office - population Trend 72
representation of the nation's population, then it is possible to argue that
there is no need to have the breakdown of Britain into such definable groups.
Yet to argue for this, considering the importance ‘colour’ politics\textsuperscript{100} has on the
psyche of the nation, will be naive to the point of stupidity. On the other hand,
to argue for the opposing point of view, is to re-establish and confirm the
stature of ‘race’ as a bonafide paradigm.

The aggregate of ethnic minorities in Britain is 5.5 % of the population\textsuperscript{101} and
this section is now politically deemed ‘black’. The ethnic information is
instinctively taken as an opposition, created in the breakdown, to indicate that
there is the ‘white’ and there is the ‘ethnic’ population, which together form
Britain.

The implication of this possible binary separation (that differentiates one
group, and homogenises the other) is that the white population of Britain is
presented as a unified body that does not contain ethnic or political
differences, effectively unified when compared with a fragmented minority. It is
thereby necessary to understand that the categories are ‘racial’ and not
‘logical’, ‘cultural’ or ‘ethnic’.

Where ‘race’ as a visual experience is acknowledged, it removes the veil of
good manners, and allows analysis of the current state of interpersonal racial
affairs. At the moment it is possible to hide behind the idea of ethnicity, to
mask racial ideology.\textsuperscript{102} Accepting the visual nature of difference will curtail this
and allow discussion around the complexity of what to do with colour.

\textsuperscript{100} Such as ‘Operation Black Vote’, or at an extreme, the ‘British National Party’, both are
registered political pressure groups.

\textsuperscript{101} Established using the data from Whitaker's Almanack 1999. 1998. p.113

\textsuperscript{102} See Araeen, Rasheed. 'From Primitivism to Ethnic Arts.' in Hillier, S. The Myth of
One of the social legacies of ‘race’ is the inferiority of one ‘race’ in relation to another. Yet to declare allegiance to racial ideas, is to declare bigotry, of being unwilling to accept that ideas of ‘race’ have been academically discredited. The problem is, even if one acknowledges the irrationality of race and racial theories, it does not eradicate the real actions carried out and social hierarchies constructed in accordance with racial sentiment.

Looking at the arguments around race closely, it is interesting to note the manner in which the dualities of race are presented. The placing of ‘black’ and ‘white’ is not of accidental development. In a situation where, as in the census breakdown, differences between ‘white’ people are treated as insignificant, while minute differences between the ‘black’ indigenes are, it is not long before one is made aware of social classification.

**How to decide**

Michael Banton, in his book *Racial Theories* identifies five different ways of looking at race. These are: race as ‘lineage’, ‘type’, ‘subspecies’, ‘status’, and ‘class’. While they are not the only possible ways to investigate race, he has managed to include most of the theories of race within these categories. It would seem appropriate therefore to retain his divisions as a starting point from which to encounter the creation of ‘race’. What is also of consideration is how the theories of race as they chronologically appear, move from the justification of ‘race’ to its denial. A denial that allows an abdication of responsibility for the ravages of racial thinking.

**Race as lineage** relies on the idea of races always existing after a celestial
pronouncement. Race is set for each man by God, and there is an inherent standpoint in determining the external and internal characteristics of man. This determination affects all living things, that sees all dogs, for instance, as a race and therefore have set parameters within which they can function. They are unable to interbreed with other races, say the race of cats. The use of 'race', as species arises from the desire for a simple designation which will clarify the world.

There is a spectre of myth that hangs over a divine reasoning for race. This of course will supersede any rational presentation of race to an audience. The story of three patriarchs that started the traditional groupings of people has been carried on for over two thousand years. It has helped form the popular conception of what race is now. Therefore it is no surprise that there is the tripartite division of Caucasian, Mongoloid and Negroid.

Religion has sometimes provided the justification for apparent irrationalities. This is not to say that religion in itself is irrational, only that when there is no other answer to hand, religion provides an answer that does not need to be argued or defended rationally.

The sons of Noah who came into the ark were Shem, Ham (Ham was the father of Canaan) and Japheth. These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the earth. Noah . . . proceeded to plant a vineyard. When he drank some of the wine he became drunk and lay uncovered inside the tent. Ham the father of Canaan saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside . . . . When Noah woke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, he said
“Cursed be Canaan, the lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers”. He also said “Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, may Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God expand the territory of Japheth, may Japheth live in the tent of Sham, and may Canaan be his slave.”

Ham became the father of black people, Shem, for Asia and Japheth carried the responsibility of starting off the White Europeans in all its ramifications. The time that has passed between the times of the Bible to the modern definitions of race seems almost insignificant, when one considers the depth that this reading of ‘race’ had on the understanding of society and the methods used to navigate through human difference.

It is interesting that this arrangement is made early on in the Bible allowing for a clear separation of people into distinct groups with an order in place, with Japheth at the top and Ham (through Canaan) at the bottom. This would later provide a good basis to explain the state of human relationship much later on in the history of man.

The association of the curse of Canaan with blackness arose . . . in mediaeval Talmudic texts. In the sixteenth century it became a Christian theme and by the seventeenth it was widely accepted as an explanation of black skin colour.

With world exploration and colonialism, when the need to present similar people as being fundamentally different would arise, and the biblical model was there ready and waiting. The use of the biblical past for the economic benefit of the present was used to separate Homo sapiens into

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racial/economic groups, and was instrumental in providing a model for ‘race’ as a set reality, rather than a construction.

It would be simple to dismiss religion and the Bible as a discredited voice in discussions that surround ‘race’, but in a community where a great number of people accept that there was a point of human creation, and we follow directly in line from the first heterosexual couple, answers to the question of racial difference that fit within this model are easily accepted.

However, those that travelled outside Europe encountered peoples of different colours, could not accept that there could be one starting point for man, and argued that the ‘races’ had separate beginnings. This was known as ‘polygenesis’, ‘first advanced by Paracleus in 1520,”⁷⁰⁶ as a means of keeping the Adam and Eve of the Bible untainted.

. . . . Durer, Vesalius, Paracleus, Hume, Voltaire and others had previously tested theological authority with alternative polygenic accounts based upon other biblical exegesis or upon Hermetic or Cabalistic manipulations of the heresies of Ham and the Tower of Babel, most of which were abusive of the newly discovered peoples and traded in the demonology and numerology of the sacred texts⁷⁰⁶

While it is possible to argue that the religious accounts are not of great significance, that biblical historicism of this sort is bound to myth and national agendas, it is hard to ignore the deliberate attempt to isolate ‘all that was good’ for the European/white and relegate the rest of the world to monstrosity.

‘Race’ had managed to create its own discourse and even its own champions. Scientific advances and discoveries were pulled into the service of racial classification. It is not a fluke that the advances of Science (knowledge with the confidence of certainty) in the West can be linked to the wealth and comfort acquired through foreign trade. The meeting of people that looked different \(^\text{107}\) led to the need for an acceptable explanation for this difference; science with its apparent unassailability proved to be the best way of explaining the unknown after religion

One of the earliest attempts to classify human racial types was made by the Swedish biologist Carolus \([?]\) Linnaeus \([1707 - 1778]\), who in 1758 founded modern taxonomy with the publication of his Systema Naturae. In formulating a system of racial classifications he incorporated a few genetic traits - such as skin colour, hair form, and hair colour.\(^\text{108}\)

(Systema Naturae) made some sense of the wealth of information about living things emerging from the scientific discoveries of the period. Later Linnaeus distinguished four varieties of man, black, yellow, red, and white.\(^\text{109}\) . . . \textit{americana} [red, choleric, erect], \textit{Europeans} [white, ruddy, muscular], \textit{asiaticus} [yellow, melancholic, inflexible], \textit{afer} [black, phlegmatic, indulgent].\(^\text{110}\)

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\(^\text{107}\) The other methods of proclaiming difference were to come later through Biology, Anatomy and subsequently Anthropology.


\(^\text{109}\) Milner, David. \textit{Children and Race}. Penguin Books, England. 1975. p. 14. There are claims that Linnaeus classified Homo sapiens into six groups. This at first glance appears to be true. However the two remaining groups are \textit{ferus} (four footed, mute, hairy) and monstrous. As these can hardly be accepted as classification of the group, they have gradually been discounted.

This systemic classification of man would be reduced to three groups by Linnaeus' successors - G. Cuvier divided humankind into three races in 1817 based on the three sons of Noah\textsuperscript{111} - and form the prevailing method of dividing man. Linnaeus' points of reference have also been retained (and expanded on with the strides of science). Even if the difference that Linnaeus did not place these groups within a hierarchical structure is true, the fact that the point of reference for all of the readers of the texts at the time would be white, and feelings of superiority already existed. It was inevitable that the system would justify emerging social structures:

... and although few explicit references were made to hierarchical ordering of the races, it was an automatic assumption that the white European was the primary stock, which was obvious from its civilisation and ascendancy\textsuperscript{112}

'Johan Fredrich Blumenbach (1752 - 1830 or 1840), the German anatomist who has been called the Father of anthropology' classified mankind into five separate groups: Caucasians, Mongolian, Ethiopian, American, and Malayan.\textsuperscript{113} That the 'fathers' of these sciences made their mark through the study, and reinforcement of race, has apparently affected the course of these discipline.

A look at philosophical thought is also relevant at this point, because apart from Linnaeus, assertions were based on observations. Philosophy is used to answer questions that science could not seem to deal with. Immanuel Kant

\textsuperscript{112} Milner David Children and Race. p. 15.
\textsuperscript{113} Banton, Michael Racial Theories. p. 5 - 6
(1724 - 1804) and David Hume (1711 -1776) are just two European philosophers that produced reasons for difference in skin colour.

In 1784, David Hume stated that he suspected that Negroes might be naturally inferior to Whites based on what he saw as the lack of developing major civilisations:\textsuperscript{114}

I am apt to suspect that negroes in general and all other species of men (for there are four of five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There never was a civilised nation of any other complexion than white, nor either any individual eminent either in action or speculation\textsuperscript{115}

Hume and Kant lived when the trade and slavery of Africans was accepted in return for economic gain, and they duly reflect the spirit of their times. Kant, allegedly, did not venture out of his town, yet was still able to reach such conclusions on race. It shows the level to which racial ideas reached.

Kant was even able to propose reasons for blackness and phenotypical differences, with;

The growth of the spongy parts of the body must increase in a hot, moist, climate; hence a thick stub nose and tumid lips. The skin must be oily, not only to moderate the influence of evaporation but also to prevent the injurious absorption of the noxious vapours of the air. The superabundance of iron particles which are present in all human

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{ibid.} p. 9
blood, and which are precipitated to the reticular substance through evaporation of the acids of phosphorus (which make all Negroes stink) causes the blackness that shines through the superficial skin.\textsuperscript{116}

It is hard to accept overlooking the racial ideas of philosophers as apathy.\textsuperscript{117} It is more likely to indicate the level of acceptance of such views and the philosophers were merely contributing to what must have been a lively debate. The depth of explanation made by these men is beyond the passing fancy.

\textbf{Race as type} decides on the various visible differences that are evident from observation. If any one concept of race was loved by 'scientists', then this is the one. Relying on observation and the methodical collection of data, meant that the recognised language of the natural sciences could be brought to bear on something totally new, desiring the authority and status of the established sciences. Type of hair, shape of nose, colour of skin, size of skull, all resulted in the mill of classification, giving the collators the 'evidence' to show their curious world on which grounds people can be divided into separate and arguably distinct races.

Philosophy and speculation come together in the Enlightenment to use science in solving the riddle of race. Yet there were still attempts to make sense of the biblical account.

In light of the similarities of argument about type, three main theorists will be

\textsuperscript{116} ibid. p. 46.

\textsuperscript{117} 'Noting that this remark had attracted attention because of Hume's eminence as a philosopher, the very rarity of such comments was symptomatic of a pervasive apathy about problems of racial and cultural difference among the more innovative thinkers of the period'

focused on; George Cuvier, Arthur de Gobineau and Charles Hamilton Smith.

The new name in ‘race’ of the 1800’s was George Cuvier (1769 - 1832), who ‘had argued that some environmental influence must have had an impact on (species) development. He observed that modification, growth and atrophy occurred . . .and that (these) characteristics were transmitted to offsprings’. He correctly argued that there had been a series of natural catastrophes wiping out species on earth, but then went on to proclaim that at the last one, man had:

... escaped in different directions ... some five thousand years before, and had developed in isolation. [He saw] ( . . .) the three major races as emerging from particular mountain slopes; whites from the region of Mount Caucasus, yellows from the region of Mount Ahai and blacks from the southern face of the chain of Mount Atlas.

Arthur de Gobineau (1816 - 1882), the ‘father of racist ideology’, heralds the transformation of ‘race’ study from understanding difference, to ‘race’ as a given and relative order. He boldly declared: ‘I have been able to distinguish, on physiological grounds alone, three great and clearly marked types: the black, the yellow and the white.’ He unsurprisingly relied on the Bible as a starting point and saw people as being separate species, with:

We must, of course, acknowledge that Adam is the ancestor of the white race. The Scriptures are evidently meant to be so understood, for

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120 ibid. p. 46.
the generation from him are certainly white. This being admitted, there
is nothing to show that, in the view of the compilers of the Adamite
genealogies, those outside the white races were considered part of the
species at all. Not a word is said about the yellow races, and it is only
an arbitrary interpretation of the text that makes us regard the Patriarch
Ham as black.\footnote{\textsuperscript{122}}

He argues on many levels, the difference between the three types; on
strength, intelligence, resourcefulness and beauty. On the last point he has
‘no hesitation in regarding the white race as superior to all others in beauty’.\footnote{\textsuperscript{123}}

He provides an incomplete formula for the offsprings of ‘race’ mixing, which
he calls the ‘quartenary’ races

\begin{align*}
&\text{Black + White = mulatto} \\
&\text{Black + Yellow = Polynesian} \\
&\text{White + Yellow = ?}\footnote{\textsuperscript{124}}
\end{align*}

He posits that these ‘quartenaries’ become unstable when mixed with a new
type and will eventually lead to racial anarchy.

Charles Hamilton Smith (1776 - 1859) is the lone Briton of this trio, the other
two being French. He subscribed to the idea of three main racial groups,
which he defined as: ‘the woolly haired or Negro, beardless or or Mongolian,
and bearded or Caucasian’.\footnote{\textsuperscript{125}} His positions were definitely tied to hierarchies
and land conquest as he proposed the extermination of indigenous
populations. He used the arguments of brain size to back his positions on
racial superiority; that the negro had a small brain as compared with the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{122}] ibid. p. 99.
\item[\textsuperscript{123}] ibid. p.113.
\item[\textsuperscript{124}] ibid. p.111.
\item[\textsuperscript{125}] Banton, Michael \textit{Racial Theories}. p.53.
\end{footnotes}
larger brain of the Caucasian. He assumed there was a 'deep rooted hatred of the Caucasian races towards the typical Negro'\textsuperscript{126} which undoubtedly accounts for his domination policies.

Smith was a product of colonialism and carried the arsenal that enabled him to carry out his role without remorse.

All three men had made the move from the realm of discovery into the realm of hierarchies. This is significant in the light of their historical placement; The French were heavily involved in the United States and their search for colonies to rival Britain that had already made its mark. Also the discourse shifts towards rationalisation of economic practices that were fast becoming untenable.

**Race as subspecies** relies heavily on the research and theories of Charles Darwin, the transformation of a simple cell to a complex and animate organism. The theory links all matter on the planet to a progressive chain, constantly in flux. Within species, characteristics develop that separate them, and in line with progress, are somewhere on the evolutionary chain.

The races of man are points on this chain. While Darwinism sees all living things as being intimately related, race sets them irrevocably apart. Species, as defined by the Darwinian, are those organisms that are able to carry out fertile mating,\textsuperscript{127} while subspecies, (which is the name now given to what used to be called 'variety') is defined as a subdivision of a sexual species, with all the attributes of a species except that the reproductive isolation is partial

\textsuperscript{126} ibid. p. 54.
\textsuperscript{127} ibid. p. 69.
rather than complete.\textsuperscript{128}

The significance of the argument is that notable differences exist between species and subspecies, Michael Banton (author of \textit{Racial Theories}) does not indicate in anyway the differences between humans, nor indicates what the species within humans are. Yet there is implicit agreement that it is isolation of human groups that brings about the creation of races\textsuperscript{129}.

It is not however as simple as that. William C. Boyd (in 1950), quoted by Banton states that:

\begin{quote}
The difficulty which we experience in trying to classify man, or any other species into races, is quite different from the problem of classifying organisms into species. [As] Races were more or less genetically open systems whereas species, which did not regularly exchange genes were genetically closed systems. A race could become a species. It was a population which differs significantly from other
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{128} ibid.
\textsuperscript{129} Take this quote for example;

\begin{quote}
Among humans, West Africans and Norwegians maintain their distinctiveness because mating is overwhelmingly within the group and there are so few matings between these groups. It is possible that if they shared territory, most individual West Africans and Norwegians would for a time prefer to mate with others of the same appearance as themselves, but their choice would be culturally conditioned since there seems to be little or no imprinting in the human species. [p. 69.]
\end{quote}

or

\begin{quote}
Immigrant groups come to new societies . . . How their social life develops in their environment may depend upon whether they are able to establish themselves in an ecological niche and turn a monopoly of some resource to their shared advantage. . . . For example Chinese were recruited as indentured workers for plantation labour in the Caribbean. In Jamaica . . . the Chinese are now an integral section of the island's bourgeoisie. Since they seek to conserve their wealth, they will marry their daughters only to members of their own group. So a Chinese ancestry, plus Chinese traits, distinguishes an ethnic subdivision of a class. [Banton, Michael. \textit{Racial Theories}, pp. 97 - 98.]
\end{quote}

In the first quote, Banton shows a phenotypical bias by designating all West Africans as against the political body of Norway, and even though there is no 'imprinting' as in other animals, he still holds the 'type' of man dear. In the second example, albeit more complex, there is still the separation of a 'class' based on phenotype, showing the 'logic' of Darwin and a particular idea of race.
human populations in regard to the frequency of one or more of the genes it possesses.¹³⁰

The complexity arises when the following formulae are considered

The Human race is a species and the different phenotypical groups form a subspecies.

The Human race is a race and the different phenotypical groups form species.

Arguably humans are a race/species, but separation could bring about definable and genetically specific species corresponding to the category of species/subspecies. Either way there are notable genetic differences, bringing the debate into the realm of genetics; in a bombastic manner returning the debate to the question of lineage without religious preordination.

The position held is that separate groups could only be the way they are, on the basis that they have unique environmental conditions under which to develop/evolve. Couple that with the notion of 'the survival of the fittest' (where fitness is moved from fertile mating to political and economic domination) and it is so easy to create a racial division of humanity along the lines that best suits ideology.

**Race as status** is actually a complex analysis of race, relying on complicated social interactions to generate the requirements for visual difference.

Anthropologists in the 1930's endeavoured to understand race in the Deep

South. This research coincides with the waning of Jim Crow and the need to establish a new social order. Two people are seen as the vanguard of the status debate; one an anthropologist, Hortense Powdermaker, and a psychologist, John Dollard. They both carried out their research in Indianola, Mississippi where 70% of the population was black.\textsuperscript{131}

Dollard argued that the prejudices accepted as human nature, were actually prejudices ‘fashioned to meet emotional needs’\textsuperscript{132} arguing that powerful pressure was being exerted by the white population in order to make the black population display submissive attitudes towards them.\textsuperscript{133} This was being done so that the white population could achieve three kinds of gain; ‘economic, sexual and prestige’.\textsuperscript{134} Put simply, it meant that the white population could get the best jobs, sleep with and be desired by both black and white partners, and receive deference, holding the expectation that black people would always look up to them.\textsuperscript{135}

W. Lloyd Warner, another anthropologist and predecessor to Dollard in Indianola proposed two systems that run simultaneously as a means to describe prejudice amongst the inhabitants other than race. These he dubbed the ‘caste’ and ‘class’ system

The caste system ranked whites above blacks, prohibited inter-marriage, and placed the offspring of inter-caste sexual relations in the lower category. The class system ranked everyone, blacks and whites in terms of their entitlement to deference deriving from wealth,
education, social origin, style of life etc. This meant that while all blacks were socially inferior and categorically subordinate to all whites in colour-caste, some were superior and superordinate to many whites in respect of social class.136

The nature of roles carried within the system was determined by the white population; sexual areas were caste, commercial, class, unless the whites decided otherwise.137

It is a system developed after a racial hierarchical structure had been commonly accepted along the lines of physiological and economic difference. The desire to maintain acquired status may lead to a system that could be defined as race; however when the sociological and social separation retains the hallmarks of the previous systems, then race as status can be argued to be a way out of the now abhorrent position of alienating people on the basis of skin colour and/or features.

Various theories were presented as models to explain the vestiges of a racial system. Among them are the theories of boundaries, signs, categories, group power and discrimination. Briefly the various theories are as follows;

boundaries state that 1. Individuals utilise physical and cultural differences in order to create groups and categories by the processes of inclusion and exclusion. Ethnic groups result from inclusive and racial groups from exclusive processes. . . . The theory of signs states that the nature of relations between groups based upon race, ethnicity . . . etc. varies because of the characteristic that is the basis for group

136 ibid. pp. 103-104.
137 ibid. p.104.
formation. . . . The theory of categories [relies on the arbitrary and inconsistent criteria to maintain status] ( . . . ) The theory of group power is concerned with the terms on which members of groups exchange goods and services, and with the way power affects the implicit bargaining of the price. \textsuperscript{138}

The last theory, theory of discrimination can be reduced to two main types; categorical discrimination - when a person discriminates because he believes that his society expects him to, and statistical discrimination - when a person discriminates because he does not know what to do. \textsuperscript{139}

As mentioned above, these systems are still attempts to rationalise an increasingly disquieting position.

**Race as class** relies on simplified neo-Marxist theories that collapse human interaction into the struggle of one class against another for the control or more accurately the benefits of controlling factors of production. This position is pushed further to claim that capitalism, as an ideology, is the reason for the purported difference because people are clearly pushed into one social position or another; worker or proprietor. It is argued by Oliver C. Cox, that in the United States;

\[ \ldots \text{Europeans appropriated territory} \ldots \] and created a system of social relations based upon the principles of capitalism. For the system to develop, labour was required. The system could grow more rapidly if that labour, or large sections of it, could be bought and sold like any other commodity, and the labourers treated as chattels rather than as

\textsuperscript{138} ibid. p.125-129.
\textsuperscript{139} ibid. p.132.
people.\textsuperscript{140}

This can be perceived as the pragmatic basis of commerce, thereby rendering its actions logical. He continues;

A supply of labour was found in Africa which could be marketed in this way since Africans were physically distinctive and could therefore be made subject to special laws.\textsuperscript{141}

At this point the argument of pragmatism fails, with;

If white workers could be persuaded that black workers were different, then they might not perceive that the true interest of all workers lay in their taking common action against their exploiters.\textsuperscript{142}

This businesslike account of human exploitation is in stark difference to the historical accounts of the white population attempting to press anyone into free labour, including indentured whites, local Indian populations, and anyone else that could be acquired.\textsuperscript{143} It does not respond to the use of laws and force to keep the 'Africans' in slavery. Words like 'labour' and 'workers considerably alters perceptions of the system in place.

Another theorist running along similar lines was Robert E. Park, even if Cox saw their ideologies as having differences.\textsuperscript{144} Park had a neo-Darwinian cast to his economic argument. He saw 'Racial differentiation as occurring in an

\textsuperscript{140} ibid. p.148. \\
\textsuperscript{141} ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{142} ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{144} Banton, Michael Racial Theories p. 148.
ecological context as different human groups competed for resources . . .
(and/or) an expression of the consciousness of a group seeking to defend a privileged position.\textsuperscript{145}

The possibility of understanding a racial distinction is to rely on class which according to Banton, 'has an objective reality' which race does not.\textsuperscript{146} The objective reality of class is so spurious as this too shifts from one generation to the next. Using class as the meter is pretending that skin colour too will change with time. The new categorisation of the British public is an example of this.\textsuperscript{147}

Banton then goes on to say that the 'relations between the white capitalists, white workers and immigrant workers from the New Commonwealth, who settled in Britain after 1948 can be usefully analysed in terms of the split labour market theory'\textsuperscript{148}. The split market labour theory simply proposes that the market for labour competes for work and is therefore split to the benefit of the employer (who will act to maintain this fruitful division). Skin colour is seen as an effective means of dividing the labour market.

He shows how commonwealth immigrants took on the jobs the resident white labour force eschewed, and was therefore of benefit to Britain. He presents them all as working class (in line with his objective reality) and are therefore theorised against the indigenous working class. These positions were argued by Robert Miles, a writer of the Marxist tradition, as; \ldots (1) the immigrant workers form part of a unitary working class \ldots (2) they constitute

\textsuperscript{145} ibid. p.149.
\textsuperscript{146} ibid. p.150.
\textsuperscript{147} Brindle, David. 'Teachers Get More Class in Social Shake-up.' \textit{The Guardian} 1 Dec. 1998. p. 3.
an underclass which cannot be assimilated into the working class . . . (and 3) that they constitute a distinct stratum within the working class.'

This economic strategy provides a way of seeing class within Britain that very effectively erodes the impact of Empire, the rejection of skills that the immigrants possess, the open antagonism shown to them, and the fact that there was a racial structure already in place in Britain before the arrival of the immigrants that was solidly based on skin colour.¹⁴⁹

Even though the following example is an example from the United States, the principles are now commonly relevant;

Attempts to protect labour interests mean that the 'entrepreneur' can protect business interests by

1. moving internationally to where labour is cheaper
2. moving nationally to where labour is cheaper
3. investing in labour saving machinery.

All workers are meant to suffer, but blacks suffered more because;

1. black workers were less educated
2. they had less seniority in the lay off queue
3. they were less able to migrate with work
4. they were less able to defend their labour interests.¹⁵⁰

Like most racial paradigms they function as uncomfortable explanations that rely heavily on preconceived notions of difference and suffer from the denial they carry.

Ultimately the ‘race as class’ theory attempts to argue that systems of interaction that have their origins in racial ideology, are no longer so. It is the individual’s approach to the paradigm that creates a raced reading.

**Jim Crow and Nation**

Under Jim Crow, ‘race’ and ‘race relations’ were codified into laws governing interaction between black and white Americans, mainly as a device to maintain the social order produced through slavery.¹⁵¹

‘Jim Crow’, being just another derogatory name for a black person, is the name given to a series of legislative moves in the United States designed to curtail the social, political, and economic freedom of the black population predominantly between 1900 and 1930. It functioned mainly as a means of ‘redressing the imbalances’ caused by the Emancipation Proclamation made by President Abraham Lincoln (1809 - 65) on the 22nd of September 1862.

“(S)tating that from the beginning of 1863 all black slaves in states still engaged in rebellion against the federal government would be emancipated. Slaves in border states still remaining loyal to the union were excluded.”¹⁵²

In the United States (as in Britain [fig. 2]), race was a black and white issue [fig. 3]. It ran along the lines of the enslaved and those that enslaved. With ‘Emancipation’, in spite of the ‘melting pot’, race and its theories had been polarised into a state of black and white. This had considerably slanted the arguments, forcing the discussions into channels emanating from relations

¹⁵¹ Whether one can call slavery a social order is questionable, as one side did not see the other as full human beings; thereby not being able to have a social relationship.

between a black and white duality. This duality has meant that anybody entering the debate who did not fit into either category was either absorbed into one of the poles or treated as if they did not exist.

Solidarity as a method of acquiring rights relies on a common history, and if this means accepting a title in common such as black, then black takes on the role of accepted signifier, even when there are clear variations within this forced homogeneity. Ernest Renan point out how solidarities and the idea of a nation can be formed regardless of national boundaries;

More valuable by far than common posts and frontiers conforming to strategic ideas is the fact of sharing. In the past, a glorious heritage and regrets, and of having in the future [a shared] programme to put into effect, or the fact of having suffered, enjoyed, and hoped together. These are the kinds of things that can be understood in spite of differences in race and language. I spoke now of ‘having suffered together’ and indeed suffering in common unifies more than joy does. When national memories are concerned, grieves are of more value than triumphs, for they impose duties, and require a common effort.\(^{53}\)

The impact of this duality on ‘race’ writing in Britain, has been the categorisation of people, which lacked the ‘origins’ of the United States in defining groups; Italian-American, Polish-American, Irish-American. While modifying the simple manifestations of racial ideology, experiences of race relations have been similar as Britain too had a slave economy. Britain and the United States continued a modified form of slavery with colonialism when the trade in humans became socially unacceptable.

The Emancipation of slaves was not the egalitarian move it is often heralded as being. Two years into armed conflict, the proclamation was a form of financial punishment against those who wanted to secede from the Union of States, and were not willing to give in to the President. It also recalls a similar proclamation made by the British during the American War of Independence (1775 - 63) when ‘the British in attempting to defeat America’s drive for independence, guaranteed freedom to any slave who escaped and joined their forces’.

Jim Crow legislative moves that followed the American Civil War (1861 - 65) can be traced back to the political and personal opinions existing before the advent of the War, which was popularly heralded as a ‘conflict of conscience’, as white men were dying to liberate the black population from slavery. On the eve of the American Civil War Abraham Lincoln is quoted as saying that “He knew the feelings of ‘the great mass of white people’ on Negroes. A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded, cannot be safely disregarded. We can not, then, make them equals.”

His position on the Negro population was not new as he had made a similar and lengthier version of this opinion to an audience in 1838:

I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been in favour of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black race [applause] - that I am not, nor ever have been in favour of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to

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intermarry with white people, and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the black and white races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together in terms of social and political equality. And inasmuch as they cannot so live, while they do remain together, there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any other man am in favour of having the superior position assigned to the white race.\(^\text{156}\)

In the establishment of political programs and especially as war approaches, politicians may say things to appease an audience, yet the sentiments held are important, when one considers the mythologising of the American Civil War in film like Steven Spielberg’s ‘Amistad’,\(^\text{157}\) where the War is directly linked to the setting free of Africans that had been taken as slaves.

Slave accounts give an impression of the myth of Abraham Lincoln

\[
\ldots \text{I 'member the day of 'mancipation. Yankees told us we was free, and they called us up from the field to sign up and see if us wanted to say on with 'em. \ldots There were a heap of things went on. Some I likes to remember, some I don't. But I'd rather be free now. I never seed Mr. Lincoln, but when the told me 'bout him, I thought he was partly God.}\(^\text{158}\)
\]

The understanding of a benevolent state has to be challenged in order that race be seen as the critical factor it actually is. It is necessary to show that

\(^\text{156}\) ibid.
\(^\text{157}\) Spielberg, Steven. Amistad. Dreamworks, Los Angeles. 1997. The film is an account of Africans, who after being kidnapped, were in the process of being transported to the United States on the Spanish ship ‘Amistad’. They took over the ship and killed all the crew, except two men. A legal wrangle ensued in the United States, and reaches the American Supreme Court, It was ruled that the captured people be allowed to go home.
while rhetoric may point to attempts at equality, candid practices are far from this.\textsuperscript{159} By pointing out the similarities in the conditions race has fostered, it indicates how the articulation, argumentation and analysis of race in modern United States is relevant to the present.

Latter day 'concessions' in racial disputes are more likely to come about in the wake of political expedience and propaganda at home and abroad, than in the desire to see the end of racist practices. As pointed out in \textit{The Strange Career of Jim Crow}:

In a brief filed in December 1952 with the Supreme Court in conjunction with the cases involving segregation in the public schools, the Democratic United States Attorney General said 'It is in the context of the present world struggle between freedom and tyranny that the problem of racial discrimination must be viewed . . . Within a few hours after the Supreme Courts' decision was read in 1954, the voice of America had broadcast the news to foreign countries in thirty five separate languages.\textsuperscript{160}

\textbf{British response to Jim Crow}

Between the official end of Jim Crow in 1930 and the beginning of the influx of a large black population into Britain in 1948,\textsuperscript{161} few years had passed. In fact it is possible to argue that they overlap in time as the real legislation to support the end of Jim Crowism came long after 1948. It is also irrefutable that the


\textsuperscript{160} Woodward, Vann C, \textit{The Strange Career of Jim Crow}, p. 132.

\textsuperscript{161} Year of 'The Empire Windrush' and the notional starting point of non-white commonwealth immigration
impact of American soldiers and the culture they brought with them had a lasting impact on the British psyche. *American Affair: The Americanisation of Britain* pictures the post-war homogenisation, that had its roots in much earlier cultural alliances.

The realities of colonialism forced racial theories into positions of importance within Britain's analysis of societies that were controlled as part of its Empire. The importance is noticeably of a different sort; colonialism did not openly state its prime intention as being the transportation and enslavement of a population to provide a free labour force, to be sold at will, and to belong to some white British landowner. Yet as slavery, Jim Crow and colonialism were forms of fostering economic exploitation, societal control, and political domination, both countries had a similar vested interest in a particular racial ideology based on skin colour and phenotype. This is the support of theories that allowed and justified the superordination of the white person, with the subordination of the black person (of all shades).

Britain managed to contain the spectre of race through the establishment and maintenance of colonies. Race and its problems were kept away from the sensitive eyes of an 'indigenous' people. Keeping black people away from the isles was a clear imperative, control was the key: why import a new population when what one wants is an inexpensive labour force where the work was. And the work, the plantations, the mines, the oil fields, were abroad. All that was needed was a willing army of administrators to stand above the local population, remain above the local population, and transfer the wealth of the local population to Britain.


163 Even if this could be a picture of the then situation in the Caribbean Islands
This meant that Britain’s exclusionary practices were evident and openly practised, with the establishment of white enclaves with black servants, ‘White Only’ membership clubs, moratorium on marriages between white colonials and black colonised, open separation of train accommodation, and the list goes on, a local mirror of the circumstances in the United States. These experiences by the colonials overdetermined the conceptions of the white British population (as there have been black people in Britain before the onset of residential colonialism) in adventure stories, in particular the generic ‘Boy’s Own’ format, designed to create willing and excited colonial masters.

This explains how the practices of racial imbalances and economic exploitation have been conveniently concealed, polarising and complicating a modern debate on race and its face in modern Britain. So, considering the parallels between the United States and Britain, it is not surprising that the concerns of racial study has been a means to explain the ravages of these ideologies.

Considering the historical, cultural and social links between Britain and the United States - from the ‘Mayflower Pilgrims’, the War of Independence, and the trade and military links during the first and second World Wars - the codification of discriminatory practices in the United Stated would have been known in the British Isles. It is therefore possible to argue that the practices carried out as reception to the immigrants were not unmeditated. Similarities between Jim Crow and the racial exclusionary practices in Britain are too close to be overlooked. The main pieces of legislation that saw the end of Jim Crow as a legal entity are the Civil Rights Act 1964 and the Voting Rights
Act 1965\textsuperscript{164} as these affected the political, social and economic rights of the
citizenry of the United States more than any other, both black and white, by
upsetting the Jim Crow laws and bringing in the force of law to protect the
rights of the individual. However the one highlighted case that famously
questioned the principle of segregation based on race is \textit{Oliver Brown et al v. Board of Education, Topeka Kansas}\textsuperscript{165} brought before the American Supreme
Court in 1952, and ruled on in 1954 (used to great political benefit, as pointed
out). While the ruling did not stop formalisation of racial prejudice, it at least
rendered it illegal.

The phrase "No blacks or Coloureds allowed" rings in the experiences of
black people in both countries and functions effectively as a starting point of
analysis.

The standard devices for accomplishing disenfranchisement on a
racial basis and evading the restrictions of the Constitution were . . .
(to) set up certain barriers such as property or literary qualifications for
voting and then cut certain loopholes in the barrier through which only
white men could squeeze. The loopholes to appease . . . the
underprivileged whites were 'the understanding clause,' the
grandfather clause,' or the 'good character clause.'\textsuperscript{166}

The 'Grandfather clause' has been used to great effect in keeping Britain
White, by providing means for the continued immigration of white people while
restraining the movement of non-white citizens.\textsuperscript{167}

\textsuperscript{164} The Hutchinson Softback Encyclopaedia, p. 445.
\textsuperscript{165} Woodward, Vann C. \textit{The Strange Career of Jim Crow}, p.146.
\textsuperscript{166} ibid. p. 84.
\textsuperscript{167} See Paul, Kathleen. \textit{Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era},
Race and nation

In his essay ‘What is a Nation’, Ernest Renan argues that there is no room for race in nation formation within Europe. He writes:

Race as we historians understand it, is therefore something which is made and unmade. The study of race is of crucial importance for the scholar concerned with the history of humanity. It has no applications, however, in politics. The instinctive consciousness which presided over the construction of the map of Europe took no account of race, and the leading nations of Europe are nations of essentially mixed blood.  

Race as defined within ‘What is a Nation?’ relies on European ethnic, religious and geographical placement and therefore has its limits. The arguments, however, are still compelling outside their original boundaries. Nation has apparently superseded the debates and realities of race. Deposition should be made to the nation, not to the elements that are relying on race to define political placement.

Yet like Ivan Hanaford, Ernest Renan fails to see the impact of colour, a Eurocentric or more honestly a Euroconscious awareness of race and nation has disallowed the possibility of undeniable visual difference.

To speak of race and not question nation is almost impossible. The dialogue on race has been confined by national boundaries as race increasingly forces

\footnote{Renan, Ernest. ‘What is a Nation?’ p. 15.
itself into the debate on national identity and the individual right to domicile becomes more than a historical alignment between the ideas of blood and land.

Race and Britain is fundamentally different to (choosing a not so random example) race and Nigeria. Without going into the subtleties of the the possible dissimilarities, the nature and identity of the nationals will throw up responses based on history and expectations. The elements of power attached to human skin colour and numerical majority make for the silencing or enforced reading of racial ideology as the memory of the past haunt. Where the numerical majority and colour dominance are not in tandem, alternative readings of race appear. Coupled with a global economic and military imbalance and the discourse will have to shift from the national to the international and back again, maintaining power relationships and affecting racial self-definition.

To speak 'race' or to have race define language is a course that has been analysed by the writings of various people. One starts with the fiction of Toni Morrison where there has been a clear undertaking to unravel the impact of race on a national psyche, in this case that of the United States. James Baldwin is seen by many as the most radical advocate, who fragmented written language in search of expression to understand racial interaction. Ralph Ellison with the classic *The Invisible Man* which through a 'biography' reveals race as what Toni Morrison calls the 'Unspeakable'. The Harlem Renaissance too provided its observers with the likes of Langston Hughes amongst others.

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In Britain, most of the writing that analyses race and nation and the impact of ‘Chromalogy’ has not surprisingly appeared from the former colonies. Wole Soyinka early in his writing career investigated race and colonialism in *Death and the King’s Horseman*, Chinua Achebe laying out the fragmentation of ‘traditional’ society in his trilogy that starts with *Things Fall Apart*, followed by *No longer at Ease* to be completed with *The Arrow of God*. Lately Caryl Phillips and Q have provided a double sided look at race and its impact on Britain as a nation. Before them, O. L. R. James produced both novelistic and philosophical writings (in line with the others mentioned it is his fiction that is presently under consideration).

Caryl Phillips, in *The Final Passage* finds means to express the ubiquity of blackness and implicitly race in Britain:

> In England Leila had suddenly found herself, her light skin starved of the sun, growing paler by the day. But she was more coloured than she had ever been before, and not shame exactly, but feelings of inadequacy prevented her from looking back into the mirror.\(^\text{170}\)

The meeting of nation and race, places the individual where their relationship to race has to be analysed. It can not always be a claim to render superior on inferior status on the self or another that makes race so poignant, the confines of nation already carry out this role.

It is also no longer as simple as claiming that nationalism as an extreme ideology is the realm of right wing extremists as the ‘moderates’ in Britain, post Enoch Powell have used the language of race and nation to their political

benefit.

Professor Catherine Hall in her essay ‘Empire and Us’ writes of the fabricated historical moment of the racialised understanding of nation:

. . . the arrival of the ‘Empire Windrush’ symbolis[ing] the post-war settlement of Afro-Caribbeans in Britain, has provided an occasion to chart the impact of their presence. . . . They came home to the ‘mother country’ only to find that it was not a home for migrants. In the process of their settlement, they challenged the established binaries of home/away, metropole/colony, them/us, black/white and contributed to the destabilisation of one version of Britain and the making of another. 171

Unlike Professor Hall’s assertion, the arrival of the Empire Windrush did not change the established roles of home and empire, it had the impact of polarising the relationships that had already existed between a white self and a ‘coloured’ other. In her book, Whitewashing Britain: Race and Citizenship in the Postwar Era, Kathleen Paul explains how successive governments encouraged white European immigration into Britain while actively discouraging the movement of then non-white British citizens. This policy action tells of a people and government that had an idea of what they wanted Britain to be, and what they did not want it to become. The challenge posed was not a ‘challenge of established binaries’ at all, but a situation that called for a reworking of cultural binaries affording the nation capabilities of dealing with ‘unwelcome’ racial onslaughts.

Them/us, especially after the Second World War was already clearly defined in the minds of a war ravaged country. ‘Home’ and consequently ‘away’ had been immortalised by the likes of Vera Lynn; with her songs of ‘Home’ and her romantic allusions to victorious death in songs like ‘Where Have All the Flowers Gone?’

Black and Colony were still being held on to, quite firmly, at this time by a country desperately in need of the resources of the said colonies for its reconstruction. White and métropole were the very things under question now: race had forced the identification and naming of whiteness and ideas of the centre. Richard Dyer has demonstrated this in *White*, showing whiteness as moving from the invisible to the overdetermined.

**Escape into the nightmare**

The emphasis on the visual elements of race has been brought about by analysing the various methods of determining racial segmentation. Even if race is discredited by the academy, it still affects the choices made by a great number of people outside it and therefore warrants concern.

An analysis of a new production from Hollywood is a good way to end this paper, as it illustrates the complex construction of race as a paradigm with blackness as a particular face of it.

Warren Beatty stars in a film, in which he contributed in both writing and directing, titled *Bulworth*. It is the story of a fictional United States Senator,

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172 Lynn, Vera. ‘Where Have All the Flowers Gone?’ on *Some of the Best* Laserlight, New York. 1997. (Song composed by Pete Seeger © 1961 Fall River Music Inc.)

Jay Billington Bulworth, during his election campaign. Life has become unbearable for him through disillusionment with politics, and the corruption in his own personal dealings. He is white.

He corruptly ‘arranges’ ten million dollars life insurance cover and then takes out an assassination contract on himself. In the meantime he has not slept for three days, nor eaten. He is on the edge of a nervous breakdown (or has already had one). In this state, he starts telling the ‘truth’ as he sees it to his constituents.

He meets a group of young black women in a black church (where the ‘sincerity’ starts) and through them is introduced to rap and a new ‘language’ (defined as Ebonics elsewhere in the film). He then ‘rhymes’ his opinion to his white film makers and political backers. By the following morning, after the black church confession and spending the night in a black club, listening to black music, dancing with Nina (one of the black young women) and eating ‘ribs’, he ‘raps’ his disdain at a fundraiser breakfast to backing beat provided by his new black ‘posse’.

He continues on this crusade, rapping ‘black’ to a black drug dealer and to white dream makers alike. He has nothing to lose and as the Guardian put it, he is ‘a rebel with a cause’. He continues his transformation, eating black food with a black family in a black neighbourhood, and ends up wearing ‘ethnic’ clothing (composed of basketball shoes, basketball shorts, sweat shirt, sunglasses and a woollen hat pulled down over his forehead). By the end of the film he makes it when his romantic desire, Nina, looks up at him and says ‘you’re my nigger’.

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Bulworth takes a good number of black American community stereotypes (British too) and plays them out within his narrative, creating a being with a moral voice to speak out on behalf of the black community, who, except for two characters (one a newscaster/interviewer and the other a television car technician), are poor, criminal, and without a ‘future’ (but fortunately are highly articulate). The black home is full of children with deceased/absent parents, with the extended family living in a ‘family house’. The community has the ubiquitous ‘drug dealing black male’ with young recruits (so akin to Bebe’s Kids\textsuperscript{175}). In the same narrative, all the white characters are employed and show evidence of a good life, if not considerable wealth.

Senator Bulworth is mentally unstable, he is corrupt and on the verge of dying, by now he has not slept for five days and not eaten for three. On his slope to oblivion he is able to become a black man. As the spiral of self destruction sets in, blackness becomes a picture of what lies behind his civilised and respectable white facade. He now mumbles, uses obscenities, likes ‘collard greens’ (kale in disguise) and is held at gunpoint by the police in the ‘hood’ as he steps in to defend a black youth. The police are hoodwinked by his ‘ethnic gear’, but on realising his importance, when he deliberately lifts his sunglasses to reveal a face recognisable on a serendipitously placed election poster, resort to calling him ‘Sir’ and apologise.

His madness continues, until he falls asleep, staying under for what is presented as a long time indeed. In the meantime, he wins the election thanks to his new style of ‘radical electioneering’ and becomes a cause celebre.

On awakening from his slumber, he returns to his 'senses' and his blue suit and red tie. He is no longer mad, the contract on his life has been called off, he has made a stand against his personal corruption and he is a man with a cause. He is now uncomfortable in his black surroundings and stiffly thanks those that had taken him in. He is ready to leave, but not without Nina, with whom he has fallen in love.

A credit to the American dream, he is white again.

Warren Beatty as Warren Beatty tells of the search for authenticity for the film, that took him to the 'land of gangsta rap, culturally a long way from Hollywood' meeting with prominent rappers. He says 'Race is the unavoidable question' and:

He thanks some of the senior figures in African American literature, both past and present for giving him the confidence to approach humour in this way

'Jimmy Baldwin was a great influence on me. He said don't be more respectful of blacks than whites, it won't work, no one will believe it. . . . You just can't represent everybody, you shouldn't even try.'

Warren Beatty does not have to bother with trying, James Baldwin was right.

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176 Younge, Gary. 'Rebel With a Cause.' p. 7.
177 ibid.
178 ibid. p. 6.
Post script

Carl Joseph, the driver stopped 34 times, lost his case.\textsuperscript{179}

\textsuperscript{179} Pearse, Damien. 'Driver Repeatedly Stopped Loses Race Harassment Case.' \textit{The Independent} 2 Feb. 1999. p. 9.
3. The Question of Representation
or What You See, . . . Maybe

The slim lady sings

The man that knows something
Knows that he knows nothing at all
Does it colder in your summertime
And hotter in your fall

If we were made in His image
Then call us by our names
Most intellects do not believe in God
But they fear us just the same

On & on and on & on
My cipher keeps movin like a rollin stone
On & on and on & on
All night until the vultures swarm
On & on and on & on
Mad props to the God JaBom\textsuperscript{180}

Erykah Badu sings the rhetorical questions that Shakespeare gave Shylock in
*The Merchant of Venice*, that the British Abolition Society gave every black man
and woman in the New and Old World. Her song questions the place allotted
to her by a hegemonic power structure. The difference is that this time it is not
a pleading voice, it is a strong voice, interrogating the representation she is

meant to emulate.\textsuperscript{181}

In September 1998, there was sudden interest in the use of ethnic minorities in billboard advertising. One contemporary report started: "An unrepentant Commission for Racial Equality yesterday defended the posting of racist advertisements, saying it wanted to provoke a debate and that the end justified the means".\textsuperscript{182} Another began with 'The Commission for Racial Equality was engulfed in condemnation last night after running an advertising poster campaign branded the most racist in living memory'.\textsuperscript{183} The outrage that followed the unveiling of the advertisements did cause a debate; the issue of stereotyping and appropriate representation was raised again and again. If stereotyping is mooted in relation to a series of images that are so outlandishly ridiculous, then as will later be pointed out, there was an element of 'truth' in the advertisements that the public was responding to by complaining.

Constructions have been in advertisements for beer that show white people with coned heads in a country 'pub' (aliens no doubt).\textsuperscript{184} 'Carling Black Label' used recollections of Second World War artillery, with a bouncing towel, as a means to beat German tourists to a resort poolside. The white landowner advertising 'Lockets' throat lozenges does not receive press reactions, neither does the Western theme of the Marlboro Man.

\textsuperscript{181} This sort of questioning creates welcome problems in representing the 'other' by diminishing the authority of those seeking to define. Statements like Badu's are often relegated, by calling them shrill.
\textsuperscript{184} These images are easily consumed and discarded as social types, even the ridiculous aliens are not problematic, one should contrast this with the alien in; Sayles, John. dir. The Brother From Another Planet. Arrow Films, New York. 1984.
These social narratives carry a ‘romantic’ notion which can either be amusingly identified with or rejected outright. The difficulty when protesting at the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) advertisements, is that within the charge that the CRE was using stereotypes, is an uncomfortable admission that the images represent a reality which the complainers recognise.

This CRE campaign is unique in deliberately presenting stereotypical perceptions held by a public that have been both surreptitiously and expressly indicated elsewhere. The public however is not willing to openly acknowledge their use of stereotypes. The three billboards by the CRE are described as follows [figs. 4 - 6]:

The three posters appear as ads for bogus companies products, and do not include the Commission’s name. One poster for a rape alarm, shows a white woman sitting on a bus, a black man in the foreground and the slogan ‘Because it’s a jungle out there’. Another, for sports footwear, shows a black man jumping up to a basketball hoop and an orangutan in identical pose reaching for a branch, beneath the caption, 'Born to be agile'.

The third advert, supposedly for an executive recruitment company, depicts two businessmen climbing a ladder, a white one standing on the hand of a black one, with the caption 'Dominate the race'.

The voice of another is used to describe the images to avoid placing personal emphasis on them. This gives leave to compare the images with others deemed acceptable as respectable, and not kept from the public gaze.

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185 Carroll, Rory. ‘CRE presses ahead with racist poster despite protest fury.’ p. 6.
With regards to fear of the black male: Barclays Bank, with their Barclays Additions campaign, rely partly on the myth of the black man as an entity to be feared. They presented, within the television advertisement, images of the services their Additions account will offer. The 'law' was represented by an ageing white judge complete with gown, 'medicine' was a white nurse in uniform and the 'understanding banker' was a besuited white man. 'Security' was represented by a big, burly black man wearing a suit and dark glasses, with his arms across his chest. He stands as a warning to potential predators, while giving assurance to those that he protects.

In February 1999, Renault, in their latest campaign for the Clio, use a basketball subtext as representation of brain over brawn. A David and Goliath scenario, where one small white man plays 'one on one' with a big black man. A Renault Clio is being driven by a white woman who tells of the virtues of the small car, its intelligence and safety. The basketball game, where the white player is initially dominated by the black man, is cut with the monologue and shots of the lady in the car. Her statement concerning 'size matters' (a sardonic question and statement rolled into one), is "its what you do with it that matters". At this point we see the white player make a move that ends with the ball in the basket. The astonishment of the black player is met with a shrug by the white player. A subtext of the advertisement is that the game is over a trophy other the pleasure of play, which the woman in the Clio forms the only visible candidate.

The obvious premise of the narrative is that the black male ought to be the better player and the statement of the white player confirms this. Even though there is a difference in size between the players, and height matters in
basketball, the understanding is that the black player 'born to be agile' ought to be the better player. This makes the triumph of the white player even more sensational.

Yet these fears need to be mollified.

The advertisement is culturally indebted to the film *White Men Can't Jump*\(^\text{186}\) which follows the exploits of two basketball hustlers; one black and the other white, the punchline being 'that the white man can jump when it matters.' Basketball will play a role in this chapter: it is timely, it represents the popular face of the inner-city\(^\text{187}\) (often used as a synonym of black), and it provides an innocuous marker for blackness in advertising.

**Mic check**

This chapter will be looking at representation as a social activity specifically as a means of understanding the way the black image is represented within the public medium of advertising. Advertising will be defined in its widest sense, including among others, handbills billboards, newspapers, television and cinema. The Internet will not be considered at this juncture as there are few representations of the physical body displayed and as a medium it is not public in the sense that I would like to approach it. Using Dyer's idea of the universal white body\(^\text{188}\), one could argue that there are no black bodies on the internet at the moment: the large corporations that have their public presence

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\(^{187}\) A term originating in the United States, coming into common use in Britain. Basketball too is making a cultural shift, with National Basketball Association [NBA] games being shown on television in Britain.


As long as race is something only applied to non-white-peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as a human norm. . . . There is no more powerful position than of being 'just' human. The claim to power is the claim to speak for the commonality of humanity [pp. 1 - 2]
on the internet are companies that already have a clear public Western European image. I think of Netscape, Microsoft, Sun, Amazon, IBM, among others, that use the internet as a real vehicle of advertising presence.

The section will also look at the methods of understanding representation, particular attention paid to the theories of social representation, ambivalence and stereotyping. The reason for this concentration is that these are the areas that are of most help in understanding advertising. Social Representations will be addressed through the theories of Moscovici and his adherents. Ambivalence will be dealt with in a concrete fashion, using examples from others who have applied ambivalence as a means of understanding representations of blackness. Kobena Mercer and bell hooks will provide particular focus. Stereotyping will be interrogated as an essential model for understanding, defining and categorising the world.

Attention will be paid to individual advertisements. As is pointed out by Stuart Hall, there are no real 'correct' answers where representation is concerned. Keeping this in mind, I intend to find a theoretical model able to analyse the black image in advertising.

The images that are of interest within this research, are those that are easily and widely available to the public, through billboards, newspapers and popular magazines. The adversarial nature of hegemonic culture development cannot be ignored. It is the public nature of these images that make them such repositories of meaning; their dominance over competing

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188 By 'adversarial', I refer to attempts by those that do not see themselves as forming part of the hegemonic structure, and therefore resist it. What is therefore seen as 'subculture' forms part of the language of advertising, in a bid to render their goods unique, and to utilise the exotic nature of the 'new' or 'different'.
images mean they not only begin to determine the manufacture of the competing material, they set the possible meanings of such material.

It is impossible to speak of the black body in Britain without touching on colonial relations and the question of race. It is not the intention of this chapter to readdress race and ethnicity, so they will only be referred to in relation to visual readings, where skin colour is clearly being used as a contemporary marker for racial difference.

Most of the material on the black body has been concentrated on the male. This causes difficulties as the marking of gendered bodies are different. The feminising of the black male as against the neutering of the black female, means that a singular reading of the black male and female image is inadequate. The use of the black body as a unified signifier has internal complications and requires separate analysis. Aware of this limitation, I will however treat the body in advertisements as closely as possible for expediency.

Overture

The question of representation as a means of understanding the visual world is one that is played out within the discourse of representation. It would appear that most of the concerns raised and research carried out on representation, as against the manipulation/understanding of language, has been done from the point of view of the weak. By ‘weak’ the understanding is

\[\text{\textsuperscript{191} For a good explanation of the rudiments of representation with particular attention to blackness, see; Hall Stuart. ed. Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. In particular chapters one, three and four. On representation and the black woman see hooks, bell. Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self Recovery. Turnaround, London. 1993.}\]
those that have not traditionally had control of the medium of representation due to their sex (as against gender), sexual orientation or racial typification. Their 'positioning' led to the questioning of placement, and interrogating the imagery used to define, when these groups have felt empowered to voice opinions. Three interrogators of representation have been Stuart Hall, Richard Dyer, and Judith Williamson, and they are 'weak'. To call them 'weak' may appear a contradiction in terms, considering their academic and political prominence, but they have used their 'weak' status as a starting point to question representation.

Interrogating representation, therefore, is more than a desire to understand how images tell of themselves in relation to a greater audience, but how images represent the 'weak' in a medium controlled by the 'powerful'. The construction of oppositions within representation is more than the binary oppositions of male/female, straight/gay or black/white, it moves into the construction of 'us' against 'them', where the 'them' at various points easily and legitimately become one of 'us'.

It is this movement from one group to another that often causes problems in the analysis of representation, so increasingly complicated arrangements are made to accommodate the vacillations in the identity of those able to represent and those represented.

This is shown in *B-Boys Blues*, where the photographing of two black lovers attempted by a white homosexual male, is constructed very differently from the approach made by a black homosexual photographer. There is the implication that the motives behind the desire to represent will be tainted through a white

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man, yet retain a purity if mediated by someone black.

The separation of people into groups, part of the nature of representation, characterises the realm of advertising. From the producer - agency relationship, to the agency - image relationship, moving on to the image - public relationship (that will hopefully end as the public -product relationship), there is a series of oppositions that characterises representation. The oppositional reading of representations means that there is a search for the 'villain' and the 'victim' in analysing advertising. As argued by Steven Neale in 'The Same Old Story', there are times when a great deal is lost in the analysis of the image because too much attention is paid to the adversarial nature of the material under scrutiny in comparison to the many possibilities available for the determined investigator.¹⁹³

I agree with Neale, in that much attention is paid to the issue of difference, while pretending that all is well in the context which defines the image. That there is the possibility of an unweighted, academic reading of any image is fallacious, even the academic faces is influenced by their context.

The popular interaction of the advertising image and its public, means that the image is eased into a debate; commercial, social, political or otherwise, whether that was the intention of the image or not. The static (in the case of the printed image) and the moving promotional image (in the case of

television and cinema) hold a particular form of representation that non-advertising media do not have to concern themselves with. They do not have to rely on immediate identification and they do not always have to point to something other than themselves.

The particularity of advertising imagery is based in its desire to coerce or at least convince the public to make a purchase. All representations within the image come together to make the potential buyer want to do just that, buy. Because the sole intention is so clear, representation becomes an issue worthy of debate as the role of the image will be to represent the advertised product as positively as possible. Meaning that everything associated with the product will be carefully and wilfully selected to fulfil product aggrandisement.

This does not mean that the advertiser is able to construct unique meaning for all readers of the image, (this would credit the advertising machine with too much power). But the intention to construct disparate meaning is there at the inception of the image, and this has to be considered when attempting to glean substance from the resultant image.

**Representation**

Both forms; the static and filmic advertisement will have to treated as a readable, consumable text, of similar weight. The short, fixed narrative of the filmic advertisement coupled with its repetition to the same audience within a short space of time, as on commercial television, means that one is able to convincingly treat the moving image as static, being that it is feasible that most aspects of the televised advertisement will be internalised by the audience. And if one considers that printed advertisements are not likely to be scrutinised for every detail by the casual reader of the newspaper or journal, then the amount of detail appreciated from both forms of dissemination can be treated as comparable.

Amidst this focus on the product it is possible to forget that the public representations of the advertisement become part of culture, and that the images created [with their internal logic of truth and reality] come to define people outside the advertisement.
I ventured forth into my new environs and approached a boy about my age who wore an immaculately pressed sparkling white T-shirt and khakis and was slowly placing one slue-footed black croker -sack shoe in front of the other. I stopped him and asked for directions to the closest store. He squinted his eyes and leaned back stifling a laugh. 'What the fuck did you say?' I repeated my request and the laugh he suppressed came out gently. 'Damn, cuz. You talk proper like a motherfucker.' Cuz? Proper like a motherfucker? It was not like I had said, 'Pardon me, old bean, can you perchance direct a new indigene to the nearest corner emporium.' My guide's bafflement turned to judgmental indignation at my appearance. 'Damn fool, what's up with your loud-ass gear? Nigger got on so many colours, look like a walking paint sampler. Did you find the pot at the end of that rainbow? You not even close to matching. Take your jambalaya wardrobe down to Cadilla Street, make a right and the store is at the light.'

I walked to the store, not believing that some guy who ironed the sleeves on his T-shirt and belted his pants somewhere near his testicles had the nerve to insult me on how I dressed. I returned to the house, dropped the bag of groceries on the table, and shouted 'Ma, you done fucked up and moved to the 'hood!' The extended quotation from Paul Beatty's *The White Boy Shuffle* shows how representation leads to the creation of pictures and expectations of social encounters, that gradually fix themselves into ideological standpoints. Two boys meet and assess each other's relative value and social placement using fashion signals and voice patterns. The concluding pronouncement in

the quote has the impact of:

1. making the 'T-shirt and Khaki' clad boy the embodiment of the 'hood.
2. The boy's description becomes a representation of the 'hood,
3. The boy is the 'hood.

A textual example has been chosen first (not that images are not textual) to point to the narrative nature of visual representation. The creation of difference in the choice of clothes, tone of voice and the authority of the narrator against the subordination of the reported. It is also important to know that in this example both boys are black.

Attempts to define representation are numerous, but mainly unsuccessful as all they can achieve is a description of the phenomenon. Now that representation is perceived as a significant part of the creation of ideology, it is important to be clear on what representation is; especially extraneous representations.

At a historical juncture where formative ideological stances: feminism, colonialism, sexuality and gender, political correctness (albeit short lived, it had a dramatic impact) and disability (as language and attitudes are modified to consider differing physical abilities) have reached the point of being reinterpreted and studied as producers of their own ideology (often indicated by the prefix 'post'), 'representation' has to stand ready to take on the considerations of the producers of representational material, and the

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197 Those that have been placed or have been placed outside the cultural mainstream as defined by access to power and self determination.
inevitable readings of those represented.\textsuperscript{199}

‘Representation’ has been defined rather tentatively as ‘the way in which signs are used to convey meaning’. It also ‘refers to the construction of meaning within any system of communication’.\textsuperscript{199} Stuart Hall provides a ‘common-sense’ usage of the term as follows: ‘Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people’.\textsuperscript{200}

Representation is communication, all communication transmits information, from at least one person to another, and with the transmission of information, meaning is generated and consumed. Yet ‘meaning cannot be transmitted in the abstract; it has to be embedded in some (social) code’ transmitted through a ‘channel’, and take place in a ‘context’.\textsuperscript{201}

A quick word on Intertextuality

Intertextuality is what we use to generate all kinds of secondary meaning. A

\textsuperscript{199} The shift in power, economic and political, from one dominant group to various collective bodies means that popular representation has to take their [the collective bodies] opinion and objections into account. Women [as a collective] now have considerable power to affect their depiction in most public media


Communication necessarily involves at least two persons, the person speaking and the person speaking (the addressee). In the process of communication, meaning is transmitted between the two participants. However meaning cannot be transmitted in the abstract; it must be embedded in some code [That is mutually understood] (. . .) [Furthermore] In order for anything to be communicated at all, addressee and addressee (. . .) have to be in contact with each other, that is the message has to be communicated through some kind of channel. . . . Finally, any act of communication takes place in a situation, a context, this involves the situation in which addressee and addressee are placed, including the immediately [and historically] preceding events (. . .) and their culture.
rose may be a rose maybe a rose, but in order for the rose to say 'I love you', it
needs more than petals, fragrance and thorns. Intertextuality helps create the
romantic link between sentiment and object.

'The theory of intertextuality proposes that any text is necessarily read in
relationship to others and that a range of textual knowledge is brought to bear
upon it . . . Studying a text's intertextual relations can provide us with valuable
clues to the reading a particular culture or subculture is likely to produce from
it.' According to Fiske there are three levels/forms of intertextuality:
'horizontal', 'vertical', and what I have dubbed 'displaced'.

The first level or horizontal intertextuality is the reading of the text in line with all
the other possible and relevant texts, to make the text being read fit into a
scheme or genre. The second or vertical intertextuality comes when there is
the possibility of a number of parallel readings, so the links to other texts need
not be generic at all. Criticism of a text for instance, allows for a vertical
intertextual way of reading.

The third kind or displaced intertextuality are the texts made by the viewers of
a text which is then used to read the text in question, such as letters to the
editor of a programme or the agency that produces an advertising
campaign.

Intertextuality does not happen in any clear order. Mental configurations are
needed to make sense of the texts confronted. It is this pendulation in the
mind of the viewer that advertising relies on to produce meaning, allows them

204 ibid. pp. 117-118.
205 ibid. pp. 124-128.
to covertly play on stereotypes, and what makes people buy.

It is also what makes the loved one smile.

**Back to Representation**

The generation of meaning is the element ‘representation’ focuses on. ‘Meaning’ will be generated whether intended or not, however, ‘meaning’ is almost always intended and ‘communication’ carries our impressions of the world within the contexts in which we might find ourselves. The generation of ‘meaning’ concerns this section, which includes intended and accidental readings available to the viewer of the communicative material.

The active nature of representation itself manipulates material, the represented object becoming passive in the face of its representative. To use the legal concept of representation, where authority is given to an advocate to stand in the stead of another, or when an individual elects to represent themself, they acquire a separate legal identity, which is removed from their body.

This active nature of representation also means that it constantly mutates to adapt to circumstances it finds itself in. With these mutations, meanings and layers of meaning are constantly being produced. Thus, the nature of representation needs to be reframed in a similar light to Michel Foucault's re-

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206 Representation, as a word is active. It indicates the act of representing. By this, one is drawn to the notion of one thing pointing to another; to use Apple Macintosh computer jargon, representation is like an alias. It will take you to the real thing. Yet while it looks like the real thing and can even carry the same name, it is not what it purports to be. If the casual user of the Macintosh think they have found what they are looking for on discovering the alias, they are wrong. And ultimately, representation, like an alias, can lose contact with its origin, not being very able to cope with change.
definition of power. Where he rephrases power as not being static, but in a state of flux; moving from place to place, or person to person; rendering power a 'state' of being rather than a 'possession'.

Michel Foucault is clearest about this idea when he contrasts the two kinds of power:

By that I mean that in the case of classic, juridical theory, power is taken to be a right, which one is able to possess like a commodity, and which one can in consequence transfer or alienate either wholly or partially, through legal act or through some act that establishes a right, such as takes place through cession or contract. Power is that concrete power which every individual holds, or whose partial or total cession enables political power or sovereignty to be established.

This rethinking affects the reading of representation as a practice. The belief that 'representation' will represent the other person, and not the person doing the representing is made unstable.

The alternative idea of representation, linking power to economics and time, seems more appropriate to its contemporary analysis. It provides the possibility of reading the same image over and over again, with the prospect.

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ibid. p. 207.
that the image will lose one set of potencies and gain another\textsuperscript{209}.

The alternative model of power which Foucault termed the ‘economic functionality of power’ allows that:

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\text{[t]he economic functionality is present to the extent that power is conceived primarily in terms of the role that it plays in the maintenance simultaneously of the relations of production and of a class domination which the development and specific forms of the forces of production have rendered possible. On this view then, the historical raison d'être of political power is to be found in the economy.}^\text{210}
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The linking of power to economy has meant that power, political, social and even economic will not remain in the same place, despite efforts to make it so. The three aspects of power will tend to function together, and often the acquisition of one kind will facilitate the others.

Power has meant that representation (often defined by the powerful) has had a profound impact in the creation of culture. But as the represented are able to wield power of their own, representation is problematised as the agenda that the ‘powerful’ instilled within it diminishes.

\textsuperscript{209} Likening representation to disease/epidemic, Dan Sperber provides a model on which to recognise the mutability of images and perceptions of the representations, shows how power affects representation especially in the case of fashion.

\textsuperscript{210} For instance, a representation can be cultural in different ways; some are slowly transmitted over generations; they are what we call traditions, and are comparable to endemics, other representations, typical of modern culture, spread rapidly throughout whole populations, but have a short life-span, they are what we call fashions and are comparable to epidemics.


Foucault, Michel. ‘Two Lectures.’ p. 207.
This mutation of representation as the power base shifts, is aptly illustrated in Judith Williamson’s essay on the family and photography²¹¹ where she concisely analyses the role of the camera and photograph within the family’s recordings of particular moments, as an economic relationship. What is of particular relevance to this section, is that the wielding of power within the family is dictated as the hand holding the camera.

Williamson highlights photography and the family, taking into account the power of parents over children, especially that of the father (who is also presented as holding power over the mother figure). He is depicted as taking the photograph by his absence. Williamson presents the imagery as consistently being produced within a defined power relationship, (which is irrefutable: even the phrase ‘take a photograph’ implies subjugation of the subjects who predominantly have to pose for the camera). But Williamson does not take into consideration the erosion of power of one group over the other (akin to Foucault’s position), such as when the child grows up and starts creating the memories by taking photographs of the father figure (who no longer has the economic and familial/political power that allowed earlier definition). There is, however, mention of the mutation of meaning as the author looks back on her own past as depicted in family snapshots.

Social Representations

There are many sources of explanation of the methods and intention of representation as a social practice. Social practice; being the desire to understand and interpret the information gleaned from social interaction. It is

not assumed that representation is benign, with individuals merely re-presenting the world as they deem fit. It is more appropriate to suspect that the desire to represent is founded in the intention to appropriate and eventually dominate.

John Berger has argued that people take photographs of their loved ones and desired objects/scenes in order to own them.\(^{212}\) This owning is impossible in real terms, but is symbolically feasible. When the photograph is presented, there is a defined space of mediation that allows a transfer of the 'possession' of the image to 'ownership' of the depicted. To overlook this relationship of representation and ownership, means that the acquisition of position and power to represent, will not carry responsibility for the interpretation they create.

Control is of consequence for representation within this thesis, which will be concentrating on the power of one socially empowered group to present an understanding of another socially determined group as it suits their needs. It will be looking at the depiction of difference, visible difference that can be seen in the presentation of gender, physical ability, and most clearly with race.

Re-presenting race, as against representing race is attributed to those that relied on race as a source of wealth and well being.\(^{213}\) Race was best articulated on the terms of those with a financial stake in its manipulation. Without its 'correct' depiction, it would not do its job of convincing a white population properly. This mercantile interest formed and forms the main bias in the representation of race as compared to those that had an academic

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\(^{213}\) Examples of those having a stake in the representation of race, are missionary groups, The Empire Trading Board, and contemporaneously; charities and travel/tourist companies.
interest, (even if the academic was linked to the economic, there was often a guise of distance).  

The significant contribution of race in Western European representation, was the introduction of skin pigmentation to function clearly and differently in the realm of the visual. Race as defined by visual phenotypical difference serves a clear purpose when the intention is to present a 'picture' of what it means to be different. This indicator can then be exploited by the advertiser to indicate differences in social, economic and class privileges associated with a product.

'Social Representations', a theoretical framework for understanding the world, is highly appropriate in the comprehension of representation as performed within advertising. 'Perform' as it is not apparent that presented images are static in origin, nor in the intention of the advertiser. The creation of an advertisement is a complex affair, its creator's desire is that it has as many possible meanings as possible. This allow the advertisement to 'effectively' convince as large an audience as possible. 'Effective' in the sense that as many people that see and read the advertisement are convinced of the merit of the product or service offered to them. Thereby maintaining control from product awareness to the impulse to buy.

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215 The visual aspects of representation will be the concern of this paper, as the intention is to look at advertising as a visual experience. While there will be an analysis of text, it will more often be attached to an image and will help to create the 'preferred meaning'.


217 According to Pieterse, representation of the black person dates back as far as 2500 B.C. Starting out as 'normal' social depictions, but by 1441, the change in relationships meant a shift in representations to the 'abnormal'. The civil rights movement in the United States and the collapse of the British Empire leading to the independence of the former colonies has caused the present shift at attempting 'positive' representations. See Pieterse, Jan Nederveen. White on Black: Images of Africa and Blacks in Western Popular Culture. Yale University Press, London. 1995. pp. 23-29.
Before outlining the concept of social representation, I would like to deal with the nature of the social within representation. As J. Jaspars and C. Fraser put it:

... what is social about social representation is not in the first place that such representations are representations of social reality, or that they are social in origin, but that they are social because they are shared in by many individuals and as such constitute a social reality which can influence individual behaviour.\(^\text{218}\)

It is beneficial to state this proposition early, as 'social representations' places the issue of representation outside the control of the individual maker; who might deem their creation as being devoid of influences outside their specific creative process. It makes the process of creating culture dynamic, acknowledging the constant influx of stimulation and the inevitability of change.

The defence that the maker of an advertisement does not carry predetermined feelings about people depicted within it, is used as a shield against accusations of bias and positive/negative depictions. It might be true that the creator is not interested in maligning those in use, but the reality is that there are a number of influences outside the image that have an impact on both its making and reading.

The theory of 'Social Representations' belongs to a French tradition of social research based on social and cognitive psychology; the study of the human

mind in a social context. It was founded after the Second World War, with its inaugural public face being credited to Serge Moscovici, on the publication of his paper, entitled 'La Psychanalyses: Son Image et Son Public' in 1961\(^\text{219}\). Moscovici defined Social Representations as ‘...the elaborating of a social object by the community for the purpose of behaving and communicating’.\(^\text{220}\) This definition can be expanded on as:

Cognitive systems with a language and logic of their own ... they ... represent ... theories ... for the discovery and organisation of reality, ...
. Systems of values, ideas and practices.\(^\text{221}\)

and,

Social Representations refer to the shared, consensual beliefs which make up our social reality ... They refer to the products of our social thinking and social interactions, and are expressed in our language, in our communication and in the cultural artefacts of a society. They are conventional and prescriptive, but at the same time, are dynamic and changing. They are the means by which we understand and communicate about events and issues which confront us in our daily lives. They are in effect the collective and active memory of individuals living together in a social environment.\(^\text{222}\)

This elaboration indicates why 'Social Representations' is critical in the
analysis and understanding of advertising. Advertising has a language, (albeit a secondary language based on the primary language and series of codes that a community uses normally); it is a form of communication; and a social experience. These three elements make ‘Social Representations’, with its intention to provide tools for personal and group analysis, invaluable. Already ‘Social Representations’ has been used in the analysis of representations of ‘handicap’, and public awareness campaigns centered around HIV, AIDS and safer sex.

Social Representations ‘are in the world’ as well as being ‘in the head’. This dual element vitalises this offshoot of social psychology, in that it is involved in social culture. It is the reason why Moscovici has called it ‘an anthropology of modern life’. ‘The research involves sampling ‘culture’ as well as ‘cognition’; ‘the media’ as well as ‘minds’ and ‘objects’ as well as ‘subjects’.

The recognition of the fluctuating nature of ‘culture’ is what makes this aspect of representation so relevant to this research. The identification of advertising as a social practice seems to be the only way that one can begin to analyse the impact of the personal on the public, and the reverse (and probably of greater magnitude), the impact of the public on the person.

The functions of ‘Social Representations’ are two fold: ‘(the) first (is) to establish an order which will enable individuals to orientate themselves in their material and social world and to master it’. This is certainly the tool the

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224 ibid. pp. 31-47.
225 ibid.
226 ibid.
227 Here the ‘public’ can be read as the social and the ‘personal’ can be read as the role of a defined collective.
228 ibid.
229 ibid.
230 ibid.
advertising that appropriates (if not simply steals) the language of fine art and
presents it to a public soon after the language is placed into any
context/scheme of understanding.229,230

"(S)econdly (it is) to enable communication to take place among members of
a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for
naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and
their individual and group history."231 This is very similar to the idea of 'context'
as laid out in *The Language of Advertising*,232 which allows the
comprehension of transmitted codes and messages.

To illustrate how social representations mediate language and culture, three
newspaper advertisements will be looked at: The Metropolitan Police, IBM
(International Business Machines) and DfEE (Department for Education and
Employment).233

**The Metropolitan Police**

The advertisement is in black, white and blue. [fig. 7]

Main copy: *'They didn't want to be diplomats, lawyers or psychoanalysts. They
wanted to be all three'*

Three 'police officers' are looking out into the camera, 'mildly' smiling
(friendly, yet serious). There are two men and a woman. We know they are

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229 Radio 4 *Front Row* 2 Mar. 1999 19:15 - 19:45 As in which Gillian Wearing [artist]
accuses M & C Saatchi [advertising agency] of stealing her ideas for their Volkswagen
[placards] and BSkyB [children's voices] Advertisements The Managing Director of M & C
Saatchi did not deny this charge and even admitted to looking at the work.


brackets mine


and DfEE in *The Guardian* 03 October 1998 p. 12
police officers because they have badges of a distinct design on their helmets. The woman officer’s helmet carries the chequered pattern associated with the police, she also wears a cravat of similar design.

They are ‘anywhere’; the background against which they stand is black and the officers blend into each other at the shoulders to give the possible effect of one police officer with three heads (the idea of a united force). Their helmets also blend into the void that is their background.

The woman is ‘Asian’, one of the men ‘White’ and the other ‘Black’, (quite reminiscent of Benetton advertisements). The copy tells us that the police ‘want to reflect London’s rich cultural mix’.

**IBM**

The advertisement is in full colour [fig. 8]

Main copy: ‘IBM Global Services: People who think, People who do’

We are in a corporate hallway, grey walls and large windows. Five ‘employees’ are looking and smiling out into the camera; three men and two women. Their corporate nature is marked by their clothing; shirts and trousers for the men, trouser suit for the woman in full view, while the other sports a jacket. Two ‘employees’ have identity cards attached to their garments for authenticity. It is a casual atmosphere; none of the men are wearing ties, and their collar buttons are open. One of the men even has his sleeves rolled up (to indicate hard work or a casual attitude?). Their names, occupation and phone numbers are listed in the copy of the advertisement. There is one black man in the group.
The Question of Representation or What You See, . . . Maybe

DfEE

The advertisement is a black and white photograph [fig. 9]

Main copy: ‘Whatever subject you’re going to read, read this first’

We are at the front of a lecture hall in an institute of higher learning. The lecture hall is indicated by the seating pattern of the ‘students’; four rows of them, each elevated behind the row in front of it. The academic environment is further indicated by the spines of ring binders and ‘sections’ of open books facing the camera. There are eleven students in the frame (three of whose heads have been cropped to indicate continuity, but we can see their hands). They are all intensely reading copies of the DfEE’s ‘Financial Support in Higher Education’

There is a ‘cross section’ of the visible public; old/young, male/female, black/white. There are two black students in the shot; one male and the other female.

The three advertisements are similar in their ‘non-offensive’ and subtle use of the black person. The arrant stereotypes are missing, which makes reading them slightly complex. It would appear churlish to see denigration in every image, and I do not think that all advertising relies on simplistic juxtapositions, but the black image ‘works’, whatever it is doing.

All three advertisements rely on clear social signals, of place, product and people, to get their message across. Within the three examples there are issues to deal with regarding the black person, but to pursue this would obscure my initial illustration of ‘social representations’, so it will have to wait. In all three advertisements, the black image is quite clearly deliberately
placed; the police advertisement makes a verbal admission. The advertisements show a particular visual understatement to race and ethnicity. The advertisements are not directly selling anything; they are just making the public aware of their existence and function. This can be summarised as:

- Metropolitan Police - product/service awareness
- IBM - product/service awareness
- DfEE - product/service awareness

This 'brand awareness' means that the corporations\(^\text{234}\) are actively involved in creating an image of themselves that will appeal to a popular segment of the population. The police present a non-sexist, non-racist face; IBM is effective, yet inclusive, security-conscious yet laid back, the DfEE sees all sections of society the same way, in line with government policy.

The social nature of social representations can be seen in three different ways within the examples given: [1] They deal with social reality mainly in the social structural and cultural sense, [2] they are social in origin and [3] they are widely shared. As a result they become part of social reality itself.\(^\text{235}\)

**To be or not to be a stereotype**

'Black Is, Black Ain't T: Notes On De-essentialising Black Identities'\(^\text{236}\) is a singular look at the construction of the black male as forever heterosexual.

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\(^{234}\) The police, IBM and the DfEE are all large and stable companies that do not need the private individual as customers. They therefore do not need to appeal to the individual as customer, but for their future growth, they need to generate a public persona that meets all the criteria of modern living. If that means equal opportunities; then so be it.


Considering Fani-Kayode's images as a pointer, one is aware that this is not necessarily the case. Yet the popular image of the black male is at once the predatory superstud. A generalisation no doubt, but a convincing one and taken to extremes in the film *Sweet Sweetback Baadasssss Song*, made by Melvin Van Peebles, a social activist. Here the black male is an insatiable, uninhibited, infatigable heterosexual superstud, the stereotype has come home to roost. The desire to believe the stereotype in both black and white observers may be based on different reasons; reassertion of the self for the blackman, reinforcement of fears for the whiteman, but they are both strong feelings relying on the 'strength of stereotypes (that) lie in its simplicity, its immediate recognisability, . . . and its implicit reference to an assumed consensus about some attribute or complex social relationship.\(^\text{238}\)

E. Perkins outlines what he sees as the 'dominant and misleading assumptions about the nature of stereotypes'.\(^\text{239}\)

According to these assumptions stereotypes are: (1) always erroneous in content; (2) pejorative concepts; (3) about groups with whom we have little/no social contact, by implication therefore are not held about one's own group; (4) about minority groups (or about oppressed groups); (5) simple; (6) rigid and do not change; (7) not structurally reinforced.\(^\text{240}\)

Looking to the 'falsehoods' (I will return to these later) of stereotypes for a moment, one notices that they are the elements of a stereotype. It is almost

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\(^{239}\) ibid. p. 138

\(^{240}\) ibid.
impossible to think of a stereotype without the fact of a distant preconceived idea of an other coming into being. After all one cannot have a stereotype of a close companion, or someone of whom much is shared in common; one is too aware of much information to arrive at glib generalisations.

'The role of stereotypes is to make visible the invisible', and to make fast the elusive. It is to separate whatever is defined as fact (through proximity and personal knowledge) to that which forms the fantasy (realised as distant and collected knowledge).

I am not suggesting that one cannot develop stereotypes of people who would be deemed close, but in this case I will use Dyer's term of 'social type' which is defined as 'representations of those that “belong” to society. They are the kinds of people that one expects, that one is led to expect, to find in one's society.' This distinction between the types of caricatured representations is important in an understanding of the use and impact of stereotypes within advertising. As Dyer appropriately points out, stereotypes are 'those that do not belong, who are outside of one's society.'

This attribute of being an outsider has been the force behind the creation and maintenance of the ‘black person' stereotype. The stereotype provides a mechanism to understand the onslaught of information that the individual will have to confront; especially if the information will have to be acquired relatively quickly. The use of definable forms will initially allow a handle on the 'new', and when the 'new' remains distant and the handle proves sufficient, then a stereotype is gradually born.

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243 ibid.
Stereotypes are not necessarily simple constructions, as aptly argued by Perkins on pointing out the complex social relationships behind the phrase 'Dumb Blonde'; arguing that it relies on prior understanding of language, gender, sexual mores, status, even voice patters, and for this reason stereotypes are like symbols.

It is this symbolic nature of the stereotype that lends it lasting power for good or bad. As the symbol takes the place of the object it is meant to symbolise, it becomes the object. Upsetting this 'new object' becomes increasingly difficult, to the point that those that are symbolised by the stereotype might become convinced that the stereotype carries some truth and is in fact part of whom they are.

An analysis of the creation of a 'world view' necessary for living means the creation of a 'sociological' role. Defined as 'a set of expectations and obligations to act in certain ways in certain settings', this role becomes determinant in the construction of the self, and the stereotype is instrumental in the creation of the role.

Robert Stam and Louise Spence posit the argument that both the internalisation of stereotypes and the search for 'positive' representation are presented in films like Gordon Parks' Shaft and Sweet Sweetback Baadassss Song, both of 1971. As they put it:

> We should be equally suspicious of a naive integrationist which simply

\[244\] Perkins, T. E. 'Rethinking Stereotypes.' p. 139.
\[245\] ibid. p. 142.
inserts new heroes and heroines, this time drawn from the ranks of the oppressed into the old functional roles that were themselves oppressive, much as colonialism invited a few assimilated ‘natives’ into the club of the elite. A film like Shaft (1971) simply substitutes black heroes into the . . . slot normally filled by white ones in order to satisfy the fantasies of a certain (largely) male sector of the black audience. . . .

The complementary preoccupation to the search for positive images, the exposure of negative images or stereotypes, . . . can lead both to the privileging of characterological concerns (to the detriment of other important considerations) and also a kind of essentialism, as the critic reduces a complex diversity of portrayals to a limited set of reified stereotypes.247

Personally, the critique of the genre now called 'Blaxploitation' ought not be levelled at these ground breaking films where the main protagonist presents a resisting social type of a particular political order. The authors are treating film as an unchangeable instrument of a white colonial hegemony and fail to see beyond the traditional use of the screen.248 While the reversal of the connotations and upstaging of stereotypes has been a typical part of Parks' and Pebbles' project, they did not merely replace white roles with black faces, even with the appearances of stereotype appropriation,249 they are also hardly blaxploitation films.250

248 One has to assume that at some point the ‘screen’ has or acquires innocence. That the ‘screen’ is a reflector of ideology and not its creator. This allows the ‘screen’ to be used as a tool of protest and not necessarily a symbol of incorporation or acquiescence.
249 The internalisation of stereotypes causes behaviour patterns that mimic them. Also the inversion of ‘bad’ to ‘baad’ means the praise of what could be seen as a vice outside of a particular space.
Stuart Hall has a different reading of the films. 'Shaft is a hero', calling them 'revenge films' - audiences relishing the black heroes' triumph over 'Whitey', loving the fact that they are getting away with it! Hall does not have a critique of the attempts, quoting the black critic, Lerone Bennet, 'Nobody ever fucked his way to freedom', but Hall is aware of the role that the representation of a 'positive' image may have in reinforcing the self image of the black audience.

There are failures of 'theory' or Western philosophy to deal with the issue of black stereotyping. Homi Bhabha indicates this with his analysis of the relationship of colonialism and stereotyping along the lines of the social and political. Bhabha shows that the theorisation of stereotyping is heavily involved in evaluation based on difference.

The difference of other cultures is other than the excess of signification or the trajectory of desire. These are theoretical strategies that are necessary to combat 'ethnocentricism' but they cannot of themselves unreconstructed represent the otherness. There can be no sliding from the semiotic activity to the unproblematic reading of other cultural and discursive systems. There is in such readings a will to power and knowledge, that in failing to specify the limits of their own field of annunciation and effectively, proceeds to individualise otherness as a discovery of their own assumptions.

Of course one needs an apparatus to deal with stereotyping, yet a culture that

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252 ibid. p. 272.
253 Bhabha Homi K. 'The Other Question - The Stereotype and Colonial discourse.' pp. 22-23.
is postcolonial and therefore relies on its sociopolitical history for the creation of pleasure, is not going to be able to separate the self from the other to the point of constructive deconstruction. The objective of Colonial discourse according to Bhabha 'is to construe the colonised as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction'.

In line with Perkins' position of the need for stereotypes in the construction of the self, colonial discourse provides the models for the construction of difference. When one considers that colonial discourse is predominantly about 'us and them' and the strategy of creating 'them' is stereotyping, then all the theories that buttress colonialism fail in their attempts of re-articulation. It might initially appear awkward to use colonial theory to define a modern meeting of stereotypes, but the lingering legacy of a colonial heritage, the continuous reference to its power structures in advertisements for charities (a particular example) and even consumer products like Lilt and Barcardi Rum, mean that the critique remains pertinent.

The stereotype (as a definable part of representation) is categorically defined by Perkins as a list of attributes, as against those mentioned above as 'falsehoods'. Taking the salient parts of his six part description; a stereotype is a group concept, held by a group, reflects an 'inferior judgmental process', gives rise to simple structures, is highly evaluative and forms a selective, organising system. These are not very different from the 'falsehoods', but do highlight the conceptual dilemma of trying to alter the status of a 'negative concept' of a stereotype, let alone the typification itself.

254 ibid. p. 23.
255 Perkins . T. E. 'Rethinking Stereotypes.' p. 145. A brief explanation of the points follows each point. Being that they have been defined within the paper, I have left them out.
Stereotypes are deemed necessary for the understanding of the world\textsuperscript{256} and therefore are formed (apparently) regardless of value, yet the working out of stereotypes provide a system that is loaded with value. As the analysis of ambivalence points out, the ego needs reinforcement, and that reinforcement will find placement in the creation of the elements that are seen as pertinent to the ego’s aggrandisement.

The stereotype however does not stop at the level of defining the other in the mind of the self; it has the effect of defining the other in the eyes of the other. Especially in the case of the ‘oppressed’.\textsuperscript{257} There are complex divergences in the explanation of the construction of the self\textsuperscript{258} and how the stereotypes of a group come to be acted out by the group in question.

Despite admitting resentment within the arguments about stereotypes, Neale argues that stereotypes are not inherently negative\textsuperscript{259} - which in itself is indisputable - for nothing can be inherently negative. It is the placement and use of language that generates polarity. There is however no doubt that the institution of stereotypes are about relegation and organisation; and these two are almost always found together with the desire to control. In order to control and retain that control, stereotyping is a useful ally in reducing the subject to manageable elements. The argument, that treating stereotypes as essentially negative (itself a stereotype), nullifies its use as an effective critical tool and

\textsuperscript{256} ibid. pp. 141 - 143.
\textsuperscript{257} I would like to see ‘oppressed’ here not necessarily as physical oppression; even that can part of the deal; but as any grouping that find themselves in a position where their position is often defined and controlled from outside of themselves. In this case it could be children that form the oppressed group, women as a political entity, criminals, or even fox hunters (even if this complicates the possibility of economic clout with numerical dearth).
\textsuperscript{258} Brown v. The board of education is famous for its use of dolls to show the construction of the self through stereotypes of the dirty/clean; beautiful/ugly.
according to Neale, denies the fluctuating power relationships that are created in the formation of lasting typifications.

Distancing the stereotype from reality (while simultaneously proclaiming its reliance on a 'reality' for its formation) has become a hallmark of the discussions on popular typifications. This is understandable when one considers the alleged reliance of the mechanism in the formation of opinions; yet on recognising the power of stereotypes in advertising, one has to stand in relation to advertising's ability to mould reality. To not depict reality in their (advertising) stereotypes means that advertisers become less culpable for the images produced and their ultimate effect. They can argue that they are not representing anyone anyway, that the representations are pure fiction; allowing them to utilise stereotypes with impunity. It indicates the social power of the stereotype; challenge will merely strengthen its position, and disregard will foster its survival.

A peculiar characteristic of stereotyping is the inability of the stereotyped to effectively carry the stereotype in the eyes of the 'stereotyper'. When the stereotyped carry out what is expected of them, the typification collapses into a semblance of reality. The values are in the mind of the formulator and it is only there (when it becomes part of the psyche of the formed) that it carries real energy.

In 'Show Biz and Blackface: The Evolution of the Minstrel Show as a Theatrical Form', Robert C. Toll shows how, when 'Negroes' took on minstrelsy as a form of popular entertainment within the United States, they were billed as playing themselves; while white 'real' minstrelsy performed by the player was

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265 See Neale, Perkins and Dyer.
the 'real thing'. The implicit argument being that the caricature is impossible in the hands of the self (not forgetting racial politics of course). Stereotypes played themselves out in the hands of the self, but are given life when played by those that form the typification. With headlines like 'THE DARKY AS HE IS AT HOME, DARKY LIFE IN THE CORNFIELD, CANEBRAKE, BARNYARD, AND ON THE LEVEL AND FLATBOAT' one can see that the interest is transferred from a form of entertainment to a form of anthropology.

Ambivalence

Ambivalence has been explained as the result of role expectation frustration. When individuals expect to be something and do not manage to achieve it, they suffer frustration and become ambivalent towards the elements that would otherwise help them achieve this expected/desired role. Their role expectations are societal and are based on learning derived from the past, interactions within their society, individual personality traits, and present/immediate societal pressures and interactions.


Haverly [A major white promoter of minstrelsy] warned the public [which one reads as white] not to compare his refined white Mastodons to his untutored Coloured Minstrels. "The efforts of these much-abused and uneducated sons and daughters of Ethiopia are . . . but the spontaneous outbursts of natures gifts . . . presented to show what the Negroes do . . . at home on the plantation.

Minstrelsy made its way to Britain, forming part of popular entertainment on television. Even the Metropolitan Police had a minstrel group, called 'The Metropolitan Police Minstrels' in 1929. [source Evening Standard: Metropolis 22 August 1997 p. 4] Lenny Henry; the British comedian, upset this arrangement in Britain by confronting a white television audience with a minstrel, that was at once amusing and disconcerting. The joke is not as funny when the viewer is forced to laugh at the caricature and the object of caricature at the same time. Identification with the 'player' [when white] makes for easy laughter as the self is reflected and the viewer can laugh along, creating a lack of identification removes the rejection and the self is placed outside the stereotype as representation.

Ambivalence means that the motivation of the actor contains both confirming and alienated components that may be directed at the normative patterns and/or at the relation with the social object (alter). The ambivalence can be oriented to an alter who, as a past satisfactory source of role reciprocity, had become a focus of positive feeling, but who now, as a frustrator, becomes a source of negative feelings. Or it can be orientated to the norm that heretofore required the relationship between ego and alter and that has been internalised by ego, especially if the norm is seen as responsible for the frustrated role demand.  

This description of ambivalence helps to explain the feelings of 'invasion', and loss linked to race hatred. Seeing the object of these ambivalent feelings as not knowing their place (the notion of uppity-ness) needing to be kept down to allow the reassuring sensation of being on top. The Ku Klux Klan as immortalised in The Birth of a Nation emphasises this with their 'redressing' role. The role of 'glass ceilings' and racial nepotism are also redressing actions, that occur in spite of the rhetoric of 'equal opportunities'.

Where a clear sign (skin colour/race or gender) allows individuals to identify where 'support' for their expected 'role' lay, they acquire a desire for the support to stay in place. Where the 'support' collapses, ceasing to be a device for achievement, preventing the individual from achieving their 'role' they inevitably develop resentment for loss of their now unavailable support and all

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264 Denny, Charlotte. 'Boasts of Racial Equality Often Conceal Bias.' The Guardian 22 July 1998. p. 23. Article outlines 'experiment' on the prospects of black applicants to firms that have equal opportunity statements. "The findings suggest that companies with ethnic minority statements are, at best, simply paying lip-service to the principles of equal opportunity or, at worst, are using their statements as a smokescreen behind which to hide discriminatory practice," said Dr Hoque."
that can be associated with its demise. They will not be able to admit reliance on their props, and in the heat of their denial will consequently erode all that is 'good' in their 'support'. Blackness being a reliable and long-standing 'support' for whiteness consequently suffers.

Ambivalence is thereafter manifest through reaction to the signifier. Actions however are complicated by the politics of the individual; the openly racist will find it impossible to admit their desire, and the liberal will deny their desire to destroy the former support. This means that open antagonism and beguiling admiration become the dominant explanations with regards to representation, making mere presentations almost impossible.

*Ambivalence can result in three courses of actions: first, the loss of any attachment to the object or the pattern (a move from ambivalence to indifference); second, a compulsive expression of only one side of the ambivalence. Compulsive because it must inhibit the unexpressed side; and third, the acting out of both the conforming and the alienated sides in contexts that are separate in time and place.*

Taking each of the possible responses at a time, the first response is almost impossible in the case of racial/economic interactions because the fate of the benefiting group is so linked to the other that indifference would be a form of suicide. The second option is definitely exhibited in racist literature and theorisations. This obviously attempts to organise information to reduce the

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*In 'Colonialism, Racism and Representation' within which the authors analyse the place of race and representations as defined through colonialism; racism is defined (borrowing from Albert Memmi) as 'the generalised and final assigning of values to real or imaginary differences, to the accuser’s benefit and at the victims expense, in order to justify the former’s own privilege or aggression'. Spence, Louise; Stam, Robert. 'Colonialism, Racism and Representation.' *Screen* Vol. 24, No. 2, Mar./Apr. 1993. p. 4.*
perceived 'threat' the change in status of the vilified will carry. The third option is evident in the 'negative' and 'positive' use the black image finds itself in, for in either use the images carry pleasure for the viewer in spite of their agenda. An explanation for this is within this summation:

... one is led to the conclusion that the personality systems will normally take the third course and try to discharge both components of its motivational states. If this is not possible the result is more likely to be either compulsive conformity or compulsive alienation.

In 'Black Flash', Henry Louis Gates Jnr., compulsive conformity is hinted at when his article is presented with 'Why are white working class kids talking as if they are Jamaican? Gates describes how being black is becoming a way of being British. While the opposing position of compulsive alienation can be seen in the number of 'cartoons' reproduced in White Lies: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in White Supremacist Discourse with the accompanying text to show the level the black person is used as alienation.

Hence the role of ambivalence within public representation of the black person in this system becomes charged with social and political power. This is because the black body is controlled in a predominantly white environment: its use is commissioned by white multinationals and manipulated by white advertising agencies and their productions subsequently criticised by a media

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270 ibid. It is interesting to note that it is the 'working class' that are highlighted as becoming black, considering these are the people that are billed as racists in the popular press; "The Lawrence Five' no less functioning as a reservoir of the racist elements of the so called 'Working Class'. The inference is that there are no changes elsewhere or as laid out within the paper, the absorption of mores and style is differently incorporated.

that is predominantly white.\footnote{272}

One possible criticism of ambivalence as a tool to explain public media and blackness (under white control), is the implied call to excise all representations of, and promotional black images from the public sphere; as they will always carry both sides of the 'user's' feelings. This option is undesirable as the avoidance of the image will not necessarily discharge feelings of frustration; it will also mean that the black image will become even more exotic and revered through its absence. Another option is to leave 'black' representations to black people alone. This proposition too is untenable, because the black self is already constructed on historical lines and it would carry the assumption that there is a unified quintessential blackness that will be appropriately handled by any one black person.

A separate complication of ambivalence as a diagnostic tool is the 'tying of hands' that takes place when the black image is used. If ambivalence remains the dominant means of interpretation, the reading and re-reading that will take place before the image 'hits the street' will leave either an image devoid of meaning (not that this can practically happen), or one so heavily loaded there will be an enforced reading of every image rendering the representation even more of a stereotype.

In spite of these reservations, ambivalence still provides a fruitful and meaningful reading of the black person in advertising, without launching into oversimplifications, as the following example shows.

\footnote{272 As admitted by the BBC when accused by Paul Condon (Metropolitan Police) with institutional racism and Jon Snow accepted that only one person out of the twenty on the news programme was black. See Younge, Gary. 'In Our Own Backyard.' The Guardian Media 1 Mar. 1999. pp. 1-3. Insert by Preston, Peter.}
Examples of ambivalent relationships in advertisements can be observed by looking at the Clio advertisement once again. Strength is represented by the size and silence of the black player, we only hear him grunt. Speed and ability come together in the prior construction of the black male as a natural basketball player (relying on popular stereotypes).

Digressing for a moment, to concentrate on the construction of the basketball player as the black man; taking due consideration of the black male on the basketball court; the myth is epitomised in the photographic portrait for Nike of Moses [fig. 10] called ‘Moses’ by Jeff Koons. A professional basketball player (for the image to work the name of the athlete is irrelevant) is shown in the advertisement wearing a linen robe over his basketball kit of red and white. He is holding a shepherd’s crook in one hand and balances a basketball on the other. He is looking straight out into the camera/horizon. He is big, godlike, dominating the frame. He is surrounded by basketballs around his feet (most of them behind and beside him). Beneath the portrait lies the legend ‘MOSES’ in upper case letters simulating the appearance of being carved into rock.

If there is any doubt as to the intended link between the basketball player and Moses of the Bible, one only has to look closely at the ground in front of the

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273 Magic Johnson, Michael Jordan, Akeem Olajuwon to name a few
274 The fact that the image is a photograph is important, like most advertising imagery, the desire to create a convincing reality is crucial.

Only a photographic lens can give us the kind of image of the object that is capable of satisfying the deep need man has to substitute for it something more than a mere approximation, a kind of decal or transfer. The photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the condition of time and space that govern it. No matter how fuzzy, distorted or discoloured, no matter how lacking in documentary value the image may be, it shares by virtue of the very process of its becoming, the being of the model of which it is the reproduction; it is the model.


man to notice the array of sea shells and starfish to indicate the bottom of the ocean. To his sides and rear we see what could best be described as a parted ‘David Mach’ sea; complete with ‘suspended’ objects (in this case balls), depicting the multitude.

The Black Moses (memories of Isaac Hayes) has become the leader, taking his people away from bondage in ‘Egypt’ into Freedom in the Promised Land (of sport). Yet his people are the basketballs. His (Moses’) claim to leadership is based on his ability with the ball, and as a Black Leader that is exactly what is available for his leadership. Sport, signified by basketball, is the way out inner city ‘bondage’.276

Moses is simultaneously reified and vilified; all that he is stands for is reduced to a stereotype (actually being a professional basketball player, allows an ‘innocent’ portrayal). He is the super sportsman and a saviour, reduced to a caricature of what he cannot be; ‘Moses’. He is real and fictional at the same time; a real basketball player good enough to be paid by Nike to endorse their products, fictional as a celestially ordained liberator.

Returning to the Renault Clio advertisement, the black basketball player carries this myth on him. He is defined by sport, by the expectation of athletic excellence (natural ability expected of his blackness). He is the man in the CRE advertisement, the man invisible/visible because of his ‘ability’. The expected domination of the court by the black player (domination is desirable) is the reliant precondition of the narrative. When he loses the point, we realise that it is brains over brawn, brains wins again, and the negative brawn value embodied in the black man becomes apparent. The white man is brain, and

The relationship between the white and black man, that furthers the visitations of ambivalence, is best articulated in the words of bell hooks:

Mutual recognition of racism, its impact, both on those who are dominated and those who dominate, is the only standpoint that makes possible an encounter between races that is not based on denial and fantasy. For it is the ever present reality of racist domination, of white supremacy that renders problematic the desire of white people to have contact with the Other. Often it is this reality that is most marked when representation of contact between whites and non whites, white and black, appear in mass culture.  

Ambivalence has also been defined as 'co-existence in one person of opposing emotional attitudes towards the same thing.' It provides an opportunity to understand the relationship of blackness to British popular representations. Ambivalence becomes the only explanation as to why a black person qualifies as a positive sign for anything. This appraisal is based on considering the treatment that black people receive as a community (even if individual cases belie the norm, and are then used as pacifiers).

Advertising relies on beneficial linkages of sign to product, and as most of the overt stereotypes of blackness are negative, it is only the covert reading of what blackness stands for that allows its uses.

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279 McKinstry, Leo. 'So Why are We Still Accused of Racism?' *Daily Mail* 18 Feb. 1995.
Kobena Mercer conscript ambivalence as a starting point to understanding the black body within a white public gaze (equating it with fetishism / displacement) with: ‘because we want to look, but do not always find the images we want to see’. He points out that the black body is ‘implicated in the same landscape of stereotypes which is dominated and organised around the needs, demands and desires of white males.’

The argument, that it is the mixture of adoration and revulsion that propels the black image to the centre, has its detractors. Yet considering the characteristics historically attributed to the black person: the savage, dirty, uncivilised, base, unfettered emotions to name a few, it is inescapable to see ambivalence as the hidden motivator behind the employment of the black image. When one considers the uses the black image has historically been put to in advertising, (see Pears, Huntleys and Palmers Biscuits, Robertson Jam, Bongo Coffee, Odol Toothpaste and practically everything marketed by the Empire Trading Board) it is difficult to not see the relationship as an ambivalent one. Contemporaneously, the possibility exists of genuine, benign fascination with the exotically different, which is not based on frustration, but even this is based on (and carries) a historical perspective.

Kobena Mercer explains the characteristics of active ambivalence in his essay on the ‘Black Book’; a collection of photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe using the black male figure. The attempt to understand the fascination of the image

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281 ibid. It must be stated that while Mercer’s analysis here is with regards to male gay pornography, it is like the gaze defined by Mulvey [see ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’ in Screen Vol. 16, No. 3, Autumn 1975. pp. 6 - 18] which is male [and white] and has the economic and political capital to render its gaze significant.
282 As proposed by a colleague through a reading of Jean-Francois Lyotard’s *Libidinal Economy,* The Athlone Press, London. 1993. In particular ‘The Great Ephemeral Skin’ where he states ‘We are suspicious of the separation of the inscription and its site’ p. 16 which was used as a defence to Robert Mapplethorpe’s Black Book by a colleague.
as an image is brought to bear when one sees Mapplethorpe as the 'eye' of a larger observing community which vicarioulsy gazes.

As much as the image making technology of the camera is based on the mechanical reproduction of unilinear perspective, photographs primarily represent a 'look'. I therefore want to talk about Mapplethorpe's Black Males not as a product of the personal intention of the individual behind the lens, but as a cultural artefact that says something about certain ways in which white people 'look' at black people and how, in the ways of looking, black male sexuality is perceived as something different, excessive, Other.

The sexing and empowering of the black image is amalgamated into the elements that have been admired in the black body. While Mercer's essay is a deliberate sexual look at the black male as presented through Mapplethorpe and can be seen as a singular incident, the experiences of Saarje Baartman, otherwise known as the 'Hottentot Venus' provides an example of the female form also reduced to a sexual object.

The 'collective look' is the object of representation, even if there are private representations, they are generated for the gaze of more than one person, or there will not be the need to create the representation in the first place. But private representations play a different role as their private-ness means that there will be an objective approach to the represented (based on intimate

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knowledge of one person of another). The 'collective look' therefore indulges itself in the sort of imagery that captures the imagination of the viewer/maker, as if the image had existed in the collective mind before its production in the first place.

The attraction of the black body to a predominantly white audience is defined by the audience's expectations of what the spectacle should be. The avenues of pleasure rely on foreknowledge of what the black body stands for.

Mercer points out that in the case of the black men photographed, the individuality of the men (through naming) is falsely presented as a foil for sexual essentialising. The men are all nude, the camera's view is unitary towards points of 'erotic/aesthetic objectification' where the figures are their sex.

it is as if, according to Mapplethorpe's line of sight: Black + Male = Erotic/Aesthetic Object. Regardless of the sexual preferences of the spectator, the connotation is that the essence of the black male identity lies in the domain of sexuality.

This sexualisation of the black male has the impact of feminising the man as well as making him an object of desire. This has been so clearly indicated in the success of RU Paul, as a musician, entertainer and a super model for women's clothes. RU Paul's success is in the face of the abilities of both

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286 I realise the possibility of private fetishes that will be no less subjective and stereotypical as in public display, but I have in mind here snapshots of friends and acquaintances, that are still representations, yet are not [in my opinion] the sort of material able to represent a collective look.


289 ibid.
black and white women in the fashion industry, which relies on a mixture of glamour and sex. Mercer’s reading of Mapplethorpe provides an explanation why there are no white male-to-female impersonators/transvestites that are enjoying similar success. The white male gaze on the body of the supermodel is made complete in the case of RU Paul, in the moment of self unawareness, a black male is openly available for explicit sexual desire. This is borne out in *The Crying Game,* where the veneer of unknowing is removed.

The ambivalent relationship with the black image is found in this desire to ‘have’ what the black man has.

The historical placing of cultural ideals on the body of the black person as negatives, has made the ambivalent relationship complex indeed. Strength, endurance, virility, and idealised physique had in the past been marks of savagery. One only needs to consider the idealisation of the body through the historic culture of the Olympics, where the male contestants performed nude before an audience. This made the Olympics as much a display of sporting endurance, as an exhibition of physical excellence.

A more current illustration of the ‘Mapplethorpe experience’ can be seen in the following example.

On the cover of *The Times Magazine* is the portrait of a black male [fig. 11]. He is nude and the caption next to his bottom reads ‘Body Heat: Herb Ritts

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290 The only case that comes to mind is the Israeli entry to the 1998 EuroVison Song Contest, Dana International, but even he has not entered the same realm as RU Paul.
292 See Gobineau
photographs the world’s finest sporting machines. He is spread-eagled, showing off every inch of his muscled body. He is poised for action and yet frozen by the camera, allowing a close survey of his body. He is 'sculpted and shaped through the conventions of the fine art nude' and made available for erotic desire. The placement of the title could have been a fluke until one reads the comment of 'And - without getting too personal - the buttocks. That's where the power comes from.'

The person is Colin Jackson, the British 110 metre world record holder, a supplementary photograph within the magazine shows his face seductively framed with his arm. 'Colin is pretty much the perfect specimen.'

The title of the feature 'Body Heat' already indicates the sexual reading of the photographs. The supplementary title of 'Working Models' points to sex, perfection, objects to be desired and emulated. Desire and fetishism are bound in the photographs. Kobena Mercer’s reading of Mapplethorpe’s fearful black images are fully borne out here.

Another British sports person photographed is a woman, Jacqui Agyepong, a 100 metre hurdler. She too is poised and oiled, and her breasts are exposed with erect nipples. Her hands are wrapped around her head in submission or agony. Here, it is her strength that is commented on, 'For a woman, that’s a very strong leg, highly developed. This shows her abdominals as well.' This comment is much in line with Stuart Hall’s analysis of the coverage of Florence Griffith-Joyner and her sister Jackie Joyner-Kersee, where the

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295 Crampton, Robert. 'Working Models.' p. 24.
296 ibid.
297 ibid. p. 25.
comments ‘Someone Said My Wife Looked Like An Ape’, and ‘Somebody Said My Sister Looked Like A Gorilla, were used to describe them respectively.298
One has to remember that ‘strong legs and abdominals’ are commonly, and culturally, seen as desirable male attributes.

Apart from the popular racial slur of closeness to simians, the statements have the impact of de-sexing the black woman who is already sexed by her gender in a (heterosexual) male gaze, while as pointed out above, equating the black male with sexual organs and availability. Carl Lewis in a Pirelli advertisement wearing red high heels raising his bottom in the air aptly illustrates this point.299

It is not that black women too are not equated to their sex, it is just that the markers are traditionally different. Strength for child bearing and heavy domestic or field work had been the characteristics sought in the black woman. This sentiment is still held, even within the black community with “[B]lack women . . . are trained from childhood to become workers”.300

Apart from the work and strength aspect of the black woman, the attention paid to the posterior and sex of Saarje Baartman, shows the black woman exoticised and fetishised into sexual organs. Stuart Hall outlines the progression from being to organ; as it was not possible to fit the black woman [as woman) in with the ideal of the ‘white' woman:

[S]he became known . . . through a series of polarised binary
oppositions' (primitive/civilised, animal/human body/mind) . . . She was reduced to her body, and her body in turn reduced to her sexual organs. They stood as the universal signifier of her place in the universal scheme of things. In her Nature and Culture coincided, . . .

There are two other body shots, this time of white athletes, Antonio Rossi, an Italian canoeist and Amy Van Dyken, an American swimmer. In both cases the bodies are cropped and the images enter the realm of abstraction. It is the comments, however that are profoundly telling. 'Antonio is a very handsome man' and 'Her back was quite beautiful' are used respectively. We even learn that Antonio has prospects in the army. In both cases, the comments are gendered and sexed accordingly. This does not deny the use of sex in the imagery, but the accompanying text alters and defines the images' reading.

Close

This chapter has looked at the issue of representation, with a bid to understand how the creation and reading of images is affected by the addition of race as signified by skin colour. Particular attention has been paid to ambivalence, stereotyping and the theory of social representations to provide the means of understanding the presence of black people in British advertising. Examples were provided to illustrate the distinctions required when considering blackness in the public sphere.

I would now like to acknowledge the glaringly obvious absence of direct references to Fanon so far. In a way, it is a ploy to save the best to the last. It is not too much to say that most of the contemporary reading on the black image


relies on Fanon as a touchstone. *Black Skin, White Masks* in its entirety provides a motif on which to base a critical discourse on the representation of blackness. It is this representation that led to the white mask in the first place.

Fanon's approach of upsetting the mental state of the black man, so as to cause a rethinkng of status, both from the self and the other, fits in well with negritude and assertion of the self.

Representation is political, requiring political means to meaningfully address it. 

Fanon was not always accurate in his observations, as a black female writer correctly points out, and his views on inter-racial liaisons are known to cause offence in many quarters. But on the representation of blackness, there are many things he got right.

‘Dirty Nigger!’ or simply ‘Look a Negro’

I came into the world imbued with a will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found I was an object in the midst of other objects.

Sealed into that crushing objecthood, I turned beseechingly to others. Their attention was a liberation, running over my body suddenly abraded into nonbeing . . . I was indignant, I demanded an explanation. Nothing happened. I burst apart. Now the fragments have been put together.

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together again by another self. . .

‘Look a Negro!’ . . .
‘Look a Negro!’ . . .
‘Look a Negro!’ . . .

I could no longer laugh, because I knew there were legends, stories, history, and above all historicality . . .

The six ladies sing

If you had lived with Denmark Vesey, would you take his stand
If you had lived in the days of Nat Turner, would you fight his battle
If you had lived during the days of John Brown, would you walk his path
If you had lived with Harriet Tubman, would you wade in the water
If you had lived with Marcus Garvey, could you see his vision
If you had lived during the days of Joe Hill, would you sing his song
If you had lived during the days of Paul Robeson, would you live his life
If you had lived with Sacco & Vanzetti, would you know their names
If you had lived with the Rosenbergs, would you hold up your hands
If you had lived with Fannie Lou Hamer, would you shine her light

Where were you when they killed Malcolm? Do hear
Where were you when they killed Martin? Do hear
Where were you when they killed George Jackson? Do hear

Do you hear them calling?

Are you living today?
Are you fighting today?
Do you hear our names?
Do you hear our names?
Do you hear our cries?³⁰⁶

The quest for names remains.

³⁰⁶ Sweet Honey in the Rock 'If You Had Lived' in Good News, Flying Fish Records, Chicago, 1981.
4. A Black History of Advertising

or What Did What?

E. H. Carr in his book, *What is History?*, questions the question itself:

> When we attempt to answer the question "what is history?" our answer, consciously or unconsciously, reflects our own position in time and forms part of our answer to the broader question (of) what view we take of the society in which we live.\(^{307}\)

The need to inquire into the nature of history is borne of the desire to write one. Black people have appeared in advertising in Britain almost from the advent of advertising as a recognised practice. Black people have appeared in notices for their own sale and in the propaganda of the Empire Marketing Board.\(^{308}\) Explorations by British travellers brought contact with new people and experiences, and their reports fired the imagination of those that remained at home.

Empire and acts of colonisation provided the manufacturer with a vocabulary hinged on race, colour and difference.\(^{309}\) Racial colloquialisms were then used to sell their wares to a discerning British public. The public's response, acceptance or dissent, to the 'new' imagery is as significant as the images themselves and implicitly forms part of the history itself; the public being the arbiter of that which they will accept for their own coercion.\(^{310}\)

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Because advertising is self protecting - that is, it will not do anything that will knowingly damage the advertised object - the black body has been utilised in ways assumed will neither offend their potential market nor impinge on the reputation of their product. This means that almost all the uses the black person is put to carries the unspoken sanction of the buying public, no matter what their claimed response is.

History is the telling of a particular sequence of events as one sees it. It cannot be any other way. Someone has to tell it, and as Carr states (alluding to the proverbial bee in the bonnet) 'When you read a work of history, always listen for the buzzing. If you can detect none, either you are tone deaf or your historian is a dull dog'\(^3\) It is no longer possible to pretend 'history' is a mere presentation of sequential facts, like an encyclopaedia,\(^4\) because there is always a reason behind 'history'. This predetermined intent has a profound effect on its form and content.

Within the realm of advertising there have been a number of histories attempting to chart the development and transition of advertising, from the simple posting of notices above shops, to the advent of the printing press with its production of handbills and wall posters.\(^5\) Others highlight the sandwich men in the towns and cities of Britain to the creation of almanacs and newspapers. All of which provided increasing avenues for getting the manufacturers' and shopkeepers' message to the public. Commercial radio and television\(^6\) then advanced the march of advertising method and

\(^3\) Carr E. H. *What is History?* p. 23.

\(^4\) Acton (...) occupant of the Regis Chair of Modern History (at Cambridge) (...) lamented that the requirements pressing on the historian 'threaten to turn him from a man of letters to the compiler of an encyclopaedia Carr E. H. *What is History?* p. 15.


The present trend of globalisation that started in the late 1980's is the latest chapter in the history of British advertising. However, they all fail to raise the question of race in advertising, an omission in their anthologies. They even choose not to use examples of advertisements that depict black people (there is always choice in the use of material). One is left with Pieterse's lone chapter 'Blacks in Advertising', which is not a history, but an overview of commercial 'black' imagery in various European countries.

This lack of historical acknowledgement has considerable impact on the representation of black people in the media. The construction of a British advertising history that effectively wipes the slate clean of a black presence points to two possibilities. It can mean that there were not any black people in advertisements, or there has not been an advertisement featuring black people worth any attention.

In the few historians' defence there had been a 'lack' of black people. On commercial television, one of the first advertisements featuring a black person (a black 'housewife') as a main character, was screened in 1991 by Proctor and Gamble, for their soap powder 'Ariel'. Since then there has been a proliferation of the black image in television commercials. However, for printed media, there is no permissible excuse, with the constant presence of black images making statements through the centuries.

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319 There are various claims to this occurrence; the earliest record I have found is in 1974. A 20 second commercial featuring a 'Turkish' man for Benson and Hedges shown on Channel 4 (src. Tellex Commercials 14 May 1999) The 1991 case is from Pieterse, jan Nederveen White on Black: Images of Africans and Blacks in western Popular Culture p. 211. offset against the claim that the first commercial washing up liquid commercial featuring a West Indian woman appeared in the UK in 1993. Clegg, Alicia. 'Colour Blind.' Marketing Week 21 Jun. 1996. p. 39.
This rather lengthy and exciting period (Slavery, Colonialism, and pre/post Independence of colonies) falls outside the parameters set for this particular history. This history will concentrate on the period of 1990 - 1999. There will be an emphasis on campaigns that have generated public and press response. These contentious campaigns have made the black person’s presence a lot more visible that it would have otherwise been, the ‘press’ also represents a public response. In some of the cases used, it is the glaring absence of the black body that makes the campaign notable and gives just as much information and insight as those cases where the black body is in use.

It is impossible to write a history of black people in advertising without drawing on the cultural developments and political shifts that have formed the last three decades: War, Independence, Sport, Political unrest, Musical tastes, Shifts in public attitude and awareness, Acts of Parliament, and Fashion have all contributed to the form and thrust of advertising campaigns. More than anything else, moves towards self-determination by the black sector of the population have forced advertisers to consider their stance where representing blackness.

The ideological and structural changes within advertising itself have also had a real impact on the form that advertisements take. Ideologically advertising has moved from the singular role of simply publicising products and creating desire to ‘product awareness’ and corporate image making. Structurally, a greater number of black people are becoming involved in advertising and those that work within the industry are beginning to question the ‘white,
middle class clones\textsuperscript{321} of the business.\textsuperscript{322}

The content of advertisements is significant as it extends beyond the product to the manufacturer’s presence and value. As the executives of British Airways highlighted when they famously complained there were too many black and Jewish people in one of their television commercials, stating that the short film did not accurately represent the staff of British Airways. (An early admission of Institutional racism perhaps.)

The tendency to enmesh the manufacturer or service provider with the actions and images that form their advertising deserves explanation. Even though agencies are used to produce ideas and copy, the final approval comes from the advertisers, and practically all the benefit accrued from the campaign will go to them.\textsuperscript{323} To this end responsibility for advertisements will be placed with the provider of the product or service being advertised.

As it is not possible nor desirable to enumerate every advertisement where the black body is featured, a selection has been made. The criteria for selection being, the advertisement prominently contains the black body, or it is positionally obvious that it is being purposefully used or negated.

The following terms for advertising campaigns will be used; print campaigns (newspaper and billboard) will be called advertisements, while television


\textsuperscript{323} The fortunate agency may win awards and accolade for particularly successful campaigns and draw more business for themselves, but normally the role of the agency is to make and not be seen.
campaigns will be called commercials. The term 'advertisement' will still be used (where clear) to include both forms. 'Advertiser' will mean the producer of the good or service and 'Agent' will refer to the agency used to create and disseminate the campaigns.

One needs to look at advertising campaigns closely to make sense of, and separate, the message from the medium. It is far too easy to concentrate on the message, after all it is the dissemination of a particular sales pitch that the advertiser pays for. In the 1990's, advertising has become a complex message medium, relying on more than the wit of the copywriter to get the desired message across.

The intentions of the advertiser has also shifted from the simple sale of goods; there is now greater emphasis on brand awareness. In order to succeed with a discerning, cynical public, we have entered an age of consumer sampling and surveys. Advertisers have learnt to treat the consumer as if they have a mind, and consequently strive to engage with this acknowledged mind.

Alongside crediting the public with intelligence there is the question of heightened media literacy. The coining of 'Generation X acknowledged that a generation had grown up with television and print advertising internalising its codes and methods of persuasion, rendering them less effective. This fear of consumer deconstruction has led to increasingly opaque advertising; where the sales pitch is hidden deep within the medium in order that the pitch

324 Commercials will be used as it is the term borrowed from the United States and used predominantly by writers on television advertising. It also neatly removes the ambiguity that might appear when referring to time based media.
only be 'discovered' through the assumed deconstruction, and hopefully succeed in convincing this sceptical audience.\textsuperscript{327}

These changes in perception and creative direction have led to intriguing, elaborate and complex advertising campaigns. Yet once the black face is introduced, there seems to be a failure of being able to utilise the same conceptual finesse that arises otherwise. The 'Irn-Bru' commercial (Trauma, Apr. 1993.) proves that it is possible and is a welcome exception to the advertisers' usual offerings.

It is not the intention of this chapter to indicate that there has not been appreciable changes in the use of the black person in British advertising. It is certainly not even remotely as crass as it once was.\textsuperscript{328} Deliberate and unabashed racially insulting material is no longer portrayed (it is simply illegal\textsuperscript{329}), and a self-made claim of sensitivity by the advertisers when the black image is to be used. This sensitivity is based on the possible loss of trade and the spectre of alienating some white customers.\textsuperscript{330}

However, what is a matter for concern, is the alarming similarity implicit in the mental process behind advertising and other popular images, images which

\textsuperscript{327} Examples are Benetton that no longer presents its audience with images of the clothes and durable goods it sells, and the now familiar visual pun (attributed to Charles Saatchi) of Silk Cut; where a piece of purple silk has a single diagonal slash running through it, and the ever increasing variations of this theme.


\textsuperscript{329} Under the Broadcasting Act of 1990 that governs broadcast advertising requires the Independent Television Commission to draw up and enforce codes of standard and practice. In the Broadcasting Advertising Clearance Centre's guidelines that are drawn up to stop advertisers falling foul of the legislation state in Section 2, part 2.1.3,iv; \textit{Racial and National Characteristics}. Care should be taken not to depict anything offensive to a particular ethnic group Unflattering stereotypes of racial or ethnic groups, even if meant humorously are best avoided as they may reinforce prejudice as well as causing offence Broadcasting Advertising Clearance Centre. \textit{Pre-Transmission Clearance for Television and Radio Advertising}, 1994.

have been in/formed by popular prejudices. Prejudices that are acceptable to a wide audience to the point where denigrations are not ‘seen’, and are therefore not likely to ‘offend’. This is possible because that which is being presented is not averse to the nature of things. Advertisers and agents seem to have failed to grasp the realities of advertising as an end in itself, of realising the necessity to find means of pushing a message without the medium failing as an autonomous creative and (in the case of black people) political image.

Where the advertiser constantly resorts to familiar and easy stereotypes, it not only indicates a breakdown in the creative process, but suggests an inability to reconfigure information and take the realities of immediate social change into consideration. This failure means that even when the advertiser thinks they are embarking on something new and innovative, whenever they deliberately choose to use a signifying black person in their advertisement, they inadvertently reinforce previously established opinions and prejudices they think are held by their desired market. Opinions consequently enshrined by the advertiser and their agents. The very act of deliberately using a black face also shows the uncomfortable position the black body finds itself in; even where bereft of immediate stereotypes, it is unclear if the image is token or if the advertisement is angling itself to a unique audience.

The dramatic irony of advertising is: where the advertisement blatantly (or subtly) uses an established stereotype, with the purported intention of upsetting the self same stereotype, the endeavour fails because of the audience’s overarching acceptance (or at least knowledge) of the stereotype. What starts out as an interrogation of held beliefs, merely

becomes affirmative reinforcement, public recognition and re-acceptance.
Advertising becomes a way of stating that which is socially held in check.

**Who says what, who does what?**

Britain in 1999 is sensitised to issues of visible difference on a level not apparently seen before. Stephen Lawrence, his murder, his dismissal by the establishment, the tenacious fight on his behalf by his parents, the report that bears his name, the plaque, and the upheavals that follow in the wake of this cultural upheaval have become his legacy. This means that as a nation, skin colour and visible difference, is now being taken very seriously. The argument is no longer one of there being white indigenes in Britain being invaded by a black throng from foreign shores, but a declaration of the rights and equality of all British people under, and outside the letter of, the law regardless of colour.

So the targeting of minorities in a bomb campaign upset a nation that felt it was putting itself to rights. All that it allegedly stood for—fair play, good manners, equality, tolerance to list a small section of the myth—was being flagrantly debunked.

Just as the dust on the bombings settle and the man in the white baseball cap [fig. 12] is arrested, neatly and incredulously ending domestic terrorism, the national papers carry a story detailing the demands of a bereaved family that organs from their white relative only go to another white person. The

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black body suffers new rejection, its very right to life is questioned. Not that
this questioning is historically unique, but baring prejudices in such a vulgar
manner signals a malaise far beyond the reach of parliamentary reports and
community action. The following day sees a retort by the 'other side' that an
Asian had made a similar request; that an organ had been rejected from a
donor when they requested that the organ only be placed in a moslem's
body334 [fig. 13].

One pressing question is: Why do advertisements not restrict themselves to
what their makers want? In most cases, it is the combination of image and
text which leaves a positive impression on the reader, and causes them to go
out and buy the advertised product or service. But its impact does not stop
there. This question is worth consideration when studying all that goes into
the making of an advertisement, the expertise, research, surveys and money.
The dislocation between the advertisement and the customer is one that
relies heavily on the mutability of images. Images as representation have
lives other than those prescribed by the advertising 'creative', and these
'other' lives unsettle the sensitive relationship between object and response.

When the black person is introduced there is an ossification of these lives:

Mainstream advertisers do seem nervous of using black or Asian
actors, possibly for fear of 'getting it wrong' and offending ethnic groups
or perhaps because they're worried about alienating the white
audience. Worse, when it does use them, they are often stereotypes or
playing token, secondary roles, ( . . . ) 335

This fear limits the possibilities of the advertiser and by default reduces the role of blackness to a stereotype. This makes the stereotype the centre of the potential marketing conversation, being all there is left. The constant dialogue between the advertiser (image producer) and the potential customer (image receiver) and the stereotype is illustrated in the following diagram that shows the place of stereotypes in the centre of advertising and how it has different viewing points.
In using the black person to support or indicate the nature of goods there is evidently a reliance on the stereotype, and which requires that the cycle of the stereotype continues unabated. The black image as a public persona is so heavily weighted by caricature and symbolism that there is almost no room for the mainstream black image to function outside the parameters of stereotype. Furthermore this prevalence of stereotype is neither questioned by the setting the black person is placed within nor challenged by the strategies advertisers use to incorporate the black person into advertising.

Incorporation is one of the problems of advertising and the black person; adding an ‘alternative’ black presence to a clearly white advert makes for schism. This schism is in fact desirous to the advertiser as it makes the advertisement stand out from the crowd. Heinz’s use of Ladysmith Black Mambazo, for instance, to provide the backing music to their soup commercial (1998) was a resounding success because of the incongruity of the situation. The schism worked as ‘planned’ due to the fact that the cast were all white. The mixture of ‘Black/African’ music and ‘White/English’ sensibilities is partly what the incredible juxtaposition is all about. But Heinz did not go for something so black that it would alienate their core soup buying market; Ladysmith Black Mambazo had been defanged by their runaway success on Paul Simon’s *Graceland*.336

Looking at one decade of advertising for the basis of a critical framework may be a short period, but it forms an ideological bulwark. By the end of the 1980’s

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336 Simon, Paul. *Graceland* Warner Brothers Records Inc., U.S. 1986. Paul Simon’s involvement with apartheid South Africa at the time was met with considerable opposition. The question still remains as to the ethics of his actions, especially when his following album ‘borrowed’ the sound of native South Americans.
questions were being raised of their presence by a mature generation of indigenous black thinkers. The role and the status of the black citizen were opened to scrutiny, and demands for change were being made by black people on their own terms. The thinkers had a clear and undisguised vested interest in the outcome of the research undertaken and queries made. The Birmingham School with Stuart Hall, the increasing importance of cultural studies, Paul Gilroy, Rasheed Araeen, Kobena Mercer, to name some, meant that the 1990’s was quite different to the previous decade.

This led to a particular sense of militancy; where lived experience was as valid as a sociologist’s findings. Blackness became a phenomenological issue, and there were few, if any, non-black detractors equipped to reasonably query the academically and methodically sound positions being held. Confronting the academy in its own language meant that the findings had to be taken seriously; no longer could the accusation of simple emotionalism be made at those that objected to the simultaneous dismissal and free uninterogated use of the black presence in Britain.

Mathematics

In spite of the mathematical weight of the indigenous Asian population in Britain outnumbering the ‘black’ population, the ‘black’ face is still the item of choice when it comes to advertising in the media. There is a collapsing of the non-white population into the most visibly different configuration. If the question is asked: why are there black faces in British advertising considering all non-white people are politically homogenised? Then the numerical dominance of one over the other matters. The ‘black’ body is there to play a role for a white other that may not find it necessary to make clear distinctions
between those that form the 'ethnic minority'. This means that advertising has
to be stratified to find meaning in the predominance of 'black' faces
representing everything that is not white.

One reason for the 'black' body 'standing in' for all non-white members of the
community, lies in the visual contrast blackness is immediately able to
produce when placed against white presence or absence. Another, is its
indispensability as a tool for an embattled industry to amend their image in
the face of race relations. After all the presence of a black body in a
mainstream advertisement does add a certain credibility to the advertiser's
claim to, or attempt at, cultural multiplicity

Money Talks

The acknowledgement of the 'black pound' has made advertisers sit up and
pay some attention to the black presence in Britain. Depiction becomes
important where money is at stake. The idea of a 'black' credit card\textsuperscript{337} and the
assessment that 'The 3A market - Asia, African, Afro-Caribbean - is worth
about £10 billion a year in the UK, and growing (...) and the Asian population
alone has an estimated annual disposable income of £5 billion\textsuperscript{338} cannot be
ignored by the advertiser. There is also talk of the black middle class which is
beginning to affect some perceptions.\textsuperscript{339}

The ‘pink’ pound made an impact in the urban landscape, forcing the hand of
insurers (even if the insurers were cynical), the provision of services and safe
entertainment, to name a few. This has led to some natural if localised use of

\textsuperscript{337} Teather, David. 'Black Credit Card Mooted.' \textit{Sunday Business} 21 Apr. 1996.
\textsuperscript{338} Tyrell, Nicola. 'Ethnic PR Comes Off the Sidelines.' \textit{PR Week} 3 Jun. 1998. p. 10.
\textsuperscript{339} Driscoll, Margarette. 'Black Middle Class on the Move.' \textit{Sunday Times} 24 Nov. 1996.

Blackness and the advertising medium

To be black and watch television or read the newspaper is to become aware of every black face. There are many accounts of the experiences of black people and their ambivalent relationships to the media. The presence of black people often seems to do no more than highlight the absence of black people in real roles; not secondary, not supportive, not token, but roles as people that can be identified with.

As early as 1973, Ann Dummett, a Community Relations Officer, wrote of her observations:

The man who had installed the television set had left some time since. The kindly neighbour now suggested turning on for the children's programmes, and Aurelia obediently turned on the set. Grotesque flickers finally took shape as characters in a comedy sequence. An African King, feathered and painted, was making loud 'mmbaa' noises and pointing to a big cooking pot, near which two white comedians sat, roped together, exchanging gags. Rapidly the sequence faded and a group began to sing one of the top twenty, while the camera raked an audience of cheering white children. Frederick and Rosanne sat solemnly watching. . . .

Dramatic chords heralded the news. One white face after another

This is however a problematic example, as it relies on the subjugation of women and the feminisation of the black male.
appeared; the newsreader, the Leader of the Opposition in a neat suit, an eye witness at a big warehouse fire, and then a fuzzier shot, (relayed) by satellite from across the Atlantic of uniformed policemen hitting out with truncheons, grabbing and dragging black people.

“Police were called in to deal with demonstrators at - ”

I left Frederick and Rosanne still watching, and still learning about themselves.\(^{341}\)

Things have changed somewhat by the 1990s, but not very much.\(^{342}\) The extended quote gives an idea of how the material which surrounds advertising undoubtedly affects the creation and understanding of roles. It is the 70s children that are now making advertisements. The advertiser may argue that they are creating ‘believable’ roles, but ‘belief’ will come from what the audience has been previously told and forms the basis of their opinions.

When the black actor appears on screen, there is a feeling of solidarity, a desire that the actor does well, that s/he wins against all odds. However it often seems that after fulfilling their theatrical obligations of exalting their white counterpart, the black actor dies. It would appear that the black character actors in a predominantly white film setting is bound to die, and they did die.\(^{343}\) Without fail they expired before the film ended, like the hapless man who wore the red shirt in episodes of Star Trek. Then along came the likes of Denzel


\(^{342}\) The beating of Rodney King and the subsequent acquittal of his molesters had a profound impact in Britain, the depiction of Africa and Africans as basket cases goes a long way to create a picture of origins to the point that one African American has thanked slavery for getting him out of there [Malone, Andrew ‘Black American Denounces ‘Horror’ of Mother Africa.’ *The Sunday Times* 1 Jun. 1997. p. 21.]. The predominance of reports linking blackness to failure and crime in the newspapers provide much of the present appraisal of race in Britain. There are even hints in the press that the violence is genetic [Trump, Simon. ‘Culture Clash.’ *The Sunday Times* 14 Dec. 1997 p. 14].

Washington, Wesley Snipes, Whoopi Goldberg, and Lawrence Fishbourne to debunk the trend. Still there are enough 'negricides' to keep the Hollywood machine going. It seems even animators can't help themselves; the one identifiable black ant saves the 'Woody Allen' ant's life and without missing a beat is killed off by the makers of Antz.

Like most things, advertising has a history. That history is significant, not only because it affords an understanding of contemporary material, nor because it allows us to understand where things come from, not even because it allows a chronology of events. Its importance lies in the cultural awareness history brings. It helps us set aside our limited impressions of the present as we become aware of active pre-existent realities.

What is history, other than an attempt to chart the events that inform the present? For this reason history can never be objective, but it should be factual, making the many written histories a starting point for the possible cataloguing of data and, hopefully, understanding the past that unswervingly dictates present advertising moves.

Advertising as control of representation

Advertising has become a site where control over representation is being negotiated for the public's mind and consciousness. This is not anomalous if one considers the control demanded by the British royal family, by not allowing their images be used for openly commercial and popular advertising. The advertising industry appears to respect this stipulation, even though there

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344 A case if rampant stereotyping. He is big, dark, has a deep voice, is inordinately strong; the return of the big black buck.
are no legal restrictions to enforce this sanction. Yet the family allows their various images to be associated with charities of their choice, even though this is also advertising. Representation here is used to the benefit of the family, the royal family is in the business of advertising the royal family.

Where there is power to control the image, a concerted effort is made to disallow representation. This is to protect the image from interpretation, allowing meaning to be defined by the owner of the image. This dichotomy is highlighted by postage stamps; where no living person is allowed placement on stamps other than present and potential members of the family, the same goes for money. Considering the distribution of stamps and currency, one can conclude that it is not exposure (stylised it may be) that it at stake, but control. One thing that advertising is not good at, is control of the image, once it is publicly available. This is not the same as controlling the message, where they have become rather adept.

Images will always be manipulated to get a message across. But in the act of manipulation, some aspects of control will have to be relinquished, or subordinated. Wide circulation with the possibility of close scrutiny and disparate interpretation are concerns the image will have to contend with. In advertising the image is never there in its own right, except when it is a ‘pack shot’,\textsuperscript{345} back to the postage stamp and the dominance of the disembodied head.

The chronicle

The campaigns that have been selected to present a picture of the 1990s are

\textsuperscript{345} A still shot of the product being advertised, in this case a person, say a politician.
as follows

Benetton
Cadbury’s Creme Eggs
Walt Disney’s Jungle Book
Nestlé Milky Bar
Ford
Vauxhall
Royal Insurance
Reebok
Commission for Racial Equality
Lilt
Malibu
Police Federation

The campaigns will follow one to the next in a natural\textsuperscript{347} chronology. The intention is to present the campaigns without weighing their reading with news of the time unless where relevant. To place the advertisements and the commercials in a cultural context will imply the assumption that the prevailing mood of society affected their content.\textsuperscript{348} While their ‘current’ fashion and legislation may restrict the liberty the advertisers are allowed, it is quite different to the lengths they are prepared to go for attention.

\textbf{Benetton}
Much has been written on Benetton, both for the nature of their 'alternative' advertising campaign since the beginning of the 1990s and for the subject matter they have decided to cover. On the question of race there has been the excellent analysis by Les Back and Vibeke Quade and numerous others on the question of shock tactics. In spite of Benetton's oeuvre and the outrage caused, (or because of it), they have had a profound effect on advertising in the 1990's, especially where race is concerned. For this reason there is an extended look at Benetton.

Advertising is about awareness; it is about making people think of a product when they go out shopping. Advertising is about adding value to a product that is not intrinsic to the product. However, by association a product is able to take on a new persona in the eyes of the potential purchaser. Even advertising itself seeks advertising, agencies going to the extent of making use of public relations companies to launch their campaigns.

French Connection managed to alter their image by introducing a near expletive in the public sphere with 'FCUK'. The brilliance of the ploy was that it straddled the boundaries of good taste. It managed to keep its genteel product line while reaching out to a younger 'hedonistic' generation. This rebranding was thrust on the public with an 'elaborate affair, involving an assembly of top snappers and journalists teetering on a disused platform of the District and Circle line at South Kensington Underground station.

The older, more affluent shoppers are able to ride the cloaked statement, safe

350 ibid.
in the established brand 'French Connection' and allows the repressed 'radical' in them to come forth. As Ms Archer so conveniently slipped into the expletive for her readers with 'Trevor Beattie [. . .] this week unveiled French Connection's new slogan as "fuck fashion".  

Benetton has been one of the advertising success stories of the 1990's, both as a maker of advertisements that add value to their product and campaigns that make a good amount of noise in the press. Trevor Beattie of Wonderbra fame has this to say of press attention: "I always think of the PR ability of a creative execution now because I believe in advertising the adverts. For me it is an aspect of the advertising. It's all part of using every single weapon in our armoury".  

Evidently in adding value to their product without its depiction, Benetton are very adept at using every weapon in their armoury indeed. They are masters in the use of race and the polar constructions of black versus white as a means of upsetting the social sensibilities of the British public. Benetton have managed to capture the advertising high ground by producing campaigns that will generate the most press coverage. They have learnt how to capitalise on outrage and the public's silence. Their 'campaigns have succeeded in attracting the public's attention, with the ASA (Advertising Standards Agency) receiving more than 800 complaints about the newborn poster.  

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352 ibid. p. 5.
353 ibid.
354 They use black and white both as a chromatic device and as a sociopolitical/emotional statement.
355 There is also the cynical minority, the so called 'delinquent advertisers', who create deliberately controversial ads because they are likely to be talked about, or even banned, and thus picked up on by the press. Benetton is the arch exponent of such tactics. Archer, Belinda. 'Have I Got Ads For You?' p. 5.
356 Mullin, John. 'Benetton plays new card in rolling back frontiers of shock.' The Guardian 14 Jan. 1992. p. 3. brackets mine. This was an image of a new born baby, complete with mucus, blood and placenta.
sales and public presence have improved since their new style advertisements have come into being and the campaign has altered the image of the company, to the extent that they have changed their name from 'Benetton' to 'United Colours of Benetton'. The use of colour as colloquialism for race is widespread, so Benetton's reliance on and manipulation of race is not unexpected.

Benetton, as a trading entity is based in Western European countries (and countries that have been 'culturally colonised' by Europeans). This implies a body of consumers that are seen and see themselves as being white. Their whiteness is an important element in the success of Benetton's advertising. Along with other disconcerting material - religion, illness, sex - Benetton introduces an uncomfortable black presence in their midst. Benetton relies heavily on the history of race in the West and the popular myths of blackness (that circulates freely in the West through the news media and 'common' knowledge).

The Cannibal, the slave, the devil/demon, the convict, the mammy/wet nurse, the list goes on. There are a good number of reasons why these images cause trauma in the west; they confront their audience with their unspoken feelings, and do not pull any punches while they are at it. When one considers price, Benetton's consumer base comes from the 'chattering classes', the faux outrage makes sense. This is the group of people that will complain about imagery that upset their sensibilities while historically and presently welding the the social clout to make race what it is.

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357 "...and have helped Benetton towards its aim of being a trademark as instantly recognisable as Coca-Cola." Mullin, John. 'Benetton plays new card in rolling back frontiers of shock.' p. 3.

Benetton makes the claim that they are providing a public service,\(^{359}\) that they are attempting to make the market place pay more attention to the blights of the world. Benetton appears to be striving for the role of advertising's social conscience. Benetton's position on advertising is problematic because as they carry out their social crusade, they rely on to the stereotypical and mythical role of the black person, failing to question the structures that created their racial discourse.

A number of peculiarities about Benetton and their advertising are worth noting: They do not use an agency to produce or place their images, the images are the responsibility of one man, photographer and image maker, Oliviero Toscani,\(^{360}\) and there is a personal relationship between the head of Benetton, Luciano Benetton, and Toscani.

So, even before the first image is made, these characteristics differentiate Benetton, especially when one considers the traditional relationship between the advertiser and the agency. While there might be a long working relationship between an agency and an advertiser,\(^{361}\) it is rare that total freedom and responsibility will be afforded the image maker.

Not all Benetton's images are controversial, or obviously seeking attention. One image in the Times Newspaper of November 13, 1996 [fig. 14] is a

\(^{359}\) "As Mr. Toscani tells it, Benetton wants to do more than shift more garments through its international store network. It wants, he says, to make people think. "We don't have the arrogance to say that our products are the best or the cheapest. The idea is to create discussion" Simonan, Haig. 'The nun, the priest and the baby. Benetton's controversial advertising campaigns.' The Financial Times 07 Sep. 1991. p.7.

\(^{360}\) Simonan, Haig. 'The nun, the priest and the baby. Benetton's controversial advertising campaigns.' p. 7.

\(^{361}\) The relationship between Charles and Maurice Saatchi and British Airways meant that British Airways moved its business to M & C Saatchi when the brothers left/were forced out of Saatchi and Saatchi to start their own agency. Fendley, Alison. Saatchi and Saatchi: The Inside Story. Arcade Publishing, London. 1996.
double page spread photograph of a wooden spoon. The advertisement commemorates the World Food Summit that was being held in Rome between the 13th and the 17th of November, organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. In line with the other images in their oeuvre, the Benetton trademark is placed to one side, with the spoon left to speak for itself. But Benetton managed to inject race with a complimentary image, ‘rice’ 1996, an open black hand holding a few grains of rice [fig. 15].

The inevitable return to black and white, with a reinforced stereotype of the black person as the ‘beggar of the world’.

Toscani says of the images he produces “The idea is to create discussion”.

Benetton have notoriously managed to produce quite a few images that have caused offence and discussion. The transition from happy, smiling people in colourful sweaters to race loaded images has been a progressive development according to Jan Moir, who charts Benetton’s imagery from gum disease to demon child. Accordingly racially specific images will be studied.

Three images will be focused on, to analyse their use of the black image:

- White angel and black devil
- Black woman with white child
- Soldier with thigh bone

The first two are ‘studio’ images, the third is a ‘documentary’ photograph.

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White angel and black devil

The image shows two children, one white with blue eyes and blond hair, the other child is black with very dark skin [fig. 16]. There is no room for racial ambiguity in this image. The children are close together. Their identity is placed in their hair; the blond child looks out smiling for the audience, his hair is combed back, smooth and shimmering, we are presented with a halo. The black child’s hair has been braided into cornrows, arranged in such a way that the mounds of the hair form horns.

The halo and the horns tell us what the children are.

One could claim that there was an attempt at symbolic ambiguity in the image, with the blond child having quite a sarcastic (if not demonic) smile on his lips, but all hope of polysemia is destroyed when we hear what Toscani, has to say: “Black people have been demonised, . . . [w]e’re reflecting what already exists.”

Now Toscani is not totally wrong in his statement. This is not an apology for his exploits, but within British literature the black person has been demonised and marked as the embodiment of evil. From Shakespeare’s *Othello*, Burroughs’ *Tarzan* to the media’s appraisals of rap artistes, one finds open, unchallenged demonisation in play.

Toscani creates discussion by tapping into the prior knowledge and prejudices of the viewer, as Jesus famously said ‘Nothing outside a man can

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365 Harrison, Andrew. ‘The Last Dangerous Music on the Streets.’ *The Independent on Sunday* 25 July 1999. p. 5. This article is placed on the centre double spread titled ‘FOCUS: VIOLENT BRITAIN’. There are three photographs on the spread: a black hand holding a handgun, a black face and a black rapper flanked by two white women.
make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean’.

Black woman with white child

A black woman in a red cardigan is cradling a white child in her arms. The baby’s face is pressed against the woman’s bosom. The baby’s left arm is holding the woman’s left breast, with its head in a position that indicates that the baby is actually feeding while the photograph was taken [fig. 17].

The woman’s other breast is fully exposed and below the baby’s body, one can see the woman’s stomach, leading to the impression that the woman is naked (though she might not be). Her posture suggests that she is standing before a white ‘empty’ space which forms a backdrop. The image fills the frame to the extent that the woman’s head, shoulders and elbows are cropped.

Above the baby’s head is the green block logo of Benetton, we are forced to notice the baby’s head and activity when reading the only text in the frame.

This image upset the American (US) audience while causing consternation in Britain. The American response was based on the historical accuracy of the image, in its depiction of female slaves being ‘wet nurses’ to white children. In Britain the image tells of miscegenation, an uncomfortable subject in the advertising palette (considering how little racially mixed couples are depicted), the image upsets the genteel business that racial separation is in Britain.

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The woman plays two roles, the mother with the fragile suckling child, the other is the whore; an exposed woman offering her breast (and herself) to the audience. In one image the mammy and the sexually available black woman is presented. It is not that this device is restricted to Benetton: Kiss FM; a London based radio station, have suggestively used a black woman’s breasts to market their music compilation albums for 1998 and 1999, appropriately called ‘Smooth Grooves’. ‘Grooves’ being both musical excellence and sexual intercourse.

Benetton relies on sex in the image and while mollifying its sexual nature with the baby, steps into another area of controversy. One imagines the child being male, completing the racial and hetero/sexual contrasting polarising aspects of the image. The correlation of the adult white male desiring black women as a result of infant memory (lived or proxy) mixed with the allure of the exotic, resonates in the image. The unwanted forced attention of the white male on enslaved black women is carried in the image, while the ‘loss of milk’ of Toni Morrison’s Beloved is evoked. Considering the above, the child can only be male.

The fragility of the white child in the sure hands of the black woman, the black body feeding a white one has political/personal ramifications. The overly defined racial circumstance tells of black African and white European dependency, except that in this case (an uncomfortable reversal) white Europe is the dependant one.

368 The woman’s body is reduced to a sexual entity, she lacks a head and therefore a personality, she is undoubtedly desirable and the image is beautifully framed. Babies are evidence of sexual activity, even if the baby appears to be another’s in this case. Also see ‘Selling Hot Pussy’ in hooks, bell. Black Looks: Race and Representation South End Press, Boston MA. 1992. pp. 61-78.

369 Benetton has addressed this elsewhere with the image of an adult white hand and a black child’s hand.
breast-feeding mother. If this were the case it would be the stinger in Toscani’s arsenal. In the ravages of race a black woman can have a white child, but even then (and this possibility within this image is rather unlikely) the reading would remain the same; the paradigm has been deliberately set up to preclude familiial normality. Benetton has also presented this possibility in ‘Albino’ [fig. 18]. (Also see Virgin Mobile’s 1999 similar creation [fig 18a].)

**Soldier with thigh bone**

This is one of Benetton’s ‘documentary’ images, where an image from ‘real life’ is presented to the public to prove some point or present a social ill. The rearview of a black soldier is shown ‘at ease’. His hands, behind his back, are holding a human thigh bone. An automatic rifle is slung over his shoulder, with a scarf and shoulder utility bag completing the ensemble [fig. 19].

Like the ‘black mother’, the image is cropped so that his head and shoulders do not show, and the largest single element in the image is the femur. The viewer cannot avoid the bone, just as they cannot avoid the white baby’s head.

The man does not appear to be a western soldier, judging by his dress and the Russian choice of weapon; a Kalashnikov. We are led to assume that the soldier is an African ‘rebel’ surveying the out of focus background; brown earth, green foliage and blue sky. We do not know if this is a post or pre battle pose, but there is no doubt that this is an active combatant.

The bone stands in as a ‘swagger stick’, a step away from the expected. We are left to wonder about what has happened to the rest of the body. For the envisaged western audience, the image is meant to shock, tease and confirm preconceptions of the black ‘other’ all at the same time Benetton presents the
preconceptions of the black ‘other’ all at the same time. Benetton presents the savage cannibal; Robinson Crusoe meets Idi Amin.

Overview
Benetton does not go over the edge, as it would like the public to believe. It manages to titillate its audience with risqué images, but never enough to truly upset the majority of the population. Upsetting a minority works well for Benetton; it renders them radical. The fact that they never seem to malign their customer base is also telling; the white part of their images is always reassuring, never are they subservient, compromised or compromising. They are never the protagonists of ‘evil (the victim?), reinforcing a benign whiteness.

A white wolf ‘kissing’ a black sheep [fig. 20], a white angel, white guiding hand, white Christian crosses with a white star of David (not a crescent and star); all white and heroes of the same good cause (with the construction of Christianity and Judaism as white European).

To be black in Benetton’s world is to be maligned and dangerous, an object of scrutiny in a white world. Yet the black people in the advertisements are beautiful. They are desirable objects to be consumed, they are twice on show, as the present and mythical exotic. Within the advertisement they are the resident alien; included as contemporary objects but incisively removed from a modern existence with the constant evocation of myth. The black presence demonstrates to the white audience what they are not.

Cadbury’s Creme Eggs (various dates) [video]
Cadbury's Creme Egg was introduced in 1923, revised in 1971, and now dominate the 'creme egg' market with a 74% share which translated to the manufacture of 155 million creme eggs in 1994.

There have been a number of different campaigns for the product since the late 1970's, telling the public that 'creme' eggs are fun to eat. This survey will however look at the 'zodiac' campaign, which ran from 1990 to 1994, 'continued the "fun to eat" message and (...) use[d] (...) the horoscope to get people interested and involved with the advertising'.

The 'Zodiac commercials were animated sequences that featured a group of anthropomorphic horoscope signs. All the campaign's horoscope figures were black (or more appropriately 'chocolate' brown), they were also all soul singers. They appeared in front of a microphone onstage, appropriately glamourously dressed, and sexily crooned their part in the given text.

The link between black people and chocolate is based on the production of cocoa and sugar; two direct fruits of colonial exploration and subsequent plantation farming. Although cocoa came originally from South America, where the beans were used as money, great plantations were set up in West Africa under colonial rule to satisfy the British taste for the product.

The use of black people in chocolate campaigns is not without precedent. In 1989, Nestlé used a black 'American' male in their 'Drifter' bar commercial, entitled 'Black Cat'. Before that, the Empire Trading Board had depicted natives presenting cocoa pods as a means of selling the idea of bountiful colonies to the British public.
Chocolate, by virtue of its colour, is also idiomatically linked to black people, both as a description of skin tone and as an insult. It therefore carries connotations outside mere commerce, it relates to consumption of the black being. Music and sport have been a safe way in which blackness has been consumed in the British isles. So the combined use of 'black' music and brown chocolate takes the desire to consume to its logical conclusion. More recently Nestlé's 'Aero' introduced black gospel singers to promote the bar.

Race, colour, visible blackness, and stereotype are cleverly moulded into one within the Creme egg commercials. If there were any doubts about the role of race and blackness within Cadbury's advertising, one only has to look at another product commercial, TimeOut, that also uses black characters. In this case a quartet reminiscent of the 'Four Tops' or the 'O'Jays. Like Creme Egg, the TimeOut commercial was animated. The 'performing' quartet appear to call for 'time out' (a break) for two 'working' disc jockeys, who just happen to be white.

The use of black figures is no accident, with animation allowing the human mind to produce images of reality that are often more 'real' than reality itself. Here it allows for a coalescing of racial/identity opinions and caricatures. Interestingly enough, the campaign to follow 'Zodiac' used 'Spitting Image' characters; known for their satirical caricatures.

Irene Kotlarz in her essay 'The Birth of a Notion' points out that there are complex issues involved in race, representation and animation. The users of animation can hide behind the humour and creativity of the genre. She argues that:
animation should be taken account of within discussions of representation, the drawn or modified images of animation - as opposed to photographic images of 'real' people - can be seen to be more clearly 'constructed' or 'created'. When such discussions consider an area such as racism, representations in animation can be seen to point up very clearly some of the issues involved, such as the emphasis on physical characteristics.\(^{372}\)

There is a search for the object's 'essential' nature in animation, the scope of communication is limited due to the labour intensive nature of its production. Cadbury's use of animation reveals how they (through approval) and the animator see black people.

Like the 'shorts' made in the United States and Britain, Cadbury's presents its audience with the all singing, all dancing black character.\(^{373}\) This 'character', validated by cultural and racial myths, is one which Cadbury's clearly does not shy away from.

**Walt Disney's Jungle Book** (October 1993)

In October 1993 Disney publicised the release on video of their rendition of Rudyard Kipling's (1885 - 1936) *Jungle Book*. Written in 1894 and animated by Disney in 1967, it is the story of Mowgli, an Indian boy lost in the woods and brought up by wolves. The advertisement caused considerable upset as Disney had chosen to use 'King Louis', an orang-utang in the animated film, as a star attraction. They produced print and television advertisements which


\(^{373}\) Kotlarz, Irene 'The Birth of a Notion.'
showed ‘Louie’ with the line: He will be fronting ‘News at Ten’ Tonight. The commercial was broadcast before the said news bulletin.

The problem was, Trevor McDonald - the ‘News at Ten’ presenter - was black. A considerable number of viewers felt he had been slurred (with the problematic correlation of blackness and orang-utangs), and by projection, other black people. The Jungle Book is a problematic publication to start with, riddled with racial slurs and innuendoes, yet Disney and their agency claim they were not aware of the obvious allusions.

Simians have caused problems in the past, based on the use of ‘monkey’, ‘ape’, orang-utang or ‘baboon’ as racial expletives for the black community. Consequently there is heightened sensitivity to any relationship between the two. Advertisements using primates had already come under fire, such as the Electricity Association’s commercials where the speaking primates had caused offence.

This chagrin is addressed by an editorial in ‘The Voice’, which attempted to remove the sting of the slur, stating that there ought not to be a negative reaction by the black community each time an orang-utang is used in an advertisement. The other extreme is epitomised by the editorial of ‘The Daily Star’, here reproduced in full:

Walt Disney have been driven to apologise to News reader Trevor McDonald for a TV ad featuring King Louis, the orang-utang.

They meant no offence and Trevor couldn't care less about the ad. But the usual tribe of loonies raised a stink.
The only damage done to race relations has been caused by these mischievous monkeys who insisted on making an issue of it.
Britain would be a happier place if they keep their twisted prejudices to themselves.

And belted up.\textsuperscript{372}

With eighty eight words, 'The Daily Star' absolves Disney of responsibility and launches an attack at the predominantly black body of objectors, selectively using words like 'tribe' and 'monkey' to rub in the insult. Blame is placed on those that choose to complain, making the maligned, the problem.

Like the Creme Egg commercials, animation is the thrust of this campaign, and it too is bound up with the problems of representation and animation. Reference to race in the \textit{The Jungle book} is inscribed in identifiable character voices; a 'Louis Armstrong' like voice (Louis Prima) is 'King Louise and the four 'Vultures' are white, reminiscent of 'The Beatles' (Chad Stewart and Lord Tom Hudson). Disney is able to function within a margin of doubt for within animation 'the ideological force of its meanings can function precisely as an iron fist within a velvet glove of gags and sentimentality'.\textsuperscript{378}

\textbf{Nestlé Milky Bar (June 1994) [Video]}

'Milky Bar' is a white chocolate bar manufactured by the food conglomerate, Nestlé. It was first introduced to the British market in 1936, with the 'Milky Bar

\textsuperscript{378} Kotlarz, Irene. 'The Birth of a Notion.' p. 22
Kid' becoming a television character in 1961. To date the 'Kid' has been a white - blonde haired - blue eyed boy.

Nestlé, sought the new face for the ‘Milky Bar Kid’, and advertised for children to audition for the part. Nathan Bardy from Nottingham, a ten year black boy auditioned for the role, but 'discovered that his face didn't fit'.

The audition which attracted 600 children, drew only Nathan who was not all white. This, in itself, shows the response which black families and talent agencies have to the possibility of ever seeing black children representing a mainstream product like 'Milky Bar'. Their misgivings are not unfounded with Nestlé saying: "We are definitely not going to cast a black or Asian child in the part", ( . . . ) the central role will go to a white child. "That's what the Milky Bar looks like and there is no reason to change it." In spite of this categorical opinion, Nestlé still invites black youngsters to audition, having predetermined that they will never be the “Kid’. At best, the black auditioners will become just another of his admirers, beneficiaries of his tuck shop generosity.

Nestlé, aware that a characteristic of their product is whiteness, would like it to remain so. This is white, pure and conceivably superior; hence the use of what has been described as a 'smug Aryan smile', knowing that anything else will not give the same message to the consumer. A black child would not conform to this racial notion of purity for mainstream Britain.

379 Src. Valerie Sanderson Nestlé UK
381 Equity attacks Milky bar on black child The Guardian 02 Jun. 1994 p. 3.
382 ibid.
Whether a black child could conceivably be the 'Milky Bar Kid' is what Equity's Martin Brown refers to as the need to “wake up to a multi-cultural Britain”. It is to do with the understanding of cultural codes and an assessment of values. If Laurence Olivier could play Shakespeare’s Othello without the audience questioning the situation, then the plight of the ‘Milky Bar Kid’ has merely begun: blackface is acceptable, but black children playing ‘traditional white roles is not, not to mention the universality of whiteness. The ‘Milky Bar Kid’ may become black, but Nestlé will only allow it if they want to send a new message to the British public.

The situation is not helped in any way when dissenters are characterised as “the most ruthless of gangs - the politically correct,” even where the issue is one of equal access to a possibly neutral position.

**Ford** (February 1996)

One of the more celebrated cases of black people in British advertising has been the ‘Ford Fiasco’ [fig. 21]. The selective removal of black employees from a promotional photograph caused Ford considerable embarrassment, but did not address the underlying problem of product representation by associating it with a black person.

Ford’s agency, Ogilvy and Mather doctored a photograph from a 1991 ad campaign featuring four black men by superimposing white faces for a picture used in a Polish promotional campaign. The strategy had disastrous results when the “enhanced” image was used in the UK earlier this year (1996). And Ford paid the four "whited out" black

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364 'Equity attacks Milky bar on black child.' p. 3.
365 Myers, Paul. ‘P.S. Son of Paleface.' p. 18.
workers compensation (of £1500).^{386}

One reason stated for the refacing was that the Polish might react negatively to the presence of black men in the works photograph, which the Poles subsequently refuted. And while Ford attempted to distance themselves from the issue, they were aware all along.

Reactions to the ploy were robust. The broadsheets and television news attempted to cover the story dispassionately, the tabloids however had a unique cant. One tabloid’s editorial on the issue reads as follows:

**Motor Racists**

**Henry Ford got rich by saying “you can have any colour . . . as long as it is black”**

Today’s Ford bosses aren’t fit to polish his hub caps. For they seem only to value their work force if it’s white - cutting four black workers out of their advert.

Ford blames its ad agency for this crass racist blunder. But the company should have spotted it.

**For if Ford bosses don’t read their own brochure, why should we?^{387}**

Describing the deliberate and delicate operation of digitally reconstituting a photograph as a ‘blunder’ shows how this affair was viewed.

The editorial paints the issue, not so much racial bias, as incompetence. And

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^{387} Editorial. *The Sun* 21 Feb. 1996. This editorial is only in keeping with what can be described as the ‘ideology’ of tabloid newspapers. (see Daily Star editorial)
maybe the editor is right, for almost without exception, each time a company is
publicly notified of their private racial practice, their defence is: incompetence
of an individual, not an intentional corporate act.

What have brochures got to do with the issue of erasure? The editor feels the
need to address the issue, but only half heartedly. What it boils down to is,
Ford is not really guilty of anything out of the ordinary, they were merely caught
with their trousers down.

**Vauxhall (June 1996) [Video]**

Over two thousand babies cooing at a screen showing the charms of a
Vauxhall Astra, one baby at a podium in front of the screen demands the rights
of the baby vis a vis the car. The Vauxhall Astra meeting the discerning
offsprings' exacting standards.

Vauxhall has created a link to babies for itself, having made quite a few
advertisements that rely on the emotional capital and 'innocence' of the baby.
They have, for instance, used the travails of a baby learning to walk as an
explanation of the value of intelligent four-wheel drive. In this example the baby
was white. In each other case, babies used have also been white.

So when the 'rally' was made, it is no surprise that the 'spokesbaby' at the
rally, like the Milky Bar Kid, was white.

The subsequent success of the advertisement may have contributed to
annoyance of a mother who complained that the advertisement was racist in
its almost exclusive use of white babies.\textsuperscript{388} Even though Vauxhall denied any wrongdoing, pointing out that there were black babies in the advertisement (one, at last count), they did admit that the baby was not prominent and could easily be missed.

The denial of racial bias in the selection of babies can only be taken at their word. Vauxhall has laid the responsibility for the lack of ‘colour’ on mothers that chose not to bring their babies to the audition with: “We advertised for babies to be put forward by their parents for the advert. There were very few from ethnic minority groups. You can’t force them to put their babies forward.”\textsuperscript{389} The casting took place in Tower Hamlets; a part of East London that has a large ‘ethnic’ population. What is clear is that, out of the ‘few’ ethnic babies presented to Vauxhall, only one was suitable. Considering that London has an ethnic population of about twenty percent and Tower Hamlets is arguably above this average, there is an uncomfortable truth in Vauxhall excluding or rejecting ‘ethnic’ babies.

One cannot but highlight the near miss of Mercury Telephones that had to cancel a casting session for their advertisement, when it was publicly brought to their notice that their promotional leaflets placed in swimming pools in South London, ‘specified that the babies be cute, white, and love the water.’\textsuperscript{390} Mercury unsurprisingly blamed their agency for the indiscretion, and went to the length of denying that they were indeed seeking only a white baby, to the exclusion black babies. This, even though the baby was to play the part of a white adult female swimmer as a child.

\textsuperscript{388} ‘Mum hits back over racist TV baby rally ad.’ \textit{Coventry Evening Standard} 22 June 1996.


\textsuperscript{390} ‘Ad casting cancelled.’ \textit{Morning Star} 27 Mar. 1996.
Returning to Vauxhall, and car manufacturers as an advertising entity, there are hardly any black images associated with the car. Vanessa Summers of the firm ASAP, an advertising agency that specialises in reaching the Black community, explains this by referring to what is most likely BMW: ‘there are problems with getting advertisers to identify with particular groups using the example of “one upmarket car company which black people are specifically attracted to, but it refuses to target them in its advertising because it wrongly perceives the British black community as being working class.”

**Royal Insurance**

Royal Insurance realised the value of race and accepted popular imagery, when they put Tarzan to work [fig. 21, 22 - 23].

A Tarzan poster is at the centre of a race row. It shows the jungle hero being threatened by apparently blood thirsty natives . . . one of Tarzan's captors is saying “You'd better ring the Royal”.

A spokesman for the Royal Insurance said “All the images in the campaign have a humorous theme and were chosen by a panel made up of people from a mixed background”. (He adds); All were cleared by the ASA. The poster certainly isn't racist and it will not be withdrawn

Tarzan, a character created by the American writer Edgar Rice Burroughs [1875 - 1950], is the son of an Englishman, Lord Greystoke, abandoned in the

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392 Now known as Royal & Sun Alliance
African jungle and raised by apes. He learns the language and mannerisms of animals and eventually rises to the top of the animal and human ladder to become the ‘King of the Jungle’.

His rise is offered as a *fait accompli* within a mythical Africa, which is not presented as a continent of different places, but as one. It is homogeneously populated with savage and simple-minded black inhabitants. They are cannibals, superstitious, lacking in reason and deferent to Tarzan’s white reason. Altogether in need of ‘civilisation’. The only ‘civilised’ in Burroughs’ Africa are other white people he encounters. For one raised by apes, Tarzan is inherently European and civilised, first through race and then through blood.

Considering Burroughs’ construction of the black person (undoubtedly informed by race relations in the United States) and the strength of Tarzan imagery in modern parlance, the advertisement’s message is clear. The British audience is invited to identify with the hero ‘Tarzan’ leaving the black mob (again white men in blackface) to form all that adversely befall a person, necessitating insurance. The black men become evil personified, which is a message easily absorbed within the popular narrative.\(^{394}\)

**Reebok (April 1995) [Video]**

In April 1995 Reebok made a commercial titled ‘Split Personality’. It involved among others, the splicing together of two female hurdlers. One hurdler was black, the other white. They run towards the camera, leaping over the hurdles, finishing the race together. The commercial cost Reebok four million pounds.

\(^{394}\) The advertising Standard Authority is investigating a Royal Insurance poster showing Tarzan being threatened by black captors after complaints that it was racist. **News Brief. The Guardian** 21 Mar. 1995. p. 15.
and ‘Reebok scouts scoured Britain to find two hurdlers of similar size, shape and facial appearance but with different coloured skin (. . .) Reebok picked black Samantha Facquarson, 24, and white Bethan Edwards, 21.’ The kind of facial features which determined the search is a question that the report could not answer.

Technology has performed racial equality which the running track has not afforded, as track and field has been dominated by black athletes. The underlying message is for the ‘races’ to work together for a better world, at least within the world of sport. As the report states ‘The result is a two tone hurdler gunning down the track to orchestral music.’

It is worthwhile looking at Reebok’s history, Reebok being one of those old British companies which at one time would have paid little attention to the black element of the sporting world. Reebok was originated by Joseph William Foster in 1890’s England making spiked running shoes, and by the early 1900’s had started a company called J.W. Foster and Sons. In 1958 two of his grandsons inaugurated a sport (mainly running) shoe company, which they called Reebok, after an African gazelle. By the 1990’s the company made shoes for an increasing range of sports.

This means that Reebok has moved into basketball, a sport now dominated by black players and has a great influence on popular culture. Reebok had previously made a commercial; Basketball (Mar. 1994), in which a black basketball player is presented. This has almost become a method, where the

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396 Ibid.
makers of sports footwear predominantly use black sport people, relying on the symbolism of superior sporting ability.

Commission for Racial Equality (September 1998)

The Commission for Racial Equality is being investigated by police for inciting racial hatred, after a deliberately provocative advertising campaign depicting black people as rapists and orang-utangs spectacularly backfired.

One of the most spectacular advertising campaigns of the decade must be the series made by Euro Whek Gosper for the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE). It courted outrage, received police censure and generated a great deal of press coverage.

According to the agency, the campaign cost £80,000 while other reports put the amount at £250,000 and the three images went up on 139 billboard sites around the country. The advertisements, for what turned out to be non existent products, contained a black person with each image graphically depicting a 'commonly held' stereotype, conception or notion about black people or the 'ethnic minority'.

Taking one of the images as a case in point: a black basketball player

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399 Hatfield, Stefano. ‘Race posters caused the wrong kind of fuss.’ The Times 25 Sep. 1998.
400 Taylor, David. ‘Racist ads that were meant to shock us: £250,000 poster campaign attacked for “insulting “ portrayal of black people.’ The Express 22 Sep. 1998. p.19.
reaching for a basket is mirrored by an orang-utang striking a similar mid-air pose. Below both images lies the caption ‘born to be agile’ with information hinting at sport shoes. The shoes are called KUJO.

Taking the image apart, one is faced with the following concepts

- The black person as naturally athletic
- The black person as agile
- The black person as wearer of sport shoes
- The relationship between the black person and the orang-utang; natural, primitive, and bestial
- KUJO is a Ghanaian name, foreign and used as a slur

Most of these attributes are used by mainstream advertising anyway, but cloaked, to avoid outrage.

To communicate and subsequently offend, the language of an advertisement has to be immediately understood by its public. Judging by the response the CRE campaign received, the language was understood. One is then left to decide that the mainstream audience either carries this information with them and used it, or they managed to construct meaning out of the images presented to them. The former is more likely.

Martin Mears writing in the Eastern Daily Press took the angle that there was a case to be answered by the public, even if the CRE were ‘barking mad rather than only slightly batty.’ He raised a set of reactions to the posters, ranging

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from disinterest to outrage

The campaign successfully managed to make the black person the main focus of an advertisement while simultaneously drawing attention to ‘black’ stereotypes in popular advertising [figs. 25 - 27].

Lilt [Video]

Lilt is a popular carbonated drink made by The Coca Cola Company. Like all Coca Cola drinks, they have an identity that separates them from the flagship drink, the eponymous Coca Cola.

In Britain Lilt is marketed on the strength of its contents: pineapple and grapefruit. It has thence been modelled as a tropical drink, with the line ‘the totally tropical taste’ attached to it. The advertisements and commercials that are produced for the drink therefore take on this tropical message using a tropical ideal created for this effect, somewhere in the Caribbean.

Coca Cola describes Lilt which they introduced in 1970, as ‘giv(ing) the customers in the UK a taste of the Caribbean with carbonated flavours like Pineapple/Grapefruit and Mango/Mandarin’.

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403 ibid.

• Many people will not have noticed them
• Others would have seen them and merely been puzzled, what was the message? It could not be that all black men were rapists, because a poster saying that would plainly be illegal. A mystery. Oh Well . . .
• A third group would realise that the posters were ironical. These sophisticates would, I guess would be in a small minority.
• Group four would be those that understood the messages and took them at their face value, nodding in approval. These would also be a small minority.
• Finally there would of been those who took the posters literally and to a greater or lesser extent disapproved. The great majority of these would have shrugged their shoulders and passed on. A few would have written a disgusted letter to the CRE , their MP or whoever.

In Lilt’s campaigns, a figment of the ‘tropical’ life is presented. Lilt’s tropics is the epitome of ‘Sun, Sand and Sea’ complete with black inhabitants that do nothing other than loll, play and live the ‘good life’. They do not need to work, living on an island paradise that naturally provides for their every need. There is an abundance of beach which mimics the popular representation of the Caribbean, smoothly linking the fictional with the ‘known’. When white people appear in the advertisements, they take on specific roles; they are there to be served, the dream of a Caribbean holiday.

In ‘Lilt Man’ (Feb. 1988), a black ‘milkman’ (complete with dreads) does his rounds, delivering lilt to his beach inhabitants. Everyone is presented as enjoying themselves; their clothing indicates anything other than labour. In ‘Sinking Boat’ (Jun. 1996) the idea that there is anything serious in or about the inhabitants of ‘Lilt Island’ is eradicated. The stereotype of the opportunistic black person is expanded. Nothing is done to alter the course of life, everything is laid back and easy.

By 1998 Lilt had moved from the island to London, bringing the Caribbean with it. Two new characters are introduced to the British public; Blanche and Hazel. They are two large Caribbean women, with flowing colourful dresses and broad Caribbean accents, bringing ‘life’ to the rhythmless inhabitants of London. As of writing there have been two episodes of Blanche and Hazel; ‘Waterloo Station’ and ‘Dancing Competition’. In both cases the duo end up showing the white audience how to ‘swing’. Lilt have done more than transfer their ‘Lilt Island’ to London, they decided to sponsor the Notting Hill Carnival (the August Bank Holiday Caribbean Carnival in London), unsuccessfully attempting to rename it ‘The Lilt Carnival’. 
With Blanche and Hazel, we see stereotypes of the black woman, and judging by Jeffrey Archer's public comments on the overweight black woman, there is not much surprise there.\footnote{Douglas, Omega. 'Watching You, Watching Me.' \textit{The Guardian: G2} 12 Aug. 1999. pp. 8 - 9.}

\textbf{Malibu (various) [Video]}

Malibu is a rum drink, whose trademark is owned by The Paddington Ltd. Rum is a distilled alcoholic beverage made from the juice of sugar cane, hence its sweet taste. It is usually at least 60 percent proof and is known for its potency. Rum was introduced to the British Isles through the plantation system and slavery in the West Indies. Sugar and its derivatives produced great wealth for British slave owners in the West Indies. The British involvement in Barbados extends back to 1625, with the island helping to 'promote England as Europe's premier slave trader'.\footnote{Walvin, James. \textit{Slaves and Slavery: The British Colonial Experience}. Manchester University Press, Manchester. 1992. p. 26.} Barbados became an independent state in 1966.

The Paddington Ltd., in its advertising, places the drink in Barbados. The idea of a good time is constantly presented in their commercials with the byline: 'It Always Shines When It Pours'.

Attention will be paid to two commercials over the decade; 'Malibu in Mind' (Dec. 1993) and 'Fishermen' (Jul. 1999). In 'Malibu in Mind', bright sun drenched colourful images pour through the outline of a strutting woman, surrounded by dull monochrome scenery. She increases in size, extending her brightness to end up in a bar with a black man and other smiling, happy
people drinking Malibu. In ‘Fishermen’, which can best be described as a spoof of An Officer and a Gentleman, a ‘sergeant-major’ is putting hopeful fishermen through their paces: bailing out fishing boats, donning the fish costume to be paddled by the others, being buried up to the neck, running to attain fitness, and being ritually humiliated by being slapped across the face with a fish by the ‘sergeant-major’ chanting ‘You’ll never be a fisherman’.

The spoof is undeniably funny, and this goes a long way to mask the discomfort the commercial generates. The humour is based on the notion of what the men do in Malibu’s Barbados. With nothing to do or needed; childlike naivety, the beach and merriment become hallmarks of the place, grown men frolic.

Rum is historically linked to drunken slaves and seamen. Rum was originally made from molasses, a waste product in the sugar making process, which made it available for slaves’ use. ‘Slave-owners throughout the Americas assumed that Africans were lazy. This was part of their justification - to themselves and others - that slavery alone could persuade the slaves to work’,\(^\text{407}\) while on days off or on special days the slaves were supplied with rum which would precipitate singing and dancing.\(^\text{408}\) The larking about is linked with Malibu (the ubiquitous rum), in the Barbados. The reference to late night partying without a concern in the world, is linked to an idea of perpetual merriment in the Barbados.

This is further reinforced in ‘Malibu Warning’; a commercial where even an earth tremor cannot stop the late night partying. A sentiment expressed by Southern Comfort in one of their commercials where a wind and rainstorm

\(^{407}\) ibid. p. 55.  
\(^{408}\) ibid. p. 69.
that rips New Orleans apart does not dampen the mood of a 'southern black' blues bar.

Interlude

all you can do is wait for the chain reaction show of ass

when one of them
looks me in the eye
and decides
to say something to the colored
guy
its
all systems go
the white folks acts like they know

\textit{hey bro er uh bro-ham}
i happen to be a big rap fan
went to see ice cube and michel'e
at the hollywood palladium
and i was the only white person in the place
\textit{aint i soul brother}

there must be another workshop on how to handle your support staff
Police Federation

Beatty fingers the problem police advertising attempts to confront - and suffer for it. The Federation attempt to eradicate difference by making it as obvious as possible. The logic being that if the public is confronted with their own prejudices, they will come to the conclusion that the cause of the police's inability to recruit non-white Britons and the 'negative' perceptions of the force, lies not with the police, but in the public.\(^\text{410}\)

‘Ads Upset Black Police’\(^\text{411}\) reads the title of an article in The Guardian newspaper. In the aftermath of the Stephen Lawrence Report, the police enlisted advertising to buttress a battered image; advertisements which pointed to a white hegemony trying to show the country and the metropolis that the police perceive black men as police officers too. In the same way that black Britons are supposed to be seen as Britons.

The advertising campaign advertently acknowledges the problem of visible difference, the problem of race. The campaign is not interested in the public per se, it is about the police force and its interaction with black Britons who happen to be police officers. The campaign also attempts to reassure black members of the public, thus functioning as a recruitment campaign too.

The posters ask a series of questions which will form an introduction to their analysis.

\(^{410}\) The question of a negative image for the police force is one that is based on an individual's own position. A force that has to fulfil the demands of the law is never going to be much liked, as the law will invariably infringe on the personal 'rights' of the public. So the police might even need a 'negative' image in order to carry out their role properly, as it allows the police to carry out its function in the knowledge that the public sees it as the face of the law.

The first of the four police federation advertisements asks the question:

**WHAT DO YOU CALL A BLACK MAN IN A BMW?**

The text is next to a black man's head in profile. Of the many possible answers to this query, among them a potential stereotype of the drug dealer in his beemer, there is the answer:

**A POLICE OFFICER ON PATROL.**

The answer is placed next to a photograph of the same man revealed to be a police sergeant's uniform in an obvious police car [fig. 28].

A black man in a BMW is not a police officer. A man wearing a police uniform, in a marked police BMW, driving on a public street is a police officer. The point of the police Federation is lost in the obvious slur on the black man in a BMW who is not a police officer.

It can easily be argued that the public recognise the symbols of authority that demarcate the police, and the public duly respects these symbols on pain of considerable physical and social discomfort.

The press release issued by the Police Federation accompanying the series of advertisements, titled ‘Fairness Campaign Launched by Police Federation’, quotes Fred Broughton, its Chairman, as saying:

The images are provocative and in some cases, uncomfortable because they challenge passive racism which exists at all levels of
Each picture shows how easy it is to fall into the trap of stereotyping people by colour or race and aims to redress the ethical balance with positive images of ethnic minority officers at work.\(^{412}\)

This is in striking contrast to the response accorded the Commission of Racial Equality's billboards. The manipulation of race becomes a tool for the police when it suits them; they have the power and position to affect public opinion, and their images will not be covered over.

**OPEN ALL HOURS?**

In the next image, the line above is accompanied by an Asian woman looking straight out into the camera wearing a white collared blouse. Below this we see the same woman as a police officer at what appears to be a police station reception desk [fig. 29]. The answer to this question is

**THE POLICE SERVICE HAS TO BE**

The allusion to the corner shop is clear; the stereotype of the Asian as a shopkeeper is called into service by the Police Federation. If there was to be doubt, the Police Federation remove this by framing the word 'OPEN' and angling it to mimic a shop sign. Also the model's attire for the question and the answer are different.

In the third image [fig. 30], a black man is whispering into the ear of a white woman. They are both wearing dark tunics with collared shirts. Their eyes are pointing towards each other, so it is clear that they are having an exchange of

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some sort. Like the previous images, the characters here are very clearly racially marked. The man is undoubtedly black, with a ‘goatee’; the woman clearly white with blond hair and blue/grey eyes. She has a questioning/concerned look on her face, while the man looks quite confident. In line with what has been set up as the hunter and his prey, the man is taller than the woman; his mouth is at the level of her ear. He is the active one. The image has sexual undertones; they could be strangers meeting for the first time or he could be whispering suggestively to an acquaintance, but this is eroded by the accompanying text.

**DRUG PUSHER?**

Then the answer:

**NO - POLICE OFFICER**

We now see both persons from the waist up, they are now standing, side by side, smiling at the camera. They are in a wood panelled room, with a crest appearing over the left shoulder of the male officer; their status is revealed by their uniforms.

It is undeniable that the purported drug pusher in the image is the black male, and the ‘answer’ is there to exonerate him only. The sequence removes the possibility that the woman could have ever been the felon, her being appears to deny this, she is a blonde, blue eyed, white woman. The possibility that they are both drug dealers is also removed, the singular nature of the text again removes this reading.
BEEN MUGGED?

In the final image [fig. 31], the face of a black man fills the frame, he is looking out to the camera, his face is so closely scrutinised that the pores of his skin are visible. He appears relaxed and resigned at the same time. He is the man on an identity parade, it is not possible to tell if he is innocent or guilty, but he might as well be guilty. The association between the text and the picture make him the typical mugger. The head of the Metropolitan police, Sir Paul Condon, wrote in June 1997: “It is a fact that very many of the perpetuators of muggings are very young black people who have been excluded from school and/or are unemployed. I am sure I do not need to spell out the sensitivity of dealing with this crime problem.”

This claim comes in the face of the statistical data that shows that a vast majority of violent crime is committed by young white men.

The issue is not so much the colour of the criminal, but the placement of blame on particular shoulders that are already marked as being criminal. The linking of race and deprivation also plays on popular prejudice. The textual pun in the image also deserves analysis, as the question ‘been mugged?’ carries various connotations. ‘Mug’ is a colloquialism for ‘face’ or ‘mouth’, it also means ‘ruffian’. To be ‘mugged’ means having one’s photograph taken for police purposes, finally it means to be attacked with stealth (generally from behind) and robbed. All the definitions meet in the image and do very little to upset the stereotype as the black mugger.

TELL HIM - HE'S A POLICE OFFICER

\footnote{Campbell, Duncan; Elliot, Christopher; Johnson, Angela. ‘Met chief says young black do most muggings.’ The Guardian 7 Jul. 1995}
The same man is then presented as a police officer, his helmet held under his arm, he is smiling with his eyes almost shut. He is standing before a grilled gate with a brick wall beyond that. The 'mugger's' face has become intertwined with the countenance of the law.

This campaign obviously set out to question and confront stereotypes of the police force, not blackness. Consequently it has simply repeated entrenched racial stereotypes while reinforcing the understanding that the police is a white organisation by making currency of blackness.

It is however easy to forget that the police are advertising just like any other business, they are competing for a scarce resource: people. Like any other advertiser they are attempting to convince people to join the police force and that the 'police force' is a good institution. Like any advertiser: if race works, use it.

Looking at police advertising within the last decade, there is little change where 'ethnic minorities' are concerned. A particularly well known and by inference successful police advertisement (Metropolitan Police 1989) is a text heavy poster with an inset photograph of two men running in a 'deprived' part of London (The Image was so successful that it was used by Benetton in their 'Colors' magazine on 'Race' as a query on racial perceptions.)[fig. 32]. The man in front is black wearing a pair of trousers, a shirt, casual jacket and a pained expression. The man behind is white in a police uniform with helmet and a calm expression.

The poster headline above the photograph reads,

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF POLICE PREJUDICE?
OR ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF YOURS?

Immediately below the image is the explanation,

Do you see a policeman chasing a criminal? Or a policeman harasing an innocent person? Wrong both times. It's two police officers, one in plain clothes, chasing a third party. And it's a good illustration of why we are looking for more recruits from ethnic minorities.

The text that follows explains the meaning of prejudice, even recounting stories of police prejudicial failure, then moves on to explain why the police needs to alter its cultural mix.

As mentioned it was a successful campaign, but a campaign that still relies on stereotypes. Even if the police put the public in the spotlight by hoodwinking them into making a value judgement, the poster, just like the public, is aware of its own stereotypes. A black man being chased by a white policeman is not anomalous to public opinion.

The police seem to repeat the same refrain: if a black man is not a police officer, he is a criminal.

In September 1999, the Metropolitan Police launched a new campaign with the line 'It's about reflecting the community we serve' [fig. 33]. The image over which the text is imposed shows different people, whose race and gender is
The use of stereotypes and prejudices seem to have disappeared from this campaign. Notable is the body text that explains the intention of the police:

A good police service is one that reflects its community. Only through true understanding, trust and confidence can we work together to fight crime and build cultural bridges. If you are interested in becoming a police officer visit your local Police Station or call 0345 272212

There is a shift in position, the police are no longer any one thing. The language has become inclusive and tension is not indicated within the poster.

This is in sharp contrast to another advertisement (1998) that shows the shoulders and head a black policewoman in full uniform, with an inset boxed caption over her neck ‘IF YOU THINK SHE’S A TRAITOR,’ finished with the line under the photograph ‘ARE YOU GIVING HER A FAIR TRIAL’.

Numbers or power?

David Theo Goldberg in his essay ‘Hate or Power?’ lucidly argues that racism and hate crimes have almost become synonymous. Essentially if without evidence of hate, a racially offensive incident is hard to prove. This complicates the reading of race in advertising, as gone are the hateful and spiteful images of earlier times. So now advertisers are free to produce imagery that does not demonstrate hate. They can reproduce stereotypes and racist ideas with impunity, as long as they are not hateful.
It has been said that racism within Britain has never been hateful, just a
gentlemanly disdain and disavowal; the denial of a place to live and the
installation of discreet colour bars, harsher sentences for identical crimes,
removing rights of nationhood, but not the burning of places of worship (even
if there is the occasional burning of homes and hanging). This has meant that
the particularly vicious and hateful racism has been relegated to the extreme
right, like the KKK, The British National Party, The National Front, Combat 18,
and lately The White Wolves, allegedly of ‘Brick Lane’ bomb fame.

The average Briton dissociates themselves from these extreme sectors of
society, and this is where Goldberg’s analysis can be applied to advertising.
The mental dominance of hate with race in the public psyche:

make[s] racist expressions (...) a psychological disposition, an
emotive affect(ation), a dis-order and so as abnormal and unusual.
Racist (and sexist) acts are thus transformed silently into emotive
expressions, into crimes of passion (...)

This reduces all racist expressions to a single form: what is not
reducible to hate is not criminalizable; perhaps it is not even racist (or
sexist), for it fails to fall under the reductive characteristics of racism (or
sexism) as hate. Therefore it need not be considered serious or be
taken seriously.¹⁶

It is under these conditions that advertising functions. The absence of
acrimony when using the black body as a symbol means that its mere
presence within mainstream advertising is to be seen as proof of goodwill.

The Glasgow Media Group carried out a survey of television and published their findings in 'Race, advertising and the public face of television'. They looked at the 'presentation of TV programmes according to who is employed as the 'public face' of television (and) the roles of ethnic minorities in television advertising'. The report presents the analysis of two twelve-hour recordings made over two weeks of BBC2, ITV and Channel 4.

It broke the programming down into categories and analysed the presenters. They then assessed the advertising during this period and found that non-white persons were only slightly under represented as against the national census figures, but were found wanting qualitatively.

The roles which ethnic minorities occupied in advertisements are a separate issue which has been the subject of much contentious debate. Our research does suggest that they are less likely than white actors to be shown in professional roles, being much more likely to appear as Musicians, Sports persons or in exotic dress.

The work of the Glasgow Media Group has answered the question of numbers, if within a small sample. While this history is not about numbers, it is beneficial to have the data to hand. However, the issue of numbers deserves some analysis in itself. Though 'Glasgow' announce a slight national under representation, it is a considerable under-representation in a place like London, where the non-white population is just under twenty

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418 ibid. p. 149.
419 ibid. p. 168.
420 ibid. p. 169.
percent.

Images of the body are powerful. They allow the advertiser to say a lot more than they could 'get away with' with words. When race is introduced, the body becomes a veritable palette of meaning. The advertiser is undoubtedly aware of this.

Paul Messaris holds a different view. He says that “because of the lack of explicitness of visual syntax, arguments made through images often need to be supported by words.” He does eventually come to the position that a picture, especially where there is a leap of intellectual faith, allows for more creative movement.

There is lot of faith in reading advertisements, and at over 3 hours of television commercials alone per week for the average Briton; that is a lot of faith.

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5. The Black Body in Use

or To Think What?

“Poor little black fellow,” said Grace Pemberton to her husband and sister. “In memory of Arnold and Amanda, I think it is our Christian duty to keep it, and raise it in the way it should go. ” Somehow for a long time she had called Arnie “it”.

“We can raise it without keeping it. ” Said her husband. “Why not send it to Hampton?”

Françoise Vergès in her essay ‘Colonising Citizenship’ interrogates the French response to the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in France. She analyses the role of the French as slavers to abolitionists, the transition from abolition to colonisation and the impact this has on the writing of history. What is poignant about this essay is that it was written as a commentary to a special issue of Radical Philosophy on race and ethnicity; race and ethnicity being unable to be confronted in philosophy without looking over one shoulder back into slavery (chattel and colonial), the one thing that has defined the relationship between Europe and the ‘black’ world.

This chapter will look at a number of models with which to analyse the presence of blackness in British advertising. It will look at subject creation within advertising and its use by a dominant ideology to survive as a cultural form. The conformist positions that advertisers take to retain potency will be scrutinised, and more importantly, how this conformist ideology may be essential for advertisers to get their message across easily and effectively.


Through this analysis, it will be shown why the black person has to remain a ‘raced body’ in British advertising.

The possibility of change in using race as a marker in advertising will also be considered: this may be read as seeking a cultural utopia. There will be an investigation into the rethinking of visible race.

Focusing on groups of advertisements will highlight the difference in the use of the black and white body. With images analysed in isolation, it is possible to fall into a biased appraisal of the ‘text’. But where there are other ‘texts’ to frame the chosen ‘text’, the inherent ideology in the image’s production becomes easier to isolate.

This does not mean that there might not have been the naive creation of an image that carries the marks of overarching ideology, which then ‘suffers’ criticism. But surely, this is the nature of hegemonic ideology, that it reaches such a level of saturation that it becomes invisible to those that are subject to it. Discernible hegemony would not succeed in its ordering of thought; the individual needs to feel that opinions carried and decisions made have originated from within them. Even if they subsequently realise that these have been informed by the actions and convictions of others.

Three campaigns will form the main basis of comparative analysis. They are as follows:

Nike: Park Football London ‘99
Nescafé
Sharwoods
These campaigns have been chosen for their ease of availability to large sections of the general public, being billboards (Nescafe and Sharwoods) and post bills (Nike). They are campaigns that can claim innocent acceptability through the lack of public complaint and their ubiquity. They were made by large companies able to pay for billboard, wall and magazine space. This is important for the analysis. It would be inappropriate to use specialised advertisements; it being possible to claim that there was a special language in use.

The use of 'black' and 'white' will create polarities. This is intended, even if there are other ways of looking at advertising, they will not ably confront the 'race' problem.

**Advertising in support of hegemony**

Advertising does not function solely as a vehicle for commercial and political ideology, it also carries hegemonic values. In fact advertising relies on hegemony to function as a convincing force, and consequently supports and reinforces hegemonic forces by reproducing imagery and narrative that substantiates the status quo. For advertising, a monolithic society would be an operating ideal. Communication, conversion and conviction would be so simple if an entire target market held the same values and cultivated similar dreams.\(^{425}\)

To take just one hegemonic myth, the domestic idyll - loving partner, the house, the car, the 2.4 children, the pension - one can see its qualifications

\(^{425}\) Even if the manifestation of these dreams appear different, as long as their underlying principle is the same in its demands, the advertiser has a bonus on his hands.
for social control. By showing people what they might lose if they step out of line as set by the state (or similar forces, like the workplace), control is established. The advertiser can foster this myth, to sell goods, by showing that the myth is both desirable, achievable and worthy of protection.

It would be pointless to upset a readymade coercive force, so advertisers actively support it by creating and reinforcing an ‘ideal’. Even when the advertisers engineer the ‘alternative’, they do so in tandem with the set ‘ideal’. This ‘alternative’ will not conflict with the internal machinations of the overarching hegemony, because the ‘alternative’, when used in popular marketing, is diluted, made ‘safe’, requiring the ‘mainstream’ to exist.426

Roundabout of psychoanalysis, problems of race

Psychoanalysis helps in understanding the persistence of race in British advertising. It is unlikely that there will ever be an admission by mainstream advertisers of cynical manipulation of race to achieve a particular message. Psychoanalysis allows investigation and explanation of unspoken motives, it permits the articulation of hidden intentions and prejudices in a 'safe' fashion.

This is not to pretend there are not problems with psychoanalysis, where 'race' is concerned. Psychoanalysis in Britain is dominated by white

426 ‘The mainstream as used by advertisers is the hegemonic mechanism; the way people would live if they followed the ‘prescribed’ median. Within advertising the alternative is available where there is a mainstream to be an alternative to. Counter culture for instance, is just that, the counter/against/opposite of ‘Culture’. Where mainstream products are marketed using the ‘alternative’ they have to maintain a rapport with their considered audience. This is where the custom and money is.

427 ‘Safe’ in the sense that responsibility for acts will be placed somewhere else, in the same body, but not on the same person. The present person being separate from the experiences that form their present incarnation.
practitioners with little done to change this state. This means that race issues are sidelined and resolved using ‘tried and tested’ methods, race being difficult to incorporate into the white ‘universals’.

Psychoanalysis and race do not meet easily. Apart from its silence on the subject (race as visible difference) there is the tendency to address race like religion. An attempt to construct a similarity between the reactions brought about by acquired knowledge, and that brought about by immediate visual confrontation. It also almost always constructs race as a white oppositional stance against blackness, to extremes of comparing white aversion to blackness, like rejection of shit.

Problems with psychoanalysis and race-as-visible-difference are threefold. First, it does not seem able to acknowledge the body; second, psychoanalysis too carries a white way of looking. And third, relationships in psychoanalysis are based on power: the infant and the parent, the superior and the inferior, the subject and the object, the self and the phallus. Race creates an uncomfortable situation in this paradigm, even though there is proof that race affects the way the self is seen.

The psychoanalyst is almost bound to see any rejection of whiteness by blackness as phallic envy, the inability to fulfil a desire. Simultaneously it is

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433 Frantz Fanon, in *Black Skin White Mask*, clearly argues that the black person is seeking a white self before he provides means of dealing with this psychological imbalance.
argued that blackness, in the collective white consciousness, is reduced to the potent symbol for the phallus: the penis.

Psychoanalytical arguments have the tendency to encircle a subject/object rather than face it. Even if facing the subject/object is the ultimate aim of the analysis, it still manages to spend a lot of time and energy perambulating. It constantly renders the subject/object a foil for something else, and even the foil is constructed as a manifestation of a deeper control mechanism which produces the subject/object. This new subject/object is also merely a foil, which in turn is a manifestation of an embedded restraint, and the cycle continues.

At the same time this perambulating allows the producers of advertising to deny responsibility for their actions, that they are perhaps ultimately not responsible for this persistence of race within their medium. Advertisers act as no more than conduits for an endemic ideology.

The 'seen' is not supposed to be the 'issue' in psychoanalysis, it is that something else. A question asked of Robert Bak, a Hungarian analyst, best shows how psychoanalysis constructs the interpersonal.

"What would you call an interpersonal relationship where infantile wishes, and defences against those wishes, get expressed in such a way that the persons within the relationship don't see each other for what they objectively are, but rather, view each other in terms of their infantile needs and their infantile conflicts? What would you call that?"

Bak looked over at me ironically and said "I'd call that life."

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In both analysis and life, we perceive reality through a veil of unconscious infantile fantasy. Nothing we say or do or think is ever purely 'rational' or 'irrational,' purely 'real' or 'transferential.' It is always a mixture.\(^{435}\)

This is all well and good in the utopian similarity that psychoanalysis wants to inhabit where the visible body does not feature, where the 'body' is always the same. Psychoanalysis attempts to rid the body of its significance, but the black body resists this marginalisation in both the white and black imagination. It is the black body that steps in the gap and upsets an easy way of looking. It is the blackness of the body that renders it a sign, not that which lies behind it.\(^{436}\)

The 'issue' with advertising is; the body is seen, it needs to be seen, it is at the level of the body\(^{437}\) that advertising works. We see the body, read what it says, and reach conclusions about the product.

For being the father of psychoanalysis, it is interesting to note that Freud wanted to remain on the white side of the divide, blackness being used as a demeaning racial/religious slur in Freud's Austria. Being placed chromatically as a combination of black and yellow, swarthy, did not sit well, especially as it was meant to be a reflection of the emotions and intelligence.\(^{438}\) This early rejection of the visibly and unequivocally 'raced' has undoubtedly informed


\(^{437}\) Even if is possible to argue that there is really only an image, but the image serves as an iconic sign for the absent body, so the body is at stake.

psychoanalysis, that so very little exists about visible difference in psychoanalysis. It is no surprise that Fanon has remained the analyst of choice where race is concerned, in that he is willing to attend to the question of racial identity. For psychoanalysis, the endurance of racial awareness is a pointing finger, highlighting psychoanalysis' silence.

The reliance on racial language in *Pleasantville*, a black and white utopia, is a characterisation of the modern analysis of race. And not race as a critique of whiteness vis a vis blackness, but as a reinforcement of white feelings of universality: 'We too understand what it means to be raced'. The film's strict, if romantic, use of words like 'coloureds' and 'greys', the relegation of the 'coloureds' to the balcony in the courtroom scene in the film, highlight the conscious/unconscious linguistic and mechanical observance of race.

The film acts out the psychoanalytic heroic/utopian construction that sees the possibility of a perfect future where all we will be dealing with is the machinations of the mind and not the body. The body becomes a representative of the mind, and no more. While this film may be attempting to represent a chromatic idyll, it manages no such feat, if anything it reinforces the ideas of visible difference. 'Colour' is achieved within the film through transgression, and by its end we see the misery that 'colour' brings with the unresolved *menage a trois*.

Racial awareness and its attendant prejudices are placed in the same category as any other neurosis, meaning that the raced being has caused trauma in the long forgotten past. So the racist or prejudiced person cannot be held responsible for their actions.

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The patient does not remember anything of what he has forgotten and repressed, he acts it out, without, of course, knowing that he is repeating it... but he makes it clear that he is ashamed of the treatment on which he is embarked and tries to keep it secret from everybody.\footnote{440}

An unstated allegiance to whiteness becomes the mode of operation. Yet psychoanalysis is a handy tool which can be brought to bear on blackness and advertising. In revealing 'repressed' prejudices, one can discover the need for race in advertising.

With its ability to uncover, psychoanalysis and its methods are helpful in reaching some understanding. As Claudia Tate, in arguing for the use of psychoanalysis with the black body, puts it: 'I argue that (...) psychoanalysis can tell us much about the complex social workings of race (...) and the representations of these workings.'\footnote{441}

**A review of visual pleasure and narrative cinema**

The role of the gaze in advertising cannot be underestimated: the gaze provides the basis for language needed to grasp the intended meaning. The advertiser has a target audience in mind and attempts to speak their language. As promotional material from Nike UK Limited put it with regards to newspaper advertising:

[It] offers a very flexible and wide form of coverage. Allows geographic, demographic and socio-economic segmentation of audience by advertising publication according to their readership profile. [This] makes newspapers a very powerful medium for target marketing.\(^{442}\)

This means that the likely 'race', income bracket, and social standing of the reader can be assumed and appropriate advertisements produced. Whoever it is targeted by advertising will be determined to view the world in a particular fashion. This position will be pandered to by the advertiser to achieve the highest possible persuasive impact. As advertising is a mass media project it has to make assumptions. The impression that the advertiser gives indicates that the British target audience is seen as white, which affects decisions made on representation.

Decisions made about the 'body' become polarised between the available 'white' and 'black'. But the expected gaze, being white, means the advertising 'body' is manipulated to satisfy the gaze and get its message across. The white gaze determines the construction of the black body in advertising. The black body functions as an symbolic sign before anything else, the black body is not there as a 'body' but as a carrier of meaning.\(^{443}\)

Mulvey starts out by establishing the need in the man for the woman to make the phallic possible, expanding to show that the woman eventually becomes the foil for the male presence in cinema:

\(^{442}\) Nike (UK) Limited promotional material. Supplied at NikeTown London 16 Jan. 2000 p. 2

\(^{443}\) This is not to imply that the white body does not carry meaning. Like the black body it is constructed and inscribed with codes to facilitate its understanding as a political entity and signifier. The black body is simply 'seen' differently in the white imagination and the subsequent gaze. There is also the construction of the white body in the black imagination., see hooks, bell. Black Looks: Race and Representation.; Hill, Mike. ed. Whiteness: A Critical Reader.; Daniels, Jesse. White Lies: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in White Supremacist Discourse.
Woman then stands in patriarchal culture as a signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order to which man can live out his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer, not maker, of meaning.  

The black body carries out similar functions in the white order.

While there are differences between cinema and most advertising (regarding print and billboard advertising), they both present a spectacle of a distanced other. Cinema being time based, has a set narrative and the audience spends a set length of time with the film. There is also the darkness of the theatre and the suspension of self that occurs in the cinema. These, however, do not erase the similarity of persuasive intention. And it is this distancing which allows the transfer of the message. For this reason Mulvey's arguments on scopophilia are equally valid for advertising and race as they are for cinema and gender.

Advertising, like cinema, has created a space where it is possible to escape into identification with the creation of ego ideals. This has been achieved through the 'star system' where the 'stars' provide a focus or centre both to screen space and story where they act out a complex process of likeness and difference (the glamorous impersonating ordinary). This is made clear when one sees the dominance of black 'stars' in advertising, where it is easier for the white audience to identify with the 'star' value of the body. Desire is

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446 ibid. p. 18.
transferred from the star to the viewer of the advertisement. The whitening of
the black body, which money and fame achieves, make the transition even
easier for the white viewer.

(BLACK) AS IMAGE, (WHITE) AS BEARER OF THE LOOK

A 'In a world ordered by [racial] imbalance, pleasure in looking between
active/[white] and passive/[black]. The determining [white] gaze projects
its fantasy onto the [black] figure, which is styled accordingly.\textsuperscript{447}

In this realm of the spectacle, it is the white gaze that has dominance, both in
the creation of the advertisement, the supposed audience and the eventual
market for the product. This awareness of the audience and the need to
transfer the message across succinctly means that the black body has to
function on the level of the fetishistic spectacle. The fetish relies on the prior
knowledge and opinions of the perceived audience. So the societal difference
between the black and white body are placed high on the visual agenda,
using Mulvey's appropriately put summation: "An active/passive (racial)
division of labour has controlled narrative structure."\textsuperscript{448} To carry on in this vein,
"According to the principles of the ruling ideology and the physical structures
that back it up, the (white body) cannot bear the burden of (racial)
objectification. (Whiteness) is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like".\textsuperscript{449}

After all the white body is arguably devoid of race.\textsuperscript{450} It is the norm, the measure
of mankind, it is therefore not wholly suitable for fragmentation. In putting
abstract concepts like speed, agility or coolness across, the white body finds

\textsuperscript{448} ibid. p. 20. Brackets/alterations mine.
\textsuperscript{449} ibid.
itself unsuitable, because this ‘breaking up’ will reduce the overall viability of the body. Therefore another body is necessary to fulfil the desires of the white self, to provide a visual articulation of what the white body wants. This is not saying that whiteness cannot stand for abstract values, it is simply easier to find another means of objectifying values. And raced bodies, already imbued with signification, carry out this function perfectly. The black body is similar enough to allow identification, but sufficiently distant to make objectification possible.

'Ultimately the meaning of the (black person) is (racial) difference, the visually ascertainable absence of (whiteness). This absence is made clear when one sees the construction of the black person as lacking in a considerable number of qualities. The black skin is not gain, it is a loss.

Consider the Metropolitan Police’s advertisement with the byline ‘THIS IS WHERE YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT’ which was circulated around London on billboards and in Underground stations in September 1999.

An elderly, married black woman is shown in a bed (presumably a hospital bed) with white sheets and gown. She is holding the sheet to her chest protectively [fig. 34]. Her face is badly injured, with bruises, swelling and bloodied eyes. Over her injuries is superimposed white text. As one reads down the page her ‘attributes’ are considered:

1. Over the injury to her cheek and eye ‘This is where he punched her because she’s black.’

451 The white body is constructed in opposition to the black body as being cerebral/civilised rendering the physical profane/primitive. This duality means that those elements that are not desirable are likely to diminish whiteness if freely attributed.

452 Mulvey, Laura Visual and Other Pleasures. p.21 Brackets/alterations mine
2. Over the other eye and cheek 'This is where he smacked her because she's old.'

3. Over her mouth 'This is where he kicked her for her pension.'

We are made to believe that the villain is a white male. The advertisement is aimed at recruiting members of the public into a police force made up of white officers predominantly. Considering the contemporary drive to increase the number of 'ethnic' police officers this advertisement might be seen as a means of galvanising the black community into action.

Yet the image reinforces the black body as object and victim. The woman in the image is primarily black, her other sufferings come later. Defenceless and scared, she becomes a vehicle for representing the worst in the white self; the racist, violent thief without regard for age, a plunderer of the 'weak'. It relies on the gaze being white, white enough to objectify the woman into what she can stand for. Not someone's mother, wife, lover, sister or aunt. She needs to remain a black 'thing' to achieve the detachment that asks, 'What can I do about this?', the ubiquitous question of charity advertising.

It is only possible to read the woman's blackness as loss, a loss that acts as a cover for a deeper fear.

Within Mulvey's argument, the male desire for the female body and what it stands for is countered by the threat of castration. Likewise white desire for the black body (especially the idealised black body) is countered by the fear of 'the thing' that is blackness. It is afraid of blackness as the 'dark side' of whiteness that it (whiteness) has constructed. Whiteness is scared of the threat of displacement/disavowal. The threat that the black body, will in fact,
become the 'ideal' body. This threat has to be removed, and demeaning objectification seems to work the best.

The 'male unconscious has two avenues of escape from this 'castration anxiety': voyeurism (demystification and investigation of the woman as object), and fetishistic scopophilia (idealising the woman's physical beauty as object, thus rendering it harmless through the directly derived pleasure). Similarly the white unconscious uses similar means to deal with its displacement anxiety. In advertising, the white unconscious is provided with the opportunity to present the black body as it sees it; the voyeur looking into a black existence is allowed to present its findings. This can be observed in the ostentatious use of parody and other kinds of humour. Idealisation, already mentioned, represents fetishistic scopophilia.

To begin with (as in ending), the voyeuristic-scopophilic look that is a crucial part of traditional filmic/advertising pleasure can itself be broken down. There are three different looks associated with cinema/advertising; that of the camera as it records the pro-filmic event, that of the audience as it watches the final product, and that of the characters at each other within the screen illusion.

This enumeration of three gazes that the image undergoes forms a suitable juncture from which to investigate the role of the advertising object itself in the persistence of race in advertising.

Like Laura Mulvey, I desire to complicate the viewing of the black body in advertising by pointing out that even the gaze and construction of the gaze

\[\text{ibid. p. 21.}\]
\[\text{ibid. p. 25. Brackets/alterations mine.}\]
relies on race and by extension racism. No more shall the black body be viewed passively as if there were not complex constructions at play. As mentioned before 'ultimately the meaning of the black body is racial difference.'

Ways of Seeing

Arguably there is one way of looking at the construction of mainstream British advertising, and that is with the white eye or the white gaze, to the point that all people, black and white, see and interpret the same way. If the black person sees through a white filter, then white people are bound to see through it as well. This may appear self-evident, but there are claims by white people to understand what it means to be black and can thereby accurately depict an objective black existence. This being the case, whenever the black body is on show, it can only be seen and understood through a white gaze and scheme of understanding. The 'gaze' has a 'code' understood by both the public and advertiser, and is applied to the body whenever employed. This is regardless of it being black or white, and in order for the advertising image to 'work' as expected, it has to be consumed using the 'code' and white gaze.

In cases where the black population forms part of an advertisement's target audience, the campaign can often fail because of cultural rejection. This happened to Persil's commercial where a Dalmatian shaking off black spots caused considerable offence. This also affected Pirelli's feminisation of Carl Lewis. Here the black person is unable to use the white way of looking; their

45b Fanon, Frantz. Black Skin, White Mask.
45c See Tarantino on Jackie Brown.
45d Carter, Meg. 'The Ads That Got Lost in Translation.' The Independent on Sunday 7 Apr. 1996.
45e 'Marketing Ignores Colour Backgrounds.' Precision Marketing 25 Nov. 1996.
self is infringed. The advertising image is therefore unsettled and does not 'translate'. This of course does not matter where the target audience is the 'mainstream'. With the discounted black consumer, the dominant mode of looking is adequate.

Perceiving all black people as culturally, socially, politically and economically homogeneous, is one way that the white gaze functions. Gary Younge outlines this crisis in his article 'Who Do You Think I Am?', where he is taken to be Steve McQueen at a literary awards ceremony by a white woman.

It took all of my creative energy to locate the source of the confusion - the winner of the Turner Prize is black. I am black. Ergo I could be the Turner Prize winner. Obvious really.\(^{459}\)

An attempt to confront cultural and political difference, at least, has been made by Western Union. In their campaign to encourage 'foreigners' to send money 'home' (thereby boosting their trade), they created separate images for Africans, Caribbeans and 'Latinos'.

The three images bear a black hand holding an open wallet containing a photograph with accompanying legends. The English/African: 'Getting your money home safely is our one and only job'; English/Caribbean: Millions of people trust us to send money home'; and the English/'Latino': 'Making sure your money gets home safely'. [figs. 35 - 37]

Yet the 'code and 'gaze' bears through again (even in a 'mainstream' campaign clearly aimed at the 'ethnic' market), the black people are alien and

needy, if smiling and 'well'. The myth of the black man working as an economic refugee or migrant in Britain to send money 'home' to his dependent wife and children, or for their passage to the 'Motherland', is repeated. All black people are strategically similar with cosmetic variation. It is possible to tell that the 'sender' is in Britain by the currency poking out of their wallets.

The racial 'treatment' is not a fluke. Where Western Union targets and depicts the white person (in two separate advertisements) photographs are eschewed and 'universal' cartoon characters in distress are employed instead, with the line: 'Money from home in minutes'. [figs. 38 - 39]

Home for Western Union is white, the gaze is white, the 'other' is black. As Younge puts it:

And the mistake is not that the person asking the question [or making the statement] has seen race - ( . . . ) it is that they have been unable to see beyond race ( . . . ). Socially it is the difference between being asked 'Who are you?' and being told 'That's what I think you are'; the difference between defining yourself and being defined.860

What is there left to enjoy?

That the dominant gaze is white, that to understand and enjoy the black body in mainstream advertising requires an incorporation of a white 'code', arguably leaves the black person unable to enjoy the body as a black person. Denied the use of what can be called the 'black gaze'.

860 ibid.
Like Mulvey's realisation that it may be possible for women to construct 'visual pleasure' which is not an internalisation of the 'male gaze', but a way of looking that subverts the dominant 'male gaze'. A reading is constructed which 'centralises' the woman, allowing for an alternative reading which displaces 'obvious' heroes, forging allegiances/loyalties with new characters.

The black person similarly creates a way of looking which allows entry into the narrative as a black body, not as a white masked one. The staged black body appears and acts as mirror for the 'live' black body which identifies with it.

Sensitivity to historical representation of the black body is demonstrated in the black community's outrage when the Electricity Association's commercial with animated apes was introduced. A barrage of complaints that the simians were derogatory representations of black people arrived at the Independent Television Commission, which in turn generated press derision, accusations of over-sensitivity and a distancing of race bodies from the complaints. The black viewer constructed a narrative differing from the white mainstream, or they may have identified cloaked intention. This alternative construction is what Sun Alliance discovered when they used a 'Tarzan' narrative to sell advertising. What is humour to Sun Alliance is an insult to a black person.

The black desire for a representation, suitable to identify with, is borne out in

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463 'Don't Laugh, They Say This Ad is Racist.' Today 18 Sep. 1992. p.23.
popular and urban film and music. Consider Isaac Hayes' *Black Moses* and Tupac Shakur's posthumously released track 'Black Jesuz' on the album *Still I Rise*. They indicate a desire to see the world differently, that there is a black consciousness that critically appraises differently to the 'white gaze'. Hayes' invoking of a *Black Moses* highlights the legacy of Marcus Garvey, and black Nationalism. Shakur explains that he wants a model who understands what it is like to wear the same skin, lives the same way, appreciates what it is to be him.

For the black person, on encountering mainstream representation, a simultaneous recognition of the self and unwillingness to suspend disbelief occurs. Manthia Diawara explains that it is not always possible for the black person to not notice the black body's role. He explains that Hollywood's framework is such that one has to identify with the white body in the film or else there will be a crisis of cinematic pleasure. He uses the 'Gus Chase' from *The Birth of a Nation* to explain that the consequence of identifying with 'Little Colonel' is "the punishment and destruction of Gus and the black race he symbolises". The obvious problem here for the black spectator is the inability to enter into the 'destruction' desire (if identification with the phantasmic Gus is possible). Gus' destruction cannot be pleasurable as it will be eliminating the 'self' which will upset the moralistic structure of the racial encounter.

The black male does not fit easily into the role of 'patriarchal antagonist' (Gus remains a victim) considering that racial oppression is shared by black men

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Black resistance to 'mainstream' visual representation and awareness of a black gaze demands a questioning of white self-validation in representing black experiences. Questions of suitability raised after Spielberg's treatment of Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple* and the 'black' interest in Spike Lee's making of *Malcolm X* illustrates this. (This is not denying the uncomfortable relationship of mainstream cinema and blackness). Diawara points out that Mulvey's male spectator is always white, as mainstream cinema "situates black characters primarily for the pleasure of white spectators". This 'situating', in undermining black personhood, renders white looking pleasure incompatible with black selfhood.

Race is important in the black person's visual pleasure, especially where whiteness has presented itself as the antithesis of blackness and even precedes gender difference in identification. Racial solidarity has been wrought by a similar representational treatment of women and men: "historically a black female is either all woman and tinted black or mostly black or scarcely woman". Likewise the black male construction, but with some beast thrown in. This racial marginalisation facilitates easier identification with the image of the black person, regardless of gender or

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Therefore the maligning manipulation of one black body impinges on the black body collective. Similarly the success or triumph of a black person in an advertisement or film is seen as a credit to all, creating pleasure. Note the response to *Shaft* and *Sweet Sweetback Baadasssss Song*, and how the films became successful through black patronage (in the face of white mainstream disregard). There was apparent pleasure derived from seeing a black person triumph.

How does the manner in which the black gaze has been forced to defer to whiteness affect 'black' pleasure when viewing the white body? The mask that traditionally protects will not suddenly disappear in the cinema or on seeing a billboard. The deference (with its attendant resentment) 'usually' employed further sensitises the gaze to the black 'self'. Hence a distancing will not occur on perceiving the black body as the 'looking structure' shifts.\(^{675}\)

**Notes on the mirror phase and misrecognition**

Following on from Mulvey's argument, when a person identifies another person, there will be a note of colour difference (as recognising physiological sexual difference precedes gender difference). This initial contact is not racial difference, just chromatic within which completeness is found. The subject person, aware that they do not bear the viewed colour, accords the other's colour difference. Both black and white people are going to find completeness in the other, but social and cultural pressures produce the dominant white

\(^{474}\) ibid. p. 16.

\(^{675}\) ibid. p. 21.
The black body and the subservient black body. The black body is stereotyped by the white imagination, while the white body takes on a fantastic role in the black imagination.

Taking Sharwoods' advertisements which carry the black body (to be discussed later), the white body misrecognises the black body to bring about its own completeness. The black body is given attributes it does not necessarily own, but which are desirable to the white body. The white person is then able to identify with the attributed desirable elements of the black body.

The advertiser needs this fictional construction (the placed attributes) to give credibility to the claims made for their product. Racial shorthand allows for ever increasing fantastic claims to be made and inferred, as the black body becomes a repository of the fantastic, for the white imagination. In the Sharwoods advertisements, though there is nothing to stop the black male from enjoying 'bland' or for the Asian woman to detest curried food, yet their bodies still function as receptors of a white fantasy that says they are 'hot'. The Sharwoods advertisements are clearly aimed at a white audience; there is little point in telling 'ethnics' that normally use 'spices' to use the same spices to 'put some fire into their belly'.

On incorporation

The black body is introduced to the cultural mainstream where it carries a function and in almost no other circumstance. This phenomenon mirrors the historical introduction of the black body to the British pubic as a curious exhibit. This functional incorporation applies to all areas of culture and is most evident in the realm of music, where black music is said to 'cross over' if a
sizeable section of the white public choose to listen to it. In essence, the black body receives a peculiar validation, when it 'speaks' to a white audience. Otherwise, it is marginalised and disallowed.

**That thing that is black**

In questioning the persistence of race/racism, race/racial prejudice and race/racial stereotyping in advertising, one has to pay more attention to the item of advertising than to the production process. Firstly, very few advertising creatives or executives will admit that they are furthering racist notions in the work they do. Secondly, it is impossible to chart the production process of advertising imagery that relies heavily on race to function. By the time the image is deemed offensive the production process is over and all that there is left to analyse is the residue of a consultive creative process. The consultive creative process is another obstacle in interrogating 'method'; the advertising image will never be the full responsibility of one person, or even a small group of people. There are various interests; the client, creative/s, account managers, and the pseudo-scientists of public opinion all bear responsibility. Racial sentiments and opinions that appear in the image can best be attributed to the repression of 'the thing'.

This means that the 'end' is the 'beginning' and mirrors Zizek's assertion (through Lacan) that the repressed's return is through the future.

The Lacanian answer to the question: From where does the repressed return? is therefore, paradoxically: From the future. Symptoms are meaningless traces, their meaning is not discovered, excavated from
the hidden depths of the past, but constructed retroactively.\textsuperscript{476}

It is the product of advertising that bears the proof of race, it is the advertising image that carries the evidence of the thought process that led to its inception. Therefore the moment of scrutiny has to be the present, not the formative past, nor some conceptual future.\textsuperscript{477}

\textbf{Being fly}

The idea of remembering as a return of the repressed is presented in \textit{Back to the Future}.\textsuperscript{478} 'Normal' racial relations are set out in the film; black waiters serve in a comfortable white suburban town somewhere in 1950's United States. Three white men hurl racial epithets at the stereotypically black band, and in spite of the level of staged violence in the film, their taboo retributive beating is smoothly left unstated. There is nothing in the film to question the status quo.

Amidst this racial dis/harmony, Marty McFly (the white teenage time traveller) plays an upbeat blues with the band because the lead guitarist has hurt his hand. As McFly thrills the audience with 'Johnny B. Goode', the lead guitarist excitedly rushes to a telephone for a one-sided conversation of:

\begin{verbatim}
Chuck!
Chuck!
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{477} Advertising images in the present are the objects that can be questioned. Advertising that has received criticism on its use of race has presented the defence that the image is before its time, that in the future, where 'race' is not an issue, the image will be rightly appreciated. This is a weak excuse as the image is in use and forms part of culture in the present. Also whatever 'good' intentions were aspired to in the image's 'past' do not affect the reality of the image at hand.
\textsuperscript{478} Zemeckis, Robert. dir. \textit{Back to the Future}. Universal City Studios Inc. New York 1985
It's Marvin!

Your cousin Marvin Berry

You know the new sound you've been looking for?

Well listen to this!!^{79}

Marvin then holds the receiver towards the stage for Chuck Berry to hear McFly play and get inspiration for his 'new' sound. When one considers McFly's role as the super cool newcomer, his surname suddenly makes sense. 'Fly' is a black slang word for 'cool' or 'hip', a streetwise character. The pop group
'Offspring' put it rather appropriately with: 'Pretty Fly (for a White Guy)' on their *Americana* album. (The lyrics are repeated here fully to show the depth of feeling carried in the song.) Offspring is an American Rock band and the song is meant to be an ironical look at a cultural phenomenon, using themselves as a motif. The video accompanying the single shows white people desperately trying to be black, the clothes, the car, the jewellery, all in the

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**Pretty Fly (for a white guy)**

You know it's kind of hard
Just to get along today
Our subject isn't cool
But he fakes it anyway
He may not have a clue
And he may not have style
But everything he lacks
Well he makes up in denial

So don't debate, a player straight
You know he really doesn't get it anyway
He's gonna play the field, and keep it real
For you no way, for you no way
So if you don't rate, just overcompensate
At least you'll know you can always go on ricki lake
The world needs wannabe's
So do that brand new thing

He needs some cool tunes
Not just any will suffice
But they didn't have ice cube
So he bought vanilla ice
Now cruising in his pinto, he sees homies as he pass
But if he looks twice
They're gonna kick his lily ass

Now he's getting a tattoo
He's gettin' ink done
He asked for a '13', but they drew a '31'
Friends say he's trying too hard
And he's not quite hip
But in his own mind
He's the dopest trip

So don't debate, a player straight
You know he really doesn't get it anyway
He's gonna play the field, and keep it real
For you no way, for you no way
So if you don't rate, just overcompensate
At least you'll know you can always go on ricki lake
The world needs wannabe's
The world loves wannabe's
So let's get some more wannabe's
And do that brand new thing

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*Americana* lyrics
http://web.mountain.net/~triggerx/smashland/americana.htm#4 08 Jan. 2000

quest of being 'fly'. Yet the irony plays itself out with the commercial success of the album. The group does become cool, their album sales indicating that what they have to say has hit a sore cultural and racial nerve. 'We usually say that the fascinating presence of a Thing obscures its meaning, here the opposite is true: the meaning obscures the terrifying impact of its presence.'

Slavoj Zizek points out

> The past exists as it is included, as it enters (into) the synchronous net of the signifier - that is as it is symbolised in the texture of the historical memory - and that is why we are all the time 'rewriting history', retroactively giving the elements their symbolic weight by including them in new textures - it is this elaboration which decides retroactively what they 'will have been'.

Within the context of a science fiction comedy, it is easy to bend the rules of life, yet it is in the very realm of fiction that the repressed nature of the persistence of race makes its clearest appearance. In an instant, McFly is cool and proves the originator of a quintessentially black sound. Marty becomes the inspiration for 'Rock and Roll', claims it for whiteness and assures what 'will have been'.

**Hegelian joke**

The advertiser may not necessarily believe in the sexual prowess of the black body, the agility of the black athlete, the intrinsic style of the black inner city youth, but he needs them to create a repository for his fantasies (aspirational

482 Zizek, Slavoj *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. p. 71
483 ibid. p. 56
and fearful). Since the scopophilic reflection is perceived as perfect in comparison to the self, the advertiser is forced to maintain the myth of the black body to satisfy the idea of perfection (of infinite possibility) that can be attached to the product.

Even when the white child has not met this black other, the first meeting of the black other will still act as a trigger for the mythical blackness that has been used to represent the other. From Burroughs’ or Conrad’s ‘natives’ to Nike’s ‘Jordan’ (one fiction, the other real), there is the representation of an idealised myth. It is virtually impossible for the contemporary white consciousness not to encounter this idealised blackness.

The black body comes to represent the collective white unconscious, ‘the mirror of identity’, as Kurtz’s existence and ‘going native’ depicted in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness implies. Kurtz stands for the unconscious identified. ‘Russian’ (Kurtz’s devotee) explains Kurtz to Marlow (the book’s narrator):

. . . Kurtz wandered alone, far into the depths of the forest. ‘Very often coming to this station, I had to wait days and days before he would turn up’ he said (. . .). ‘Kurtz got the tribe to follow him, did he?’ I suggested. He fidgeted a little ‘They adored him’ he said (. . .). He was living for the most part in those villages on the lake. (. . .) This man suffered too much. He [Kurtz] hated all this, and somehow he couldn’t get away (. . .)

484 The mirror phase occurs at a time when children’s physical ambitions outstrip their motor capacity, with the result that their recognition of themselves is joyous in that they imagine their mirror image to be more complete, more perfect than they experience in their own body. Recognition is thus overlaid with misrecognition; the image recognised is conceived as the reflected body of the self, but its misrecognition as superior projects the body outside itself as an ideal ego. Mulvey, Laura Visual and Other Pleasures, p. 17

disappear for weeks, forget himself among these people - forget himself - you know.’ ‘Why! He’s mad.’ I said.  

Conrad uses the trip in the Congo to present the other side of humanity, revealing what happens when we look too deep within, to find the other side. A similar theme is presented in William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, where English schoolboys revert to the ‘primitive’. But what a primitive: spears, grass skirts, blood-letting rituals, the accoutrements of the black other. To explain the flip side of whiteness, there is the need for blackness.

The European does not accurately perceive the African but projects unto him unconscious aspects of himself. These aspects are parts of his personality that are in conflict with his ego. They are the primitive parts of himself that he has rejected as incompatible with his civilised self image. As a result, the white self’s vision of the black others reality is mediated - obscured and obstructed - by a variety of prejudicial and discriminatory projections.

Using Van der Post, Michael Adams explains that the black body has become a mirror of the white body. Even more than a reflection, the black body becomes the mirror and reflection combined, making the black body consistently the means by which the white self can see itself.

To find the reflected self, necessitates Zizek’s use of a Hegelian joke to explain misrecognition.

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Hegelian Joke

- The Jew and the Pole

- There is no secret to discover

- What is being sought has been owned right from the outset

The searcher is seeking for the nothing that they already possess.

The paradox is in the fact that the searcher does not know that they possess what they seek. This makes the search rather important. The searcher needs the search to find what it is they already possess. If they did not meet the one they thought had what it is they were looking for, they will not discover their own heritage. What they do not want to admit they possess, (in the case of the Pole, extracting from people their last coin) has been displaced into the other, which they then can turn around and resent the ‘other’ for possessing. They therefore need the ‘other’ to represent this possession in order to acknowledge its existence.

The black person plays the role of the Jew in the joke and becomes what the white consciousness needs to allow the discovery of itself. So if Nike shoes are Michael Jordan’s secret of agility and jumping ability, then ‘Nike Air Jordans’ will have to be bought. To ’Be Like Mike’ becomes the shoes. On

498 A Pole and a Jew were sitting on a train, facing each other. The Pole was shifting around nervously, watching the Jew all the time; something was irritating him; finally unable to restrain himself any longer, he exploded ‘Tell me how do you Jews succeed in extracting from people the last small coin and in this way accumulate all your wealth?’ The Jew replied ‘OK I will tell you, but not for nothing, first give me five zloty (Polish money).’ After receiving the required amount, the Jew began ‘First you take a dead fish; you cut off her head and put her entrails in a glass of water. Around midnight, when the moon is full, you must bury the glass in a churchyard. . . . ‘And,’ the Pole interrupted him greedily ‘will I also become rich?’ ‘Not too quickly,’ replied the Jew, ‘this is not all you must do, but if you want to hear the rest you must pay me another five zloty!’ After receiving the money again, the Jew continued his story; soon afterwards , he again demanded more money , and so on, until finally the Pole exploded in fury ‘You dirty rascal, do you think i do not see what you were aiming at? There is no secret at all, you simply want to extract the last small coin from me!’ The Jew answered him calmly and with resignation ‘Well you see how we, the Jews, . . . ’

Zizek, Slavoj  The Sublime Object of Ideology, pp. 64
discovering that they can jump, the finger of accusation can be pointed at Jordan; if they cannot, it is easier to invoke race difference. Michael Jordan becomes the ideal, misrecognition on level of physical ability.

**Homogenisation**

A possible response to the contemporary issue of a white gaze and misrecognition is that society is less racially fragmented. The advertising use of the black body, is belated acknowledgement that a black body too can act as a 'universal' body, and not only as a signifier. Arguments of the third space for instance, an alternative space/consciousness that exists alongside the dominant polarities, works as a conceptual model, but does not yet translate when faced with a black body on a billboard.

As Homi Bhabha puts it:

> '... as we know very well, that in societies where multiculturalism is encouraged racism is still rampant in various forms. This is because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests.'

Even the third space of hybridity, eventually becomes a space in its own right with the possibility of opposition and signifying capacity. Some signifying positions already in place are: the utopian notion of a raceless world, the possibility of another kind of person other than the clearly 'raced' black or white. The third space will ultimately reach a point where it needs to align with

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490 ibid. p. 208.
a 'side' because there are forces much stronger than this invented space of resistance/moderation. Eventually the mainstream will incorporate the margins as a source of new life for the centre.

**Das Ding. It's a black thing . . .**

The thing which is clamoured over in the black body and person is quite undefinable in a climate where there is an unwillingness in admitting to reliance on racial stereotypes (and by inference, prejudice). Yet there is clearly a necessary element for the advertiser held in the black body. This element is what makes the black body so malleable in the hands of the advertiser; to inscribe ideology onto the black body is so easy because it is not the body per se that is on show. It is the pre-knowledge of the black body that is being used as a support, the undefinable element, what Zizek calls 'Das Ding.'

**You wouldn’t understand**

‘Das Ding’, that which is being clamoured over in the body of and symbol of blackness, is the unspoken element which commercially defines the body.

These ‘things which mean nothing, suddenly signify something, but in quite a different domain’. . . . This knowledge is an illusion. It does not really exist in the other, the other does not really possess it, it is constituted afterwards, through our - the subject’s - signifier’s working, but it is at the same time a necessary illusion, because we can paradoxically elaborate this knowledge only by means of the illusion that the other already possesses it and that we here only discovering
It is this identification of 'the thing' in the other that renders the other valuable. It is not rational, it is the hope that there is something in the other to fulfil the held position of the self. For the black body in Britain, the myth that surrounds it holds 'the thing' for the white population. As Zizek illustrates:

Let us again take the typical individual in Germany in the late 1930's, he is bombarded by anti-Semitic propaganda depicting the Jew as a monstrous incarnation of Evil, the great wire puller, and so on. But when he returns home he encounters Mr. Stern, his neighbour, a good man to chat with in the evenings, whose children play with his. Does not this everyday experience offer an irreducible resistance to the ideological construction?

The answer is, of course, no. . . . His answer would be to turn the gap, the discrepancy itself into an argument for anti-Semitism. 'You see how dangerous they really are? It is difficult to recognise their real nature. They hide it behind the mask of everyday appearance'.

The preface 'I am not a racist, but' or 'some of my best friends are black' alert the listener to the irrational essentialising of the black body. Neither, never meeting nor constant interaction with the black body, will erode 'the thing' that is the essential other. There will remain the belief that the black body is what the black body is supposed to be.

'The thing' that is blackness is what blackness stands for. It needs to be

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491 Zizek, Slavoj The Sublime Object of Ideology. p. 56.
492 ibid. p. 49.
elusive, for to grasp it will mean the end of blackness. It is the indispensability of the imaginary that leads to the creation of one body in advertising. Most large businesses will survive without the six percent income that the black purchases represents, so it is not the goodwill and patronage from black customers that inspire the black body's use.494

**Construction of ‘Das Ding’**

It is the construction of blackness that allows identification with the billboard image.

**Symbolic identification / constitutive** is identification with the very place from where we are being observed, from where we look at ourselves, so that we appear to ourselves, likeable, worthy of love.

**Imaginary identification / constituted** is identification with the image in which we appear likeable to ourselves, with the image representing what we would like to be.495

‘Symbolic identification’ is an explanation of what happens to a black person when they confront advertising that has been clearly directed at a white audience. ‘Imaginary identification’ is where the white person sees what they want to be discernible in themselves, in the black body. Identification with the essence or ‘thingness’ of the black person.

Where the white person sees themselves as being ‘black’, or at least having access to ‘the thing’ that is blackness through an active choice of cultural

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494 Zizek, Slavoj  *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 48
495 ibid. p. 105.
activity; music, language and clothing style. They will find it easier to identify with the black body in advertising. This is not becoming physically black, just a mental position of already being ‘black’ at seeing an advertisement.

Advertisers are astute in relying on the illustrative element of blackness, this is the very part of blackness that the white collective is able to deal with. It is ‘different’ and this difference allows incorporation. For incorporation to happen, the black body has to remain an ideal, not ‘marred’ by similarity to the white body (a white body generated in a white consciousness for mainstream advertising). We are not dealing with how a black body will view itself, being able to laugh at dubious constructions, make fun of it, as advertisers strive to isolate blackness.496

What must seem an ideal situation is when the white body is able to incorporate the ‘thing’ of blackness and dispense with the black body as mirror. Hence the successful incarnation of people like Elvis Presley, Vanilla Ice and Marky Mark.497 The ‘complete’ white person will have all that is needed to be black, yet remain clearly and unambiguously white. It is this paradox that denies Michael Jackson that role (the derision of the press shows this), his chromatic transformation will never achieve this goal. He is already too black. It is not the way he looks, it is ‘the thing’ that cannot be pinned down.

This pre-knowledge of the black body is expressed in the advertisements of Peter Werth featuring a black model as a fashion designer. Text runs under the photograph of a black man in black with spiked hair, sitting, with his body

wide open on a white pillar against a white background [fig. 40]. Quite apt, reading his given/spoken statement:

    i am peterwerth.

    i am peter werth
That's right I'm black
I'm 5' 8", I can't dance and I can't sing. In fact I am not particularly well
edowed in any way except for my talent for designing menswear.
Peter Werth clothes are still hip and trendy without being all gold chains
and trousers that hang down below your butt cheeks.

The advertisement appears to upset the stereotype of what a black male is; by
debunking the ‘essence’ of a black maleness and aesthetic. Both are
stereotypes of what the black person is involved in. The advertisement's
audience is meant to carry the notion that the black male is always tall, can
sing and dance and has a big penis. Peter Werth is reinforcing these
stereotypes, Peter Werth's advertisement attempts to find the thing that
makes the black man 'cool' and strives to associate their product with it.

The advertisement, in stating that black style involves gold chains and low
hanging trousers, aims at distilling blackness through style. It says that Peter
Werth clothing is able to meet any challenge of style that a black aesthetic
may make.

Peter Werth's clothing advertisement appeared in a young men's fashion
magazine (FHM Oct. 1999), and the argument can be made that the potential
audience possesses a wry sense of humour (that demands an aggressive
advertising style). It does not remove the fact that the image revolves around the manipulation of race and the implied carrying of prejudices by readers of the magazine. In fact the advertisement will not succeed as a piece of potential humour if the readers were not prejudiced, or at least carried jaundiced positions.

This leaves an image riddled with the prejudices it claims to upset. The advertisement is based on racial prejudice. The attempt at solidarity with 'i am peter werth' is too close to the rallying slogan 'i am Malcolm X' of Spike Lee's Malcolm X, to be a accident. It does not succeed in its mission, especially when one queries the manipulation and essentialising of blackness. Even if the negation is couched as a 'positive' repudiation of racial (physiological, social and cultural) stereotypes, it still relies on the black body as a raced signifier.

The advertisement takes on greater racial poignancy, when one realises that Peter Werth is a 53 year old white man, who started his clothing company in 1975.

The thing speaks

Advertising functions as exposition of the black person’s role in British society. It provides a means to gauge values and expectations of the advertising agencies (and by extension British society at large), where the black person is concerned. The reason for black people in British advertising, is only made clear when the black body begins to speak for itself through the very medium of advertising.
The necessarily public nature of advertising demands exposure of the views, intentions, and language of the advertiser (which is not necessarily homogeneous). The construction of advertising material has to acknowledge the existence, aspirations and values of the potential purchaser and their gaze. The reliance on focus groups by advertising agencies and corporations attests to this. However it is the published part of this enterprise that gives clues to the role given to the black person.

Exposition is always also an argument. Therefore in publicising these views the subject objectifies, exposes himself as much as the object that makes the exposition an exposure of the self. Such exposure is an act of producing meaning, a performance.

The creation of meaning, makes a subject of the exposed object, a subject with a voice and able to speak. Advertising does not desire that the object of exposure reaches the state of being able to speak with its own voice, as this detracts from the role given to the object. A mute object ready to absorb applied interpretation is the aspiration. Where there is the need to create openness, the white body is able to function, as the expectations of the audience are met with a multiplicity of meaning. Where there is a specific thing to be said, the black body is the 'body par excellence'.

This excellence is what creates the desire to use blackness. It creates the focus and source of both the presenters' and viewers' opinion and position on the black body.

Mieke Bal explains the energy of the formerly voiceless:

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Exposing an agent, or subject puts things on display, which creates a subject/object dichotomy. This dichotomy enables the subject to make a statement about the object. The object is there to substantiate the statement. It is put there within a frame that enables the statement to come across. There is an addressee for the statement, the visitor, viewer or reader. The discourse surrounding the exposition, or more precisely, the discourse that is the exposition is "constative": informative and affirmative.\(^{499,500}\)

'The object is there to substantiate the statement.'\(^{501}\) Here we see the object's role as buttressing the declaration of the addressor: in the advertiser's case, they use the 'object' of the black body to create a discourse to support their assertions.

Bal continues:

This discourse has a truth value: the proposition it conveys is either true or false. It is *apo-dectic* in that sense of affirmation. In exposition a 'first person' the exposer, tells a 'second person' the visitor, about a 'third person' the object on display, who does not participate in the conversation. But unlike many other constative speech acts, the object, although mute, is present.\(^{502}\)

Bal's position, even though primarily on the image/object of the museum,

\(^{499}\) ibid. p. 3.
\(^{500}\) Constative; stating or asserting a wish, comment or plan, not its actual performance. "I hope to go" is a constative utterance, "I am going" is a performative utterance. It can also mean a statement that can be true or false that implies assertion rather than performance.
\(^{501}\) Bal, Mieke. *Double Exposures*, p. 3.
\(^{502}\) ibid. pp. 3 - 4
The Black Body in Use or To Think What?

proves useful in the analysis of contemporary advertising. It gives the advertising image power and authority to speak clearly and concisely. In one sense the advertisement protects/hides the producer, in that we interrogate the silent image as if it were the cause of the charges being made at it. The first person becomes invisible to the second person. Advertising thereby chooses to speak through this 'silent' third person, owing to the abdication of responsibility it offers. This disguise consequently silences the third person twice. The first silencing is in the lack of attention that is paid to the voice of the image; the second is the louder voice of the first person that we are more likely to hear. The diagram shows the order of the relationship between the three 'subjects' 

![Diagram](image)

I have chosen to call them subjects, because in this relationship, all three parts have a voice.

The visibility and the presence paradoxically makes it possible to make statements about the object that do not apply to it; the discrepancy between the 'thing' and 'sign' is precisely what makes signs necessary and useful. But the discrepancy in the case of the exposition is blatant and emphatic because the presence of a 'thing' that recedes before the statement about it brings the discrepancy to the fore. The thing on display comes to stand for something else, the statement about it. It comes to mean. The thing recedes into invisibility as the sign status
The Black Body in Use or To Think What?

... takes precedence to make the statement. A sign stands for a thing (or idea) in some capacity, for someone.  

If for one moment one thinks of the 'thing', as treated by Zizek, then this statement becomes loaded with meaning. It is the 'thing' in blackness that is being used in advertising, it is the thingness of the black body that carries meaning for the advertiser. The black body is a 'thing' twice over. First it is the body as a 'thing', then secondly, the 'thing' about the black body comes through to carry the message/statement. The black body works so well in this capacity of the silenced third party, because, the black body is perceived as being 'all' sign. it carries its own 'thingness' around with it.

Advertising is exposing what it means to be 'black', it is showing the world the attributes of the black body, mind and spirit. As it exposes, it attempts to hide behind the facade of the message, stopping interrogation by presenting the image as the object of scrutiny. The narrative presented with the image is given as the preferred meaning, anything else is easily dismissed as wild conjecture.

So the black body/person becomes, as stated, no more than a sign having its status drilled into it. As complete sign, it becomes almost impossible to break outside its appointed status because it will not be recognised in any other guise. This loss of recognition will mean a loss of 'use value' for the advertiser.

The sign status of the black body has an additional benefit to the advertiser; it blocks the viewer from seeing the devices of advertising. The black body as

\[503\] ibid. p. 4.
fantasy provides fixation for the white gaze. See the opening shots of *Amistad* for the treatment of the black body as phantom/phantasm.

This brings us to coffee.

**Time to drink**

*Nescafé* Sept. 1999

There are three people in the campaign: Ian Wright; footballer, the boxer Chris Eubank; and Denise Van Outen, former presenter of Channel Four's 'Big Breakfast' and actress in ITV's *Babes in the Wood*. The men are black and the woman is white. The advertisements were placed in magazines, newspapers and on billboards nationally.

The lines that accompany the images are ambiguous. The footballer's refers to substitution, the boxer to the 'betht' (best) and the presenter's to 'original'. The words simultaneously refer to the 'models' occupations and Nescafé's 'qualities'.

Denise Van Outen

She is standing in front of a window wearing pink: pink undergarments, dressing gown, hair ornaments and fingernail polish. We are with her in the morning. She is in a domestic kitchen, complete with television, cooking utensils, toaster, loaf of bread on board and knives on wall. She is holding a cup of coffee with the byline 'The Original and still the best' [fig. 41].

Chris Eubank

Eubank is wearing a conservatively cut brown suit, white shirt and dappled yellow tie. He is holding a cup of Nescafé in his right hand allowing us to see his Union Jack cufflinks. His image is set in a ‘comfortable’ domestic setting; there is a large painting above an ornate fireplace, which itself supports an indistinguishable bust. This accentuates Chris Eubank’s reputation for things English and grand. His grandeur is promptly undermined by his byline ‘Thimply the betht’ rendering his lisp visible to the audience. This device also ingeniously credits Eubank with the phrase [fig. 42].

Ian Wright
He is sitting in a ‘comfortable’ worn leather chair reading a broad sheet newspaper. The room is modern and minimal in furnishing, with a glass wall behind him, through which can see part of a bicycle. He is dressed in black and is wearing a leather bracelet on his right wrist. His line reads ‘No substitute’ [fig. 43].

Both male athletes are unambiguously black; with dark skin. Their counterpart is clearly white; blonde and blue eyed white. The historical sexual allusions could not have escaped the producers of the campaign. The black ‘studs’ in the sportsmen and the white ‘virgin’ is played with in the coy Denise Van Outen.

The creation of a notable triad suggests that they are simply recognised faces which Nescafé want to associate themselves with. But what quality do Ian Wright and Chris Eubank bring to the coffee, if not their strength and potency as athletes? We have already seen Eubank ridiculed, and Wright received similar derision in a Homepride advert for ‘Chicken Tonight’ (where he is dressed as a landed gentleman, and cooks, explaining the simplicity of the
process in a clearly faux accent). Denise Van Outen plays against them both, she is simply available. She presents her coffee and awaits her day. pink and ready.

Of all the black people Britain has to offer, all that could be found are two athletes, simply reinforcing the myth of the sporting black body.

**Distillation of the Other**

In the summertime, at night, in addition to all the other things we did, some of us boys would slip out down the road, or across the pastures, an’ go 'coonings' watermelons. White people always associated watermelons with Negroes, and they sometimes called Negroes 'coons' among all the other names, and so stealing watermelons became 'coonings' them. If white boys were doing it, it implied that they were only acting like Negroes. Whites have always hidden or justified all of the guilts they could by ridiculing or blaming Negroes.

The new comic sensation, Ali G, has entered the ‘race as humour’ debate, and not before time too. Through ostentatious jewellery, designer label hat, sportswear as leisure wear, and extravagant hand gestures, he is meant to create a black persona. A persona that is a representative of the collective imagination of the television viewing audience. He makes fun of the establishment by being 'ignorant' of current affairs, concepts and ideas. He has a limited vocabulary and traps his guests into making mistakes through

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505 At this juncture it will be valuable to digress and analyse a representation of the polar racial paradigm, as against the idea that race as an idea is being unpicked. It will also adequately illustrate some of the problems of race and advertising, by highlighting the `new/latest' manipulation of blackness.

the use of slang as double entendre.

A black person dressed in sportswear, jewellery and running shoes is a dangerous character: he symbolises fragmentation of society, a criminal, a gang member, an outsider at the least. S/he is marked. A white man in similar getup is a white man in ‘black’ garb. He is innocent, someone merely in disguise, attempting to be something he is not. He is never allowed to be an outsider. It is the race of the person in the clothes that matters after all, it is skin colour that marks, blackness remains a signifier even through clothing.

It is this malleability that makes for the delight of the advertiser. One needs an outsider to carry attributes, in the moment of misrecognition it is possible to tell of other attributes, who better to tell of other attributes than the 'other'.

There are a number of questions of who is being represented in the work of Ali G, and his unsettling of the machinations of representation needs at least some recognition.

Is Ali G:

A black man?
A white man?
A black man who is a black man?
A white man who is a black man?
A black man pretending to be a black man?
A white man pretending to be a black man?
A black man pretending to be a white man pretending to be a black man?
A white man pretending to be a white man pretending to be a black man?
The Yoruba have a proverb, ‘Idi ere la’ti m’oto oro’ which can be loosely translated to ‘It is in jest that we learn the truth’. Minstrelsy did it in the past; it was made clear how much racial denigration the population was prepared to accept, and through this learnt what they felt about the ‘strangers’ in their mist. What white people thought of black people became apparent through burnt cork (soon to be face paint) and striped trousers.

Michael Eboda in his commentary ‘We can take Ali G’s humour in our stride’ writes that at the Notting Hill Carnival, a white Radio 1 DJ said to a crowd of revellers ‘Right I want all the white people to move to the back and let my big dick niggers come to the front’.

Mr. Eboda reports that a roar of approval went up, black and white. He uses this anecdote to explain that racial mimicry, by Sacha Baron Cohen alias Ali G, is acceptable and that the black community is ‘big’ enough to take it. G’s use of minstrelsy, racial and misogynist epithets are merely to create authenticity, and is not reprehensible or damaging.

Michael Eboda is the editor of New Nation, a black paper, and therein lies his authority to speak for every black person with his ‘we’. He says that accepting minstrelsy and denigration shows maturity. Malcolm X understood this mentality all that time ago:

. . . , and whenever I showed my face, the audience in the gymnasiums ‘niggered and ’cooned’ me to death. Or called me ‘Rastus’. It did not bother my team mates or my coach at all, and to tell the truth it bothered me only vaguely. Mine was the same psychology that makes Negroes even today, though it bothers them deep inside, keep letting

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527 Eboda, Michael. ‘We can take Ali G’s humour in our stride.’ The Independent 12 Jan. 2000 p. 4
the white man keep on telling them how much 'progress' they are making.\textsuperscript{508}

Ali G allows a white audience to laugh at black people in a safe environment, he presents the image/essence of a white construction of blackness. This is the same essence that makes it into advertisements like Nescafe's use of Chris Eubank. Where a 'truth' is being delivered, humour is meant to temper the insult.

The reliance of the black essence works in reverse here, as Gina Yashere, a comedian, states: 'He (Cohen) wouldn't have to been able to get arrested, let alone his own TV show, if he'd been a black guy. A black man pretending to be dumb like that would have been too real for white people. The humour would have been lost.'\textsuperscript{509}

Cohen functions on more than the humorous, he opens a floodgate of repressed feelings to sally forth. Ali G dramatises those things that are supposed to be black, this is why nobody doubts what he is meant to be. The acceptance of him being 'black': Black being stupid, intolerant, rude and misogynist. There is admitting to the existence of racial codes, Ali G symbolises what a black man is meant to be in a white consciousness.

His televised free use of highly offensive patois insults, is only allowed on the assumption that the expected audience (being white) will not understand what they mean. Thus reinforcing a problematic stereotype.

The humour 'safely' reinforces an essentialised blackness. For the

\textsuperscript{508} Haley, Alex; X, Malcolm. \textit{The Autobiography of Malcolm X}. p. 110

\textsuperscript{509} Younge, Gary Comics find Ali G is an alibi for racism \textit{The Guardian} 11 Jan. 200 p. 4.
management at Channel 4, he ‘satirises white men trying to adopt black culture’; but this defence fails when a white male says:

Paul Thompson, 29: I’m not racist myself but a lot of black comedians take a lick out of white people and nobody says anything. Now all of a sudden people get on their high horse. I’ve always thought he was a half-caste, but he is actually well spoken, quite educated.

The implication of his assumptions speak for themselves, half-caste (to be read as black), the opposition to well spoken and educated, shows that Ali G is more than satire. To conflate Yashere and Thompson: Ali G is believable as ‘stupid’ as long as he is black (or foreign); the moment he is revealed as ‘well spoken’ (clearly his ‘patois’ is not speaking well) he can no longer maintain his guise of stupidity. Ali G has become a release valve.

**Sharwoods**

Sharwoods, formally started trading on the sixth of June 1889 as J. A, Sharwoods & CO. in London, as ‘Importers and Exporters of Foreign Produce’, was acquired by Rank Hovis McDougall (RHM) in the early years of the 1960’s. RHM merged with Tomkins PLC in 1992, to form RHM Grocery/Tomkins Group PLC. Sharwoods’ main turnover is now generated from three main product areas: Indian (curries and chutneys), Chinese (sauces and chutneys) and Chutneys as a stand alone enterprise. They produce ‘authentic’ Indian and Chinese cooking sauces and Ready to Eat Puppodums.

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510 Ibid.
512 Studd, Helen. ‘We Hate Ali G (Says Kazakhstan).’ The Sun 24 Apr. 2000 p. 13. To an ‘official Kazakhstani’ complaint, ‘An Ali G insider said “They’ve no sense of humour. We don’t know what they are complaining about.”
Sharwoods set out to dominate the market in 'ethnic' foods, they claim:

Since 1991/92 the company has concentrated on growing the business for ethnic foods through the major multiples - today Sharwoods is market leader in Indian and Chinese food. It is acknowledged that Sharwoods stands alone in developing these markets and its market review manifests this point. As such Sharwoods' marketing has never been more focused on making it as easy as possible for consumers to cook Ethnic food at home.\(^5\)

**Stir up your passion**

This section will focus on the 'Stir Up Your Passion' campaign. It was launched on the fourth of October 1999 and was presented as billboard and magazine (predominantly women's and cookery) advertisements

There are four images that form this campaign.

1. In front of an orange background is a black man in a crisp white shirt with flailing dreadlocks. The man is holding a red and green mango in his left hand, the other hand is empty, his arms are placed in such a way that his body is open and welcoming. His mouth and eyes are very open, his expression is a mixture of surprise and pleasure. The byline attached to the image reads 'Put some fire in your belly' [fig. 44].

2. Against a purple background there is an 'Asian' woman in a white
skirt/trousers and blouse with her midriff showing. She too has flailing hair. She is holding bunches of spinach in both hands. Her body is angled aggressively making the bunched vegetable into weapons. Her mouth is wide open in a silent roar. The byline attached to her is ‘Unset the menu’ [fig. 45].

3. On a red background there is a white woman in a white blouse with a red and white skirt. Her red/brown hair is carefully arranged around her head with a ‘stray’ lock over her right eye. Around her neck is a necklace of red chilli peppers. She is smiling broadly at the camera with her extended hands framing her face and the viewer in a square made of her thumbs and index fingers. The byline attached to her reads ‘Never settle for a square meal again’ [fig. 46].

4. A green background is behind an Asian man in a white shirt; his hair is spiked. In both hands he is holding three orange bell peppers. Like the first man, his eyes and mouth are very open so we can see the white of his eyes and teeth. This bodily arrangement, and expression represents shrugging surrender. His byline reads ‘Cook with a free range mind’ [fig. 47].

The need for the black body in these advertisements is fairly clear when one considers the product. The campaign is about brand awareness; they are not selling any one product directly to the public with this campaign. Sharwoods simply want to keep their brand in the forefront of the customers’ mind.

This being the case, the audience is being shown what is really on sale from Sharwoods: the ‘other’ to spice up their diet. The non-white bodies are the very thing which are being offered as food. Their bodies represent the culinary adventure that is available to white customers, wanting to investigate ‘ethnic’
The four bylines are telling: three 'active' exhortations and one cautionary tale. One is reminded of Norman Mailer's idea of the square in the white woman's byline: 'Never settle for a square meal again'. It is clearly not the ideal balanced meal that viewers are exhorted to avoid, it is rather, something bland and 'white. The other lines tell the white reader to break away from 'normality', choose 'exotic' excitement, and become like the people presented in the advertisement. The fact that Sharwoods categorise themselves as a niche marketeer almost demands the presence of the black bodies to fortify their position.

The choice of vegetables and fruits also provides meaning. The three black bodies are holding mild objects while the white woman is wearing hot chillies, the heat and excitement of Sharwoods is clearly being held in the bodies of the models, so there is no need to spice them up any further.

As mentioned before the advertisement can only be aimed at those that do not normally prepare 'hot, exotic' food. This is not to say that black people do not or will not buy Sharwoods' products, just that the exhortations are clearly not aimed at them. In order for the campaign to 'work', the reader needs to be separate from the models. The reader incorporates the black' people in the advertisement as the 'other', and identify with the white woman. The ability to see the black models, simultaneously as the 'other' and the self, indicates ambivalence and misrecognition.

Nike

Nike (named after the Greek goddess of victory) came into being with the
moulding of a running shoe sole with a waffling iron by Bill Bowerman and the dissolving of BRS/TIGER a trading/manufacturing partnership between four entrepreneurs (Mr. and Mrs Knight, their son Phil Knight and Bill Bowerman), and Tiger (a sport shoe manufacturer). By 1976 Nike has control of fifty percent of the American running shoe market, and by 1984 Nike led the sport shoe industry. In 1999 Nike’s revenue worldwide is US$ nine billion and it has retained the position of market leader.515

Nike has a policy of using athletes to endorse their products and even name product lines after successful athletes. Take the case of Michael Jordan and Nike Air Jordan, that basketball boot is now simply called Air Jordan. Nike is an advertiser sensitive to race as increasingly black athletes dominate the sports arena, and sportswear has crossed over into ‘inner city’ leisure wear. It now rivals traditional leisure wear in prominence and price. Nike being fully aware of its customer demographics, tailors its advertising to suit.

Welcome to the ‘hood

Nike: Park Football London ‘99

In the essay ‘The Perils of Persuasion’, Joanna Pitman outlines the problems of using celebrities as the frontispiece of a product. She lists embarrassing statements, unacceptable behaviour, cost, and the alienation of a section of the target market means that a producer has to be careful when selecting what Pitman calls the ‘Brand Ambassador’.516

On spending a considerable amount of money on brand sponsors like

Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods [fig. 48]. Nike is clearly building up the idea of the sport superhero. The hero to the black community that retains the myth of sport as an exit from the raced ghetto. Tiger Woods, like Moses and Jordan before him, has become the new messiah that will provide a way in or out for a new generation. A cartoon in a Swiss magazine encapsulates the ‘inspiration’ sentiment of a British newspaper [fig. 49].

As the problems of multinationals rise, Nike have altered their approach with the ‘Park Football London ’99’ campaign.

Forty images form this nationwide campaign. The posters’ models were not ‘cast’. During the summer of 1999, it was decided to commemorate amateur football played in the parks of London. The production team went around various London parks and took Polaroids of ‘players’ in the park or other positions that the ‘players’ wanted as their setting. The other positions, however, were all related to the ‘urban’. The Street, the Public House, ‘grey’ zones the of Park itself and similar views, became the backdrop for the campaign.

On making the choice of which of the parks to return to, the production team returned to the sites with a professional photographer, took photographs and interviewed their subjects. The intention was to create a non-partisan record of park activity per se, even if it did turn out that the images that made it into the final selection seem to have a preference for Nike products.

To deal with the number of images, brief descriptions of the image and the accompanying text will be described. The people in numbers 1 - 26 are white, 27 - 40 are ‘politically’ black.

1. Bare chested middle aged man in drawstring shorts with Nike goalie’s gloves, football pitch in background, shadow of photographer on man’s legs. ‘I was the daddy’ [fig. 50].
2. Young man in orange Nike T-shirt against grey brick wall. ‘Our recipe was chill and skill.’
3. Male in grey T-shirt and black jeans. City street in background. ‘I still feel bad about my freekick hitting the old lady.’
4. Male wearing kitchen overalls in industrial kitchen. ‘I played when I got the chance’.
5. Balding man in white vest and black shorts, long black socks and black football boots sitting on grassy football pitch. ‘Same place next year.’
6. Androgynous youth in grey T-shirt and white shorts standing among trees. ‘I creamed my boss’ [fig. 51].
7. Full face of youth with carefully made hair and a single gold earring. ‘I had to stop to have my appendix out.’
8. Male in V-necked T-shirt standing in front of football pitch on a windy day. His arms are folded behind him. ‘I laid ruin to many defences.’
9. Man in front of head high pile of wood chippings wearing ‘old fashioned’ football gear of green T-shirt, black knee length shorts, white and black striped knee length socks and black boots. ‘I showed those young fellows a thing or two’ [fig. 52].
10. Man wearing sunglasses in black and white shirt and white shorts with Nike black and white football boots. ‘My lucky boots weren’t.’
11. Smiling young man in car park wearing long sleeved sweatshirt and black
jeans. ‘I got to sleep with my team-mate’s sister.’

12. Young man in red and blue Nike zipped jacket standing in front of football pitch. ‘I kept putting in perfect crosses and nobody touched them.’

13. Man wearing blue and white Nike zipped jacket and black jeans in park. ‘It got me out of decorating the spare room.’

14. Man with capped teeth wearing white vest and cream trousers with wide brown belt with his arms folded across his stomach. He is standing in what looks like a technical store. ‘I hated the cheats’ [fig. 53].

15. Bare chested man in green drawstring shorts. ‘It was a good excuse to get away from the bird.’

16. Bearded face fills whole image. ‘Whoever stole my bike, can you please return it.’

17. Man leaning on pool table in red T-shirt and shorts with a black baseball cap holding a pint of beer. ‘I could’ve been a pro.’


19. Man in green T-shirt with arms folded across his chest. ‘I spent too much on the beer afterwards.’

20. A young man in a grey long sleeved T-shirt and white shorts. ‘I almost gave up smoking.’

21. Man in blue T-shirt with tattooed forearms. ‘I played a lot with my friend’s sister’s husband’ [fig. 54].

22. A young man in an armless grey T-shirt. ‘There’s nothing funny about football’ [fig. 55].

23. Young man in a Bermuda shirt standing in front of a mural. ‘Nobody expected me to score’ [fig. 56].

24. Man in white tennis shirt and black trousers standing in front of a red wall and wooden sections. ‘I got coated in dog shit.’

25. Young man in blue Nike T-shirt by public House door. ‘Broke my nose
The Black Body in Use or To Think What?

again'.

26. Smiling young man in blue Nike T-shirt and black shorts standing near park car park. 'I was the babe magnet' [fig. 57].

27. Bald man in sunglasses and grey shirt and trousers with a London cab Driver tag on his breast pocket. 'I lost 4 lbs.'

28. Man in a blue denim Nike cap and black sweatshirt in front of a red building. 'We didn't need a ref.'

29. A young woman in a green and yellow Nike football jersey and white shorts standing in a park. 'I was number nine' [fig. 58].

30. Young woman wearing a blue Nike vest with a street in the background. 'I was underestimated' [fig. 59].

31. Man sitting in Public House in black string vest and black trousers wearing a thick gold necklace, bracelet and earring. 'I managed the pub team' [fig. 60].

32. Man in white caftan standing in football pitch. 'Everyone plays in Tunisia' [fig. 61].

33. Young man in white string T-shirt standing in front of fence. 'I was the Roberto Carlos of Regents Park' [fig. 62].

34. Man in turquoise Nike cap and blue 'Arsenal' T-shirt standing in football pitch. 'I got called Kanu' [fig. 63].

35. Full face of man in white T-shirt. 'I learned to swear in Italian'.

36. Young man in grey T-shirt and white trousers sitting against a public house wall. 'I played all the sexy football.'

37. Man wearing dark sunglasses in a blue polo neck and black jeans standing in park. 'God was our twelfth player' [fig. 64].

38. Man in blue Nike tennis shirt, running shoes and blue jeans standing on road junction. 'I hate watching football.'

39. Man in white tennis shirt and green shorts standing in parched park. 'I was
wasted in defence.'

40. Bare chested male in grey track bottoms, red/white socks and white Nike shoes. Arms akimbo and standing in park. ‘I pulled off one of those Ronaldo things’ [fig. 65].

The sheer number of images, resolves some of the problem of essentialising. Everything does not need to be said in one image. It is laudable that they have successfully evaded the ‘Benetton effect’. The people are people at first glance. It is only when the images and text are taken together that the issue of race leaps forward.\(^5\)

The choice of quotes are not innocent. From the first one, ‘I was the daddy’ reminiscent of *SCUM*,\(^6\) with the bare chested ‘tough’ looking man, and the meaning of the image suddenly changes. The fatherly figure becomes the borstal thug.

Being underestimated says a great deal when attached to a black woman. Heavy jewellery on a black man holding an ‘aggressive’ pose in a pub does not do much to dispel stereotypes of blackness. Not that dispelling stereotypes ought to be their intention, but the image choices instead of the other possibilities indicates deliberation.

It has to be stated that it was a successful campaign, commercially and ideologically. It does manage to upset the simple racial paradigm, and almost upsets the fixed gaze.

\(^5\) On the role of the campaign to the ‘black community’ see: Lumpkin, James B.; Strutton, David. ‘Stereotypes of Black In-Group Attractiveness on Psychological Effects.’ *Psychological Reports* No. 73, 1993. pp. 307-311.

Yet visiting NikeTown at London's Oxford Circus, seeing that all the staff and a good number of the patrons were black, it is wise for Nike to hedge its bets. As a purveyor of sportswear, it needs the black body, imaginary and real to capture whiteness.

Anger possessed him, fury at this ungrateful black boy who made his wife cry. Grace Pemberton never cried over anything Mr. Pemberton did. And now she was crying over what this . . . this . . . In the back of his mind was the word *nigger*. Arnold felt it.

"I want to go" said Arnie "I've always wanted to go".

"You little black fool" said Emily

"Where will you go?" Grace Pemberton asked. Why, oh why, didn't Arnie beg their pardon, and stay? He knew he could if he wanted to.

... Arnie went out.\(^{523}\)

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6. Consummation
or To Where From Here?

Disease and its cures

Like epidemiology and disease, advertising allows a study of public imagery through its deliberate manipulation of representation. Dan Sperber argues in 'Anthropology and Psychology: Towards an Epidemiology of Representation', that the mind is susceptible to representation in the same way that the body is vulnerable to disease. One can therefore see representation as a disease, and advertising as a carrier. Consumption or action in response to advertising thereby becomes a symptom of the disease.

This position renders advertising innocuous in itself. However the deliberate spread of a virus destroys innocence, the advertiser becoming responsible beyond mere repetition of its society. As some diseases are easier to catch than others, so the stereotypes and imagery of blackness in British advertising are easier to retain than those of whiteness. This relates to the implied 'foreignness' of blackness, and a violent reaction to that which is new.

The British public, while aware of the malaise presented in advertising, does not want to be reminded of the fact. The former caused an uproar, the latter is notable by the silence. The use of race and stereotypes will be condoned as long as it is couched in wit and ambiguity, allowing the consumers to enjoy their prejudices with an exit, if cornered.

The ability of advertising to absorb, to adapt and benefit from criticism has been appropriately outlined.\textsuperscript{525} Advertising openly acknowledges its critics, reproduces the criticisms in new campaigns, and uses this acquired 'vulnerability' to further its role of persuasion. The characterisation of advertising as a flexible monolith,\textsuperscript{526} a beneficial contradiction, allows recognition that asserted suggestions and opinions may ultimately benefit advertiser's acts.

For these reasons, changes have to occur outside advertising's machinery, to have any impact on its practices. Alterations to the black body's treatment rely on changes in social practices. Advertising is bound to respond to its audience's values, stated, overtly by complaint or covertly by acquiescence.\textsuperscript{527}

British advertising is similar to popular literature where:

\begin{quote}
a number of things characteristically happen to black people. They are almost always described by whites, and from a perspective which limits the roles they play and the situations in which they are placed. This process may reflect the historical and material constraints upon them, but it narrows and obscures the real dimensions of their lives, selectively excluding their cultures of resistance, and those relationships and activities in which they engaged for themselves and
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{526} Advertising needs to be seen as an authoritative part of the establishment, while being able to sway with the fashions and whims of the day.

\textsuperscript{527} Culf, Andrew. 'Complaints over ads rise.' \textit{The Guardian} 15 Apr. 1997. p. 5.
In advertising, the overt use of the black body to meet mainstream ends, such as rebranding Britain or giving a new face to the Army, is not met without resistance\(^\text{529}\) [figs. 66 - 67]. In both cases it is not the edification of black people that is paramount, but the agenda of a white mainstream hegemony, if xenophobic divisions in a ‘multicultural’ Britain and reports of black soldiers are considered.\(^\text{530}\)

In the modern 'multicultural' Britain, much flaunted by the liberal establishment to prove its enlightenment, blackness is still ultimately defined by a white hegemony. The black body is introduced to express the generosity of the makers or to indicate a sense of being 'forward looking'. This is multicultural Britain, where a black vicar is refused a hospital chaplaincy in north London,\(^\text{531}\) and a diplomat is refused exit by British Airways ground staff as she could not believe he could have a diplomatic passport.\(^\text{532}\) This is a state where a black family in Lancaster has suffered more than two thousand race attacks in eight years.\(^\text{533}\) Looking at these instances, it is evident that the veneer of gentility is peeling.

Studies that sample only white opinion have been used to determine the

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shape and style of advertising for both black and white consumers. In such cases, the black person is treated as either holding the sample's opinions, or is implicitly discounted. While it is people with particular values and income the advertisers desire to reach, the decisions made about advertisements ultimately affect more than the target market.

There is hardly any doubt, as to whether popular stereotypes of blackness are used in advertising. The choices of obviously demeaning stereotypes are not surprising either: the need for representations, easily consumed and aggrandising for the expected audience, is the most important benchmark. Not that there are no flattering stereotypes of blackness either. But even 'positive' stereotypes eventually pull the black collective down, by defining possibility and restricting opportunity. (Stereotypes that black people ably sing, dance or run, while innocuous attributes in themselves, soon become 'all' that black people are capable of doing.)

That advertising repeats, and hence reinforces, popular stereotypes is also not contentious. The ability of most viewers to not see the constructions, while appropriately responding to them, verifies their ubiquity. The assertion that British advertising is aimed at a white audience is borne out by the narrative and inherent 'values' of advertiser's offerings.

Cultural bias in the allegedly neutral is not new. Over 25 years ago, IQ tests used to determine the intelligence of black children were subsequently proven to represent 'white' values. The bias of the IQ tests was borne out when the

534 "( . . ) five hundred and forty five middle class white boys and girls (average age = 10.67 years) compiled a 28 item scale after watching a TV commercial" The study concluded that advertising had no impact on the children, did not influence their desire to buy, nor seem to affect their self-appraisal. Barkling, Julian; Fullagar, Clive. 'Children's Attitudes to Television Advertisements: A Factorial Perspective.' Journal of Psychology Vol. 113:1, Jan 1983. p. 25.
author's own tests, appropriately called the Black Intelligence Test of Cultural Homogeneity [the BITCH Test] and Son of the Original Bitch Test [the SOB Test], proved difficult for a white audience.\textsuperscript{535}

Disregarding the black person's customs and voice, in the creation of advertisements, will become increasingly difficult as the presence and clout of the black community is acknowledged (this is already beginning to happen).\textsuperscript{536}

Where attempts have been made to target the black community, the resultant images and sentiments indicate an insensitivity on how to communicate with and to the black body politic (as demonstrated by the Police Federation).\textsuperscript{537}

Throwing caricatures of blackness at black people, or 'colouring' white sensibilities, will not meet the demands of a 'voiced' black populace.\textsuperscript{538} (See Army posters: figs. 66 -67).

Formal chromatic considerations within the advertisements are also an issue; a black body will show off white elements better than a white one, hence the black body can be used for ice cream and milk advertisements formally, but not symbolically; this is still reserved for the white body [fig. 68].

This thesis, in criticising representation, acquires the responsibility of seeking alternatives.

Some conclusions


\textsuperscript{537} Hopkins, Nick 'Ads Upset Black Police.' \textit{The Guardian} 27 April 1999. p. 7.

\textsuperscript{538} Lombard, Tom. 'TV Taken to Task over Ethnic Errors.' \textit{Telegraph} 8 Dec. 1999. p. 6.
i. Racial stereotyping in advertising is constantly recycled because: the essence of race has not changed, just the language. The black body remains a simplified signifier, and amidst the reinvention of whiteness, there is even greater ‘white’ urgency that blackness is clearly defined. Though the liberal academy argues for the emptiness of ‘race’, it retains enough power to affect representation. British societal identity is so interwoven with racial ideas of superiority that it is almost inconceivable to see it otherwise. Hence rejections of ‘race’ resound with a desire to deny the obvious consequences of an ‘irrationality’, other than any real conviction of the non-existence of ‘race’. This half-hearted refutation ends up being a repetition of the very thing that is being questioned. Hence advertisers will construct scenarios like the 'Reed' commercial on the basis that it has nothing to do with race, while realising that it relies on race to function. The image used by Harvey Nichols in Leeds also illustrates this point [fig. 69].

ii. Campaigns repeat racial ideas, because they lack viable ‘immediate’ alternatives to convey their message. Advertisers need the established order of race to create the right conditions for telling stories. ‘Race as a signifier’ is such an efficient form of communication, that to abandon its trope will severely limit the language of advertising. Advertising does not appear to be deliberately racially offensive, It would seem unable to deny itself the expediency of racial stereotypes (with the resultant consequences). The problem is, it is impossible to consciously or unconsciously exploit race without being racist, the one always collapses into the other. Garrard’s use of ‘The African Queen’ and ‘Pocahontas’ is at once benign and screams of racial and cultural myth.
iii. When one group chooses or is empowered to speak of another, it eventually defines the other. Advertising deliberately does this. In having to stand as the voice of authority, it empowers and validates its own utterances. This authority is passed to every element in advertisements, from the image to text to the siting of the advertisement. They need to fix meaning in such a way that questions will not be asked by the potential purchaser. So a black body has to be black in the manner the advertiser wants it to be (and this classification will differ from black body to body; criminal in one, 'cool' in another). The advertisers therefore impose their authority on the idea of blackness, in order for 'blackness' to remain fixed linguistically [figs. 70 - 71].

iv. The black person, too has been trained how to see in 'white'. This allows advertising to freely stereotype blackness, as even black customers will construct the images as something other than themselves. This viewing position may be rejected, but only in extreme cases of deliberate self awareness [fig. 72].

And now?

Advertising manipulates both its maker and the 'informed' viewer. The maker is deluded into bearing the belief that the message broadcasted is fundamentally true and worthwhile. Enlightened viewers are hoodwinked into believing that they can see through the tricks of advertising, and will therefore avoid its snare.

The response to advertising cannot be an open offensive, due to its adaptability and the sheer weight of wealth and clout that supports it. The recourse is to highlight blackness in advertisements and reveal the invisible
and damaging incarnations of race. Showing that the use of race is calculated and deliberate, that it meets the need of the advertiser and will continue for as long as race functions socially is one way of confronting the situation.

The advance of science

Technology is entering the racial arena with the creation of virtual models and newscasters. Virtual models, with their mass appeal and mutability, are set to determine the selection and actions of human players. These incarnations follow on from characters like Max Headroom and Lawnmower Man. Initial creations were clearly white, but the new models are moving away from a 'white' norm to something ostensibly race-less or 'universally beautiful' [fig. 73]. While virtual newscasters and models do not erase racial constructions and prejudices, they do indicate a shift towards the imaginative. Of course the 'un-raced' creation will be within the limits of popular acceptance, and the success of these characters indicate this.¹⁵¹⁹

Reed [2000] and Sherman [1998]

I would like to end with a brief look at two campaigns, a commercial for www.reed.co.uk and a billboard for Ben Sherman. www.reed.co.uk is an employment recruitment website, while Ben Sherman is a clothing manufacturer.

There are three items in each campaign. I will look at the incidents, from the campaigns, that use black men.

¹⁵¹⁹ Rodger, Joann Ellison. 'Flirting is good for you.' The Guardian: The Editor 30 Jan. 1999. pp. 12 - 13.; Coren, Victoria. 'Next year's model.' The Guardian: G2 27 Jul. 1999. p. 7.; See Lara Croft and Lucozade. The Simpsons are another case, but even here the 'other' is still another colour and Homer Simpsons' success with Doritos is predicated on his 'yellow' skin meaning 'white'.
reed.co.uk: [Video]
1. ‘Pub’: two white men in a toilet.
2. ‘Pickpocket’: one white man and one black man.
3. ‘Fortune cookie’: one ‘Chinese’ woman (White woman in a silk dress and black wig. The wig is subsequently removed to reveal blonde hair.) and two white women.

Ben Sherman:
1. White man in blue shirt [fig. 74].
2. White man in red shirt [fig. 75].
3. Black man in purple shirt [fig. 76].

reed.co.uk
Two men approach each other on a crowded street: one a close cropped besuited white male, the other black, dreadlocked and casually dressed. They violently collide and separate; the white male immediately checks his jacket for his wallet. He finds it there, but with an addition. There is a close-up in slow replay of the collision; we see the black male remove the wallet, insert a note, and replace it. The two men look back at each other and smile.

That the man checks for his wallet is 'normal'. We are incorporated into his assumption that the black man is a thief, and after initial refutation, the assumption is right. We are to also assume that the white man has a job and is seeking to better himself in the corporate world, while the black male (by his knowing smile) is a professional thief.

The black man plays his role well in providing identification with the white
man. The black person is still not the target market, just an effective narrative device. It deserves to be noted, that those offered jobs in all three of the commercials, are white.

**Ben Sherman**

Ben Sherman's billboard depicts a black man with his arms folded across his chest in a short sleeved button purple down shirt, looking down into the camera. He stands against a black background alongside white words. The font used is reminiscent of American Western 'Wanted' posters. The text reads "A man should be judged by the colour of his shirt".

Unlike the other images in a series of three images, the font comes in two sizes, the large being about twice the size of the small, so that it reads as follows; "**A MAN SHOULD BE JUDGED BY THE COLOUR OF HIS SHIRT**".

Presented with this ambiguous statement, one could take the image at face value and read it as advocating a human value system based on style and garment colour preference, or one could take it a pointer to race and see it as a sardonic glance at the implicit guilt that skin colour creates. Either way, the four large words seem not random at all, they deliberately highlight 'race' high in the image.

The line is in quotation marks, making it a statement uttered by the man rather than a statement made about him. The line would be a lot more explosive if made about him, especially a 'white' other. This unpleasantness is ameliorated by punctuation. This makes the statement a defence or plea for justice or a form of equality, based on his mental ability of making 'right' choices. His skin colour is to be ignored; as this cannot happen in the
advertisement, the cynical line simply makes his skin colour the main focus.

The man is black and therefore read as being already guilty. His stance is one of defiance or self protection, he is above the photographer; in the dock for being black, and his shirt will save him. Taking the series as a triad, there is a marked difference between the use of the white body and the black; two stand for their country and one stands for his race [See figs. 74 - 76].

In both campaigns desire, ambivalence, double entendre and the black body play their roles well. One campaign presents the crime, the other passes judgement and British advertising marches on. Neither advertisement received complaints and according to their makers the campaigns have been successful in creating desired and desirable interest in their products.

**Ultimately**

It is impossible to isolate blackness in advertising from the lived and reported reality of black people. Until cultural and social isolation that continually renders black people ‘other’ is removed, and black people can enter all areas of British society without causing indignant ripples, the black body will not be free for use in British advertising.

**End note**

J. Shaft: Look like war coming, uh?

V. Androzzi: Bad thing, John. Mafia against Bumpy.

I mean it’s hood against hood on the inside, but on the outside it’s black against white.
[...]

V. Androzzi: Androzzi here.

J. Shaft: Vic, Your case just bust wide open.

V. Androzzi: So close it for me.

J. Shaft: Shut the crap man, this is Shaft. It looks like you're gonna have to close it yourself, Shitty.\(^{540}\)

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Figure 1
Figure 6
Police Officers

Police work is many things to many people at different ages. It is a challenging and rewarding career that offers a unique opportunity to be part of a team that helps to protect and serve the community. It requires a lot of hard work and dedication, but the rewards are well worth it.

In this role, you will be responsible for maintaining public order and providing support for community safety. You will be expected to work closely with other members of the police force, as well as with other emergency services, to ensure the safety and well-being of the public.

There are many different paths to becoming a police officer, and each path offers unique challenges and opportunities. Whether you are looking to work in a large metropolitan area or in a rural community, there is a role for you.

To find out more about becoming a police officer, visit [Metropolitan Police](https://www.met.police.uk/).
Whatever subject you're going to read,
read this first.

If you are thinking of going into higher education next year there is financial help available, whatever your age, and you may get more than you think. With the many opportunities on offer to students, higher education is a great way to realise your potential. For a leaflet about the financial support available for you as a student, call free on 0800 731 9133.

Figure 9
BODY
HEAT
Herb Ritts photographs
the world's finest
sporting machines

JOHN ROCHA • KATE MUIR • BILL PULLMAN

Figure 11
Thanks to those liberal views you were expressing before your appendix operation, Mr Willoughby, you've made one West Indian, an Eskimo, two Africans and my cat Tiddles very happy ...
World Food Summit
Rome 13-17 November 1996

FAO
Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Figure 14
Figure 17
Figure 18a
n fl T  T I K  H l C t m C l H * E  Amazed Ford workers at Dagenham couldn’t believe it when they saw how they’d faded in the picture, below. Patricia Marquis, seated fifth from the right, says she turned white, old and flabby.

Figure 21
You'd better ring the Royal.

Figure 22
You'd better ring the Royal.
You'd better ring the Royal.

Figure 24
WHAT WAS WORSE?
THIS ADVERT
OR YOUR
FAILURE TO COMPLAIN?

RACISM. CONDEMN IT OR CONDONE IT. THERE'S NO IN BETWEEN. 0171 932 5437.

Figure 25
WHAT WAS WORSE?
THIS ADVERT
OR YOUR
FAILURE TO COMPLAIN?

RACISM. CONDEMN IT OR CONDONE IT. THERE'S NO IN BETWEEN. 0171 932 5437.

Figure 26
WHAT WAS WORSE?
THIS ADVERT
OR YOUR
FAILURE TO COMPLAIN?

Figure 27
WHAT DO YOU CALL A BLACK MAN IN A BMW?

Figure 28
Figure 29
BEEN MUGGED?

Figure 31
ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF POLICE PREJUDICE?
OR ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF YOURS?

Do you see a policeman chasing a maniac? Or a policeman harassing an innocent person? Among both lines, it's true.

Police officers are often called upon to perform dangerous tasks. And it's important to maintain a proper balance of power and respect for the law. However, there are instances where officers may act outside of proper procedure.

Figure 32
It's about reflecting the community we serve

A good police service is one that reflects its community. Only through true understanding, trust, and confidence can we work together to fight crime and build cultural bridges.

If you are interested in becoming a police officer visit your local Police Station or call 0345 272212.

Figure 33
THIS IS WHERE HE PUNCHED HER BECAUSE SHE'S BLACK

THIS IS WHERE HE SLAPPED HER BECAUSE SHE'S OLD

THIS IS WHERE HE KICKED HER FOR HER PENSION

THIS IS WHERE YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

POLICE OFFICERS

Racism. Attacks on the elderly. We never stop being as shocked as you are.
But asking "How can one human being do that to another?" is not enough.
Doing something is.

You can, by joining the Metropolitan Police Service. A service that relies on intelligence and teamwork.
A service that offers world class training and a diverse range of careers. A service that's learning and evolving all the time, and gives you the responsibility to make a crucial contribution.
This is where you do something about it. For more information call now.
0345 272212
www.met.police.uk

Figure 34
Getting your money home safely is our one and only job.

Figure 35
Millions of people trust us to send money home.

Western Union Money Transfer
Freefone 0800 833 833 (24 hours)

Figure 36
Making sure your money gets home safely.

Western Union Money Transfer®
Freefone 0800 833 833 (24 hours)

Figure 37
Money from home in minutes.

Free 0800 833 833 (24hr)

Figure 38
Money from home in minutes.
Free 0800 833 833 (24hr)
That's right I'm black.
I'm 5'8". I can't dance and I can't sing. In fact I'm not particularly good
embowed in any way except for my talent for designing menswear.

Peter Werth clothes are still hip and trendy without being all gold chains and
trousers that hang down below your butt cheeks.

Figure 40
The Original and still the best.

Figure 41
Thimply the bethoven.

Figure 42
No substitute.

Figure 43
Figure 44
Figure 45
Figure 46
Figure 48
Figure 50
Figure 51
I showed those young fellows a thing or two.
Figure 53
I played a lot with my friend’s sister’s husband.

Figure 54
Nobody expected me to score.
I was the babe magnet.

Figure 57
I was number nine.

Figure 58
I was underestimated

Figure 59
I managed the pub team.

Figure 60
Everyone plays in Tunisia.
Figure 62

I was the Roberto Carlos of Regents Park.
I got

called Kanu.

Figure 63
God was our twelfth player.

Figure 64
I pulled off one of those Ronaldo things.

Figure 65
Figure 66
YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU

Figure 67
A massage a day keeps the shrink away.

Figure 68
© HARVEY NICHOLS LEEDS (NOTfollows).

Figure 69
Figure 71
Figure 72
Figure 74

ENGLAND
AWAY SHIRT.
FRANCE ’98.
QUALITY CONTROL.

Figure 75
"A Man should be judged by the colour of his shirt."

Figure 76
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The advertisements on this tape form a survey of the various ways in which race is used in British advertising. It shows a number of methods: from the simplicity of the black couple having a quiet evening, to the Uncle Tom figure there to amuse the 'Massa's' children. Stereotypes of the black athlete, musician, dancer, loafer, good tine pursuer endure. There are also commercials that depict blackness as standing for nothing more than the caricatures of blackness; as the examples of Malibu and Lilt attest to.

The examples do not represent all the advertisements available. There is a certain random nature in the search for specific examples, therefore it is not an exhaustive survey and it does not form a chronological development of the black person in British Advertising.

The dominance of 'visibly blackness' is obvious, leaving one to wonder if the politically black is being reduced to the Afro-Caribbean, eschewing the ambiguity of the 'Asian'.

The categories that the Television Register uses to organise commercials are as follows:

- Drink
- Food
- Household
- Leisure
- Toiletries (including Pharmaceuticals)
- Retail and Publishing
- Financial
- Automotive and Travel
- Miscellaneous

The black actor [as significant characters] features most in three main areas: Drink, Food and Leisure, with leisure forming the point of highest concentration. Here the black sporting stereotype rules.

This following index shows how the advertisements are presented on the videotape.

**Apr. 1996**
Vauxhall Astra: Baby rally
Nike: Terrans vs. Aliens

**May 1989**
Nestle Drifter: Black Cat
Panasonic: Watching paint dry
Holts Autofilm: Ninja

**Apr. 1998**
Lilt: Hazel and Blanche/Dance hall
Video: Actual List

Nescafe: Open Up

**Jul. 1999**
Nestle: Fishermen

**Nov. 1998**
Homepride Chicken Tonight/Sizzle&Stir: Toffish Ian Wright
Benylin Cough Mixture: Jazz Saxaphonist
VW Polo: Tai Chi

**Mar 1998**
Coca Cola: Love
Nike: Beach Football Goalee
Adidas: Bob Marley
Nike: Beach Football Boots

**Dec. 1997**
Coca Cola: Atomic Fans
Pataks: Colours

**Jan. 1992**
Tennets Lager: Bullet Train
Nestle Milky Bar: Raisins
Terry's Pyramids: Egyptian Mummy

**May 1990**
Pepsi: Tina Turner
Lucozade: John Barnes
Nescafe: James Brown (particular use of music)
Nestle Milky Bar: Haunted House

**March 1989**
Pepsi: Madonna (the use of black choir and bell hooks on Madonna)
M&M's: Barracks
Banana Trading Board: Unzip a Banana
Marmite: Barracks

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Cadbury’s Time Out: Soul Singers
Tag Heuer: Success. It's a mind game
Adidas: Muhammed Ali
Reebok: Split Person
British Airways: Wrapped Island (Christo)

**Dec. 1993**
Tia Maria: Woman lying in grass
Malibu: Malibu in mind

**Jul. 1986**
Pepsi: Tina Turner

**July 1989**
Abbey National: Abbey Endings

**Apr. 1993**
Inn Bru: Trauma
Ponds Aloe Vera: Herbs and Women
Vauxhall Corsa: The New Supermodel

**July 1993**
Stella Artois: New Stella Artois
Pepsi: Shaq Attack
Nestle: Coffee Mate
Toilet Duck: Japanese Theatre
Persil Colour: Calypso
Prudential: Cat Walk

**Jan. 1993**
Pepsi: Michael Jackson
Nestle Drifters: Surfers (For contrast)

**Dec. 1996**
Malibu: Malibu warning: Club
Terry's All Gold: Gold

**Nov. 1989**
Heinz Ploughman's Pickle: Missionary
Heinz World Soup: Lost alien
British Dyslexia Association: 
  1. Courtroom
  2. Classroom
  3. E=MC^2
  4. Rubbish Dump
  5. Prizegiving
  6. Black teacher/mother
There is a mini survey here of the difference in treatment.

**Apr. 1990**
Rubicon Mango Juice Drink
Hula Hoops: Hula (reminiscent of the tales of Brer Rabbit)
Sharwoods: Tandori

**Aug. 1997**
Pepsi: Tina Turner
Pepsi: Michael Jackson
Alpen: Tropical Alpen; Lenny Henry
Sun Maid California Sun Dried Raisins: Grapevine
Apr. 1991
Nationwide Building Society: Father to Son
Government Safety Campaign: Wear a Helmet

Dec. 1988
Malibu: Lively up yourself
Bounce: Two basketball players

March 1994
Phileas Fogg: Mexican Barpar
Super Nintendo: NBA Jam
Reebok: Basketball

Feb. 1988
Lilt: Lilt Man
Pepe Jeans: Worlds apart
Michelin: Safari

June 1996
Lilt: Shipwreck
Malibu: Let the sun enter your spirit
Persil: Stain resistant (Dog shakes off black spots)
Remington: Good luck England; Head shaving (a predominantly black style of
dressing male hair)
BAA: Duty Free; Kasbah
BAA: Duty Free; Kasbah part 2
VW Golf VRG: Beetle Race
Orange Telecommunications: Kites
Christian Aid: Grandparent
Poverty Answering Back

Jul. 1991
Levi's: Eight Ball betting

Jan. 1990
Coca Cola: Generations; I'd like to teach the world to sing
Cadbury Creme Eggs: Zodiac singers
Cathay Pacific
Nike: Bo Diddley; Cross Training
Real Fire: Boy, mother and snake

May 1992
Nike: Just shine on
Global Hypercolour

Sep. 1992
Toffee Crisp: Free the crispy bits
Converse React: Larry Johnson; Basketball
Nike: Can I kick it? Football

Feb. 1995
Muller: Yoghurt Corner, Naomi Campbell
Levi's: Cut for men since 1950, crossdresser?
Natrel Deodorant: Man as Tree
BTEC: Future prime minister

Feb. 1998
Nestle Rolo: Lone Ranger and Tonto
Powergen: Boxes of electricity
Levi's: Tremor
Puma Cell: Linford and Colin
Pizza Hut: Good luck Raad
The Times: Healing
Daihatsu Terrios: Japanese Streets

Sept. 1998
Fanta: Photo booth
Renault Clio: Safety
Vauxhall: Masterfit
Royal Mail: Gran's picture

Jan 1999
Cadbury High Lights: Hot Chocolate
Bachelors Pasta Sauce: Japanese Guests
Bachelors Soup Noodles: Black Couple; wasting away
Levi's: Dancing Doll
Tunes: Toilet Queue
Equitable Life: Muhammed Ali
Saab Perceptions

May 1999
Oasis: Beach
Walkers Sundog: Shaft
Mercedes Benz: Oh Lord . . .
Christian Aid: The Meaning of life

Edit 26/06/97
CRE: Them
CRE: Equal

Jul. 2000
reed.co.uk: Pub
reed.co.uk: Pickpocket
reed.co.uk: Fortune Cookie
Video: Chronological List

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This following index presents a chronological list of the commercials.

Jul. 1986
Pepsi: Tina Turner

Feb. 1988
Lilt: Lilt Man
Pepe Jeans: Worlds apart
Michelin: Safari

Dec 1988
Malibu: Lively up yourself
Bounce: Two basketball players
March 1989
Pepsi: Madonna (the use of black choir and bell hooks on Madonna)
M&M's: Barracks
Banana Trading Board: Unzip a Banana
Marmite: Barracks

May 1989
Nestle Drifter: Black Cat
Panasonic: Watching paint dry
Holts Autofilm: Ninja

July 1989
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Heinz Ploughman's Pickle: Missionary
Heinz World Soup: Lost alien
British Dyslexia Association:
1. Courtroom
2. Classroom
3. E=MC2
4. Rubbish Dump
5. Prizegiving
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There is a mini survey here of the difference in treatment.

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Cadbury Creme Eggs: Zodiac singers
Cathay Pacific
Nike: Bo Diddley; Cross Training
Real Fire: Boy, mother and snake

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Levi's: Eight Ball betting

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Tennets Lager: Bullet Train
Nestle Milky Bar: Raisins
Terry's Pyramids: Egyptian Mummy

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Global Hypercolour

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Converse React: Larry Johnson; Basketball
Nike: Can I kick it? Football

**Jan. 1993**
Pepsi: Michael Jackson
Nestle Drifters: Surfers (For contrast)

**Apr. 1993**
Irn Bru: Trauma
Ponds Aloe Vera: Herbs and Women
Vauxhall Corsa: The New Supermodel

**July 1993**
Stella Artois: New Stella Artois
Pepsi: Shaq Attack
Nestle: CoffeeMate
Toilet Duck: Japanese Theatre
Persil Colour: Calypso
Prudential: Cat Walk

**Dec. 1993**
Tia Maria: Woman lying in grass
Malibu: Malibu in mind

**March 1994**
Phileas Fogg: Mexican Bar
Super Nintendo: NBA Jam
Reebok: Basketball

**Feb. 1995**
Muller: Yoghurt Corner, Naomi Campbell
Levi's: Cut for men since 1950, crossdresser?
Natrel Deodorant: Man as Tree
BTEC: Future prime minister

**Apr. 1995**
Cadbury's Time Out: Soul Singers
Tag Heuer: Success. It’s a mind game
Adidas: Muhammed Ali
Reebok: Split Person
British Airways: Wrapped Island (Christo)

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Lilt: Shipwreck
Malibu: Let the sun enter your spirit
Persil: Stain resistant (Dog shakes off black spots)
Remington: Good luck England; Head shaving (a predominantly black style of dressing male hair)
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BAA: Duty Free; Kasbah part 2
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CRE: Them
CRE: Equal

Aug. 1997
Pepsi: Tina Turner
Pepsi: Michael Jackson
Alpen: Tropical Alpen; Lenny Henry
Sun Maid California Sun Dried Raisins: Grapevine

Dec. 1997
Coca Cola: Atomic Fans
Pataks: Colours

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Nestle Rolo: Lone Ranger and Tonto
Powergen: Boxes of electricity
Levi’s: Tremor
Puma Cell: Linford and Colin
Pizza Hut: Good luck Raad
The Times: Healing
Daihatsu Terrios: Japanese Streets


Mar 1998
Coca Cola: Love
Nike: Beach Football Goalee
Adidas: Bob Marley
Nike: Beach Football Boots

Apr 1998
Lilt: Hazel and Blanche/Dance hall
Nescafe: Open Up

Sept 1998
Fanta: Photo booth
Renault Clio: Safety
Vauxhall: Masterfit
Royal Mail: Gran’s picture

Nov 1998
Homepride Chicken Tonight/Sizzle & Stir: Toffish Ian Wright
Benylin Cough Mixture: Jazz Saxophonist
VW Polo: Tai Chi

Jan 1999
Cadbury High Lights: Hot Chocolate
Bachelors Pasta Sauce: Japanese Guests
Bachelors Soup Noodles: Black Couple; wasting away
Levi’s: Dancing Doll
Tunes: Toilet Queue
Equitable Life: Muhammed Ali
Saab Perceptions

May 1999
Oasis: Beach
Walkers Sundog: Shaft
Mercedes Benz: Oh Lord . . .
Christian Aid: The Meaning of life

Jul 1999
Malibu: Fishermen

Jul 2000
reed.co.uk: Pub
reed.co.uk: Pickpocket
reed.co.uk: Fortune Cookie
Film List


Goodbye