

---

# Blackface sweaters and pizza with chopsticks: Problem cases and strategies for converting cultural appropriation into cultural appreciation in the fashion industry

Received: 23rd November, 2020



## Domenique Jones

Doctoral Candidate, University of Tennessee, USA

Domenique Jones is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Management at the University of Tennessee. Her research interests include feminism, objectification and appearance management for marginalised consumers. She is passionate about highlighting structural issues and inequalities for oppressed individuals throughout the fashion and retail sectors. She has an MS from the University of North Texas.

Department of Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Tennessee, 1215 W. Cumberland Ave, Jessie Harris Building #233 C, Knoxville, TN 37996-1911, USA  
Tel: +1 713 829 5902; E-mail: dejones@vols.utk.edu



## Michelle Childs

Assistant Professor, University of Tennessee, USA

Michelle L. Childs is an assistant professor in the Department of Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Management at the University of Tennessee. Her research interests focus on understanding changing needs within the retail and fashion industry and its impact on brand image, brand growth and consumer responses. Research conducted by Dr Childs has been published in *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, *Journal of Brand Strategy*, *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, *International Marketing Review* and *Business Ethics: A European Review*. She has a PhD from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Department of Retail, Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Tennessee, 1215 W. Cumberland Ave, Jessie Harris Building #247, Knoxville, TN 37996-1911, USA  
Tel: +1 865 974 8405; E-mail: mlchilds@utk.edu

**Abstract** The fashion industry has been criticised for its practices of cultural appropriation and disregard for the cultures of Black, indigenous and other people of colour. In an age of instant criticism promulgated through social media, viral condemnation is becoming increasingly powerful. As Western cultures focus on the importance of cultural appreciation, including issues centred on equity, diversity and inclusion, it is vitally important to address marginalised groups correctly. This paper therefore proposes a shift toward respectful cultural appreciation, paying homage and giving credit to original cultures. Based on a review of popular culture and academic literature, the paper highlights issues relating to cultural appreciation in fashion and presents opportunities for fashion brands and marketers to do better through education, awareness, diversity initiatives

and acting against cultural appropriation. The study also discusses specific examples of cultural appropriation (ie taking pieces of another culture and portraying them as one's own) and cultural appreciation (ie respectfully paying tribute to and highlighting the beauty of another culture through marketing and fashion). These examples have practical application for businesses seeking to avoid potential consumer backlash and become leaders in the fashion industry.

**KEYWORDS:** cultural appropriation, cultural appreciation, fashion, marketing, diversity, racism

## INTRODUCTION

Cultural appropriation is described as 'the process of adopting an aspect of another culture and presenting it as one's own'.<sup>1</sup> Within the realm of fashion, this practice of failing to acknowledge — or seek approval from — cultural influences is becoming increasingly problematic. Indeed, fashion brands are regularly accused of misrepresenting cultures, perpetuating harmful stereotypes and perceived acts of racism. In particular, fashion brands have been criticised for inappropriate cultural references to Black, indigenous and other people of colour (BIPOC).

Through a combination of public relations exercises, apologies and excuses of inspiration, intended appreciation and/or not discovering the portrayal prior to production, accused companies have historically tended to resurface unscathed. Today, however, consumers are becoming less forgiving and are increasingly voting with their dollars.

These higher expectations from consumers are attributed to a growing knowledge about the problematic nature of culture appropriation from fashion brands, including stereotypes and prejudice toward cultural groups. Examples are abundant: Urban Outfitters illegally used the Navajo Nation tribe name for its collection; designer Isabel Marant plagiarised the traditional costume of a Mexican community for a blouse design; Gucci faced backlash for using Sikh-style turbans on white models; and *Vogue* magazine was criticised for dressing a white model as a geisha.

Simply put, stripping the true meaning away from a third party's cultural activity in order to commodify it is no longer acceptable.

Not only is cultural appropriation considered economically and socially harmful to the original culture group,<sup>2</sup> but it is also bad for business, as consumers are increasingly aware of these issues and will voice their grievances through boycotts and social media campaigns. Given consumers' growing concern and awareness of issues centred on cultural appreciation, including equity, diversity and inclusion, cultural appropriation in fashion is gaining increasing attention in media and popular culture more generally. Clearly, the issue requires greater attention from consumer-facing businesses.

Although there is research surrounding cultural appreciation in literature, history and early education practices, there is little research surrounding the shift from cultural appropriation to cultural appreciation in the fashion, retail and marketing sectors.<sup>3-6</sup> This paper proposes what has previously been deemed a 'shift from cultural appropriation to cultural appreciation', where cultural appreciation refers to celebrating the beautiful aspects of a culture while also paying respect to their origin.<sup>7</sup> The paper will discuss issues centred on cultural appreciation in fashion, as well as opportunities for fashion brands, retailers and marketers to do better through education, awareness, incorporation of

diversity initiatives and action against cultural appropriation.

### **WHAT IS CULTURAL APPROPRIATION?**

Cultural appropriation is commonly cloaked as benign and inclusive by those who are not members of the affected group.<sup>8</sup> This perception can lead to harmful ignorance in the commodification of misconstrued culture. The key difference between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation is that cultural appreciation is the respectful and accurately represented portrayal of inspiration from a given culture, while cultural appropriation takes from minority culture without credit given to the originating group.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes this derives from ignorance or lack of exposure; other times, it is an intentional dismissal based on not wanting to know the effects of dominant group behaviour. Regardless, it is the responsibility of the individual fashion brand or company in question to educate itself and research its intended portrayal of a culture and/or use of cultural practices.

The biggest difference between cultural appropriation and cultural appreciation is that cultural appreciation is positive and involves research into cultural meaning with a focus on intent and paying homage to another culture, while cultural appropriation is negative and involves representing pieces of another culture as one's own with no credit or respect given to the original culture or its original meaning.<sup>10</sup> Context can determine whether a person or company is appropriating aspects of a culture as their own in a way that emphasises stereotypes, or, conversely, if they are appreciating the culture by paying homage in a respectful, appreciative manner.<sup>11</sup>

Individuals and companies are often more likely to adopt culturally appropriated facets of a culture — combed through versions of full cultural context void of original meaning — than to take the time

to research and understand the culture from which the inspiration came.<sup>12</sup> This is demonstrated through the popularisation of trends originating from BIPOC and only deemed worthy once they are worn and/or approved by a majority.<sup>13</sup> Aspects of a culture which are appreciated and promoted prior to dominant appropriation may be seen as negative or devalued and not worthy of public acceptance.<sup>14</sup> This is harmful to marginalised people who may feel stripped of their identity and view the act as reinforcing the perceived importance and status of the dominant group. This is demonstrated through the misinterpretation and deconstruction of traditional cultural expressions and the ways in which copyright laws fail to protect and preserve these cultures and their practices due to the blurred lines of intellectual property within fashion and fashion design.<sup>15</sup>

### **CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN FASHION**

Fashion and physical appearance in their broadest sense are used in every culture to express identity and homogeneity within a group. The aesthetic inner-workings of these cultures are meant to be 'shared, understood and celebrated'.<sup>16</sup> However, people within these cultures have specific nonverbal meanings they convey based solely on their experiences and group identity, which are derived from these cultures. The complex personal narratives created through fashion are precarious in nature and possess extensive meaning for both the individual and the group. Cultural appropriation can remove this meaning, which can be detrimental to self-identity and cultural practices.<sup>17</sup> Those facets of culture that are often misconstrued without permission for commodification and profit, are part of a larger scale of societally systemic issues. Consumer perception is shaped by this environment and personal lived experiences, including fashion, media

and the perception and understanding of different cultures. Furthermore, the way in which to respectfully take inspiration from other cultures while maintaining original meaning is dependent on the fashion industry's dispersion of accurate information.<sup>18</sup>

It is important for artists, designers and others who pull from different cultures for inspiration to become culturally competent in order to bring awareness to the beauty of different cultures in a meaningful and respectful manner.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, many fashion brands, including Urban Outfitters, H&M, Nike and Chanel, have been criticised for their poor cultural competency and lack of respect for the people from whom their designs were taken.<sup>20</sup> Examples include Nike's Panamanian shoe patterns, Urban Outfitters' Navajo underwear and Chanel's indigenous Australian boomerangs. The representations of these cultures in fashion products can be considered offensive and inappropriate when compared with the original meaning and intention. Lack of acknowledgment of the original source is a prevalent and harmful aspect of cultural appropriation. However, attaching the name of the cultural group to the product, such as Urban Outfitters' Navajo underwear, can also be distasteful and offensive to the group and its people.<sup>21</sup> Products of cultural appropriation are often displayed in a negative light, in comparison with other displays of culture and forms of cultural appreciation and inspiration.<sup>22</sup> For example, Isabel Marant created a blouse based on culturally-specific apparel worn by the Mixe people of Mexico, but without acknowledging their influence or seeking their approval, despite utilising the same colours, embroidery and style.<sup>23</sup> For the victims of cultural appropriation, this is akin to suggesting their cultural artefacts have no value until Western society (in this case a white fashion designer) has commodified them.

Cultural appropriation in fashion is not relegated to clothing and accessories; it also includes physical appearance attributes originating in non-white culture. Cornrows, for instance, have been a point of contention when worn by white models with no reference to their historical roots and no mention of them in a context of education and praise outside their minimal portrayal when convenient.<sup>24</sup> Some people have argued that straightened hair and other popular trends are appropriated and may be equated with white women wearing cornrows or other appropriated products. There are many issues with these statements, all of which demonstrate dominant groups using a lack of education to justify their actions. Utilising cornrows to create a look, divorced from their original context and absent homage to their cultural meaning can devalue their origin and erase its original meaning.<sup>25</sup> Members of the Black community have been outspoken in response to these portrayals in fashion shows, fashion magazines and advertisements, and their desire for these fashion brands and companies to be more inclusive and provide better explanations regarding the cultural origins of their products.

The global fashion realm fosters shared creativity and economic fruitfulness when practices are for the greater good. Inspiration from and reinterpretation of different cultures is important and can be mutually beneficial to the global community when it comes to sharing knowledge and merging ideas, but it must be conducted in an appropriate manner so as not to misrepresent or harm the culture itself.<sup>26</sup> To engage in respectful cultural appreciation rather than appropriation, the culture must be included, and the context of the new form must overtly align with its original intention in some form or fashion.<sup>27</sup> The economic impact of the fashion industry and its ability to influence societal structures makes the prevalence of cultural appropriation and racism something that cannot be ignored;

this includes claims of unknowingly damaging a culture being unacceptable if the brand wants to retain its customers.

## **RACISM AND FASHION**

A common racist trope in fashion products is that of the mammy, the stereotype of the Black woman who is large in size, asexual, cares for everyone around her, is seen as motherly to the white children she takes care of, and part of the white family to which she can never actually belong.<sup>28</sup> Dolce & Gabbana's infamous 'mammy' earrings provide a case in point,<sup>29</sup> although other fashion brands and retailers are equally guilty. Prada, for example, has come under fire for making figurines of black monkeys with red lips — a harmful trope intended to mock and degrade Black men, often shown in displays of blackface.<sup>30</sup>

When fashion icon Grace Coddington gave a tour of her home, viewers saw mammy figurines scattered throughout the property.<sup>31</sup> This demonstrates the way in which decision makers are aware of the meaning of stereotypes and the subsequent oppression of people of colour. Unfortunately, however, they continue to disregard these individuals' struggles because they do not see the effects or consequences on their own lives. Although stereotypes in fashion and other avenues have *improved*, the very existence of such inaccurate portrayals of Black women contributes to the limitations and oppression of these women.<sup>32</sup>

There was a time when retailers could employ various techniques to repent for their indiscretions and convince customers of their sincerity and ignorance.<sup>33</sup> Since the advent of social media, however, brands are not only exposed to a much wider audience, but news and information spread at a much faster pace. This makes it more and more difficult for brands and individuals to cite ignorance as a way to dig themselves out of the proverbial hole. Indeed, as

consumers have become more educated, they are increasingly holding brands and companies accountable for their behaviour, and not taking lack of awareness or cultural understanding as an excuse.

Simply put, if consumers can understand racist stereotypes, regardless of perceived acceptance and racist structures of oppression, then so can brands.

The rise of Black designers and inclusive representation in the fashion industry is an important aid in the fight for acknowledgment of intersectional forms of oppression and their impact on all areas of society.<sup>34</sup> Members of the Black community heavily involved in the consumption and creation of fashion have also aided in the call for increased accountability among fashion brands, as has been the case with Dapper Dan and Soulja Boy in their criticism of Gucci.<sup>35</sup>

## **NEGATIVE FASHION BRAND ACTIONS**

Although many brands, such as the Dapper Dan collaboration by Gucci, are striving toward a more inclusive and respectful space for BIPOC, consumers are calling for more authentic behaviour.<sup>36</sup> In the past few years, Gucci, Prada and Dolce & Gabbana have all come under fire for perpetuating racist tropes through culturally insensitive products and advertising.<sup>37,38</sup> Dolce & Gabbana, for example, even had to cancel its 2018 fashion show in China following the extensive condemnation it received for its advertisements that mocked Chinese culture by showing Chinese models using chopsticks to eat such Italian foods as pizza and pasta.<sup>39</sup> For today's consumers, simply apologising or trying to reconcile relationships with consumers through brand rehabilitation is not going to cut it. What is more, the brands are aware of this, as Chanel, Gucci, Prada, Burberry and many others have created new positions within their companies to oversee diversity

initiatives.<sup>40</sup> Naively, perhaps, Chanel hired a white woman to head up diversity within the company — a decision that was instantly called out on social media.<sup>41</sup> This begs the question, are these new diversity positions solely a response to fashion brands being called out for their *out of touch* perspective? Or are these changes reflective of the fashion industry starting to take responsibility for its harmful practices?

To create actionable change to prevent harmful and problematic behaviour toward consumers and their cultures, fashion brands and companies need people within the decision-making process to bring up questions and prevent problematic products, advertisements, etc, from reaching consumers. Fashion brands also need to address the multitude of issues surrounding racial injustice towards BIPOC in the USA and abroad.<sup>42</sup> Some fashion brands have recruited leaders with various intersecting forms of marginalised identities, such as H&M, while others, such as Chanel, have not been attuned to needing a BIPOC in these executive roles.

The question, as people all over the USA are asking right now, is how much people are prepared to sacrifice in order to facilitate change. As the prominent Black fashion designer Virgil Abloh says, there is no room for compromise on this matter;<sup>43</sup> fashion brands that do not take an active stand against racism are, by definition, part of the problem. Being a performative ally can be just as harmful as doing nothing at all — simply pulling problematic and offensive products from the shelves to appease consumers is no longer an option. Creating a diversity team is not enough to up the ante. For many of these companies, the lack of diversity and representation in *the room where it happens* is blatantly apparent. At the same time, actionable change requires thought processes and education to be integrated into the culture from the top down. Many people feel the actions of the fashion industry at large

have fallen short,<sup>44</sup> so it is vital for these companies and other industries to put in the work to create authentic and lasting positive change.

## CULTURAL APPRECIATION IN FASHION BRANDS

The implementation of diversity initiatives and departments is a step in the right direction. Another initiative is the 15 per cent pledge created by Aurora James of the brand Brother Vellies, which encourages retailers and brands to devote 15 per cent of their shelf space (both brick-and-mortar and virtual) to Black-owned brands, to ensure the space is more representative of the 15 per cent of the US population who identify as Black.<sup>45</sup> Recently, Macy's became the largest retailer to commit to the 15 per cent pledge.

Additionally, the Kelly Initiative is demanding the Council of Fashion Designers of America conduct a census to obtain more insight into the racial composition of the fashion industry.<sup>46</sup> The publication of such data will force fashion companies to recruit more Black talent and diversify their employees. This need follows on from the policy of affirmative action, which was initially introduced to provide jobs to all marginalised individuals, but mostly resulted in the hiring of *underrepresented* white women (mostly able-bodied, married and affluent) and Black men (mostly able-bodied and heterosexual), at the expense of disabled, queer and socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals and, most notably, Black women.<sup>47</sup> Hegemonic beliefs continue to dominate societal perceptions that affirmative action and social policies work to provide unearned resources and opportunities for Black women.<sup>48</sup> They also intentionally and malignantly reject ideas of Black women's inequality, oppression and vulnerability by suggesting they are too strong to be victims.<sup>49,50</sup>

## BEST PRACTICES FOR CHANGING CORPORATE CULTURE

Corporate culture can be changed and enhanced through education about the accurate portrayal of culture, history, customs and beliefs. This can safeguard brands from disseminating harmful advertising and marketing messages. Brands also need to inject diversity throughout their organisations — a push that should be spearheaded by a team of diversity experts. Lastly, brands need to be action-oriented and be the first to recognise their mistakes. Positive brand actions are the necessary first step toward creating an inclusive brand that avoids harmful messaging and supports oppressed communities.

Companies cannot be expected to shift the full 180 degrees instantaneously, however. They must start by allocating space to BIPOC-owned businesses, removing packaging or products that contain harmful stereotypes and tropes, and educating their employees about inclusivity and cultural competency. While there is presently no standardised framework for cultural appreciation in fashion and marketing, in what follows, this paper summarises the best practices (see Figure 1) for practitioners and academics looking to implement such a framework.

### Education

The best way to be respectful and inclusive is through education. Companies and brands that are unable to recognise where they have been oppressive or harmful will be unable to prevent it from happening again. Ignorance is no longer tolerated, and fashion companies must understand the cultural importance and significance of their design and imagery. Learn from social media accounts, such as Diet Prada, that create conversations around brands, companies and individuals who are creating and engaging in harmful practices (eg cultural appropriation, products and

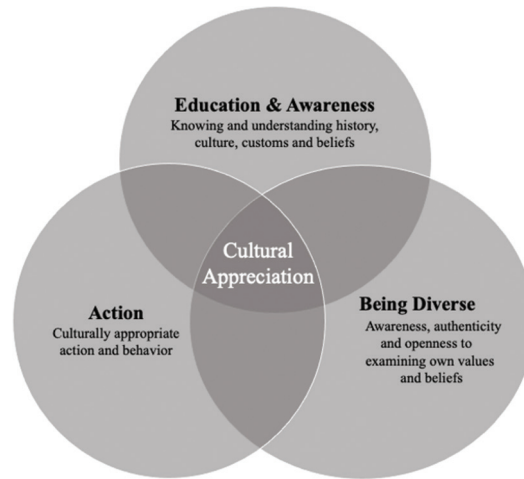


Figure 1: The cultural appreciation framework model

messaging with racist tropes, stealing from small BIPOC companies, etc).

### Awareness

With education comes awareness and understanding. There are many ways to spread awareness to consumers and others in the fashion industry. One way is through supporting BIPOC-owned businesses and joining the 15 per cent shelf space campaign to provide opportunities to showcase these brands online and in brick-and-mortar stores. It is important to actively seek out these brands and companies in order to spread awareness and be inclusive. Many brands, such as Second Wind and Laquan Smith, are working hard to represent these companies. Companies can partner with these brands, as well as share the demographics of their employees, to continue in a manner of transparency and promote awareness.

### Diversity

As previously discussed, employing a team that specialises in diversity initiatives is critical for brand success and will be essential for market leaders in the coming years.<sup>51</sup> Having people with intersecting forms of identity and experience of oppression

in the room where decisions are made brings more education and awareness to everyone in the company; it also prevents companies from making harmful decisions at the conception of an idea instead of once financial investments and work have been put into advertising, products, etc. This saves brands and companies from wasting time and money, while also avoiding fiscal implications and tainted brand image caused by consumer backlash. Brands and companies must remember that making a person or team responsible for diversity and inclusion is the easy part; to have the intended impact, these people must be empowered to create initiatives with actionable results. For example, models in the Fenty fashion show demonstrate diverse models and inclusive sizing to appeal to consumers and demonstrate action.

### Action

Course correction is needed to overcome problematic company behaviours. Brands must think about the imagery they use and not be passive when confronted by consumers or employees. Simply removing advertisements or products from shelves is positive, but accountability and awareness are the first steps toward authentic action. Companies that want to restore consumer trust and repair brand image must not only apologise for their mistakes but also demonstrate that they have learned from them. Gucci, for example, issued an apology letter after withdrawing from sale a controversial sweater that also served as a ski mask.<sup>52</sup> Although it was an iteration of an existing design, this particular version was clearly based on a Blackface design with large red lips — a demeaning trope designed to mock Black individuals.

### CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

As the USA becomes increasingly multicultural, brands that want to survive

need to support diversity. Within the fashion and retail industry, cultural appropriation and disrespect have prevailed for too long. It is the duty of the industry to take a stand against these issues, and to respect and promote *all* consumer groups. As this paper is being finalised, the USA is in the midst of a cultural reset, with people learning about white privilege as never before. Retailers such as Anthropologie and Zimmerman are being forced to respond to allegations regarding the profiling of Black customers and the insensitive treatment of Black employees. The amplification of BIPOC voices in bringing the silenced systems of oppression engrained in societal structures, including retail and fashion, is resulting in a stand against racism and inequality, manifest through awareness and consumer pressure. In a market where consumers value authenticity, the increase in societal education regarding cultural issues will only make it harder for retailers perceived to be racist and those in the fashion industry who engage in cultural appropriation to flourish.<sup>53</sup>

Is it possible for a company accused of having racially profiled its customers, such as Anthropologie, come across as authentic in its allyship posts on social media?<sup>54</sup> Can Anna Wintour and other executives recover from reports about their racial prejudice from former employees and industry *friends*?<sup>55</sup> Can Ferragamo, Target and other brands and retailers support the Black Lives Matter movement while simultaneously discriminating against trans people?<sup>56</sup> People can certainly change, but it takes recognition of internal biases and an understanding that racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc are all intertwined, and no one form of prejudice or oppressive action is its own individual problem to tackle.<sup>57</sup> All forms of prejudice must be addressed in order to have true progress and move forward as an industry.

This paper provides insight into understanding the impact of *cultural appropriation* in the fashion industry and



the importance of trading it for *cultural appreciation*. Allowing cultural appropriation to continue through intentional or unintentional ignorance perpetuates societally reflected harming of marginalised groups. Fashion brands can do more to pay respect to cultures and groups of people in order to propagate respectful influences instead of harmful cultural appropriation. As an industry with a multitude of facets that touch every person across the globe, fashion media and retail brands have the ability to raise awareness of injustices and inappropriate portrayals of people and culture within oppressed groups. Consumers are savvy, and consumers have power; companies must therefore use their power and resources in a respectful way that will not result in online backlash.

To move further towards cultural appreciation and instil a multicultural mindset in corporate America, further work is needed. Both practitioners and researchers have important questions to ponder. For example:

- In what ways do racially insensitive practices/products affect internal corporate culture?
- Do intersecting forms of identity matter for a head of diversity position?
- Does diversity in retail sales associates positively affect sales?
- To what degree does internal education on multiculturalism/anti-racism affect corporate culture?
- How do customers perceive companies that are not taking direct action against racism?
- In what ways can companies who have received bad press for their cultural appropriation revive their image?

## REFERENCES

1. Vaughan-Bonas, D. (2019) 'The oppression in appropriation', *Footnotes*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 1–5
2. Vézina, B. (2019) 'Curbing cultural appropriation in the fashion industry', *CIGI*, Vol. 1, No. 213, pp. 1–24.
3. Larsen, S.F and László, J. (1990) 'Cultural–historical knowledge and personal experience in appreciation of literature', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. 20, No. 5, pp. 425–440.
4. Purcell, J.M. (1988) 'Cultural appreciation through literature', *Foreign Language Annals*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 19–24.
5. Labrecque, M.F (2005) 'Cultural appreciation and economic depreciation of the Mayas of Northern Yucatan, Mexico', *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 87–105.
6. Ambe, E.B. (2006) 'Fostering multicultural appreciation in pre-service teachers through multicultural curricular transformation', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 22, No. 6, pp. 690–699.
7. Han, H.C. (2019) 'Moving from cultural appropriation to cultural appreciation', *Art Education*, Vol. 72, No. 2, pp. 8–13.
8. Green, A.L. (2018) 'Calling out culture vultures: Nonwhite interpretations of cultural appropriation in the era of colorblindness', unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cincinnati.
9. Vaughan-Bonas, ref. 1 above.
10. Han, ref. 7 above.
11. *Ibid.*
12. Vaughan-Bonas, ref. 1 above.
13. Green, ref. 8 above.
14. Vaughan-Bonas, ref. 1 above.
15. Vézina, ref. 2 above.
16. Han, ref. 7 above.
17. Thompson, C.J. and Haytko, D.L. (1997) 'Speaking of fashion: consumers' uses of fashion discourses and the appropriation of countervailing cultural meanings', *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 15–42.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Han, ref. 7 above
20. Vézina, ref. 2 above
21. *Ibid.*
22. Alspaugh, L. (2019) 'Is cultural appropriation braided into fashion coverage? An examination of American magazines', *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research Communications*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 6–14.
23. Anonymous (2016) 'Case Study: The Indigenous Mixe Women of Santa Maria Tlahuitoltepec vs. French fashion designer Isabel Marant' available at: <http://culturalpropertyrights.blogspot.com/2016/04/> (accessed 17th February, 2021).
24. Alspaugh, ref. 22 above.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Vézina, ref. 2 above.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Collins, P.H. (2009) 'Black Feminist Thought', Routledge, London and New York.
29. Rees, A. (2012) 'Dolce & Gabbana explains those controversial earrings', available at: <https://www.thecut.com/2012/09/dolce-gabbana-explain-those-earrings.html> (accessed 17th February, 2021).
30. Petrarca, E. (2019) 'Is fashion finally ready to face its blackface problem?', available at: <https://www.thecut.com/2019/02/fashion-brands-blackface-problem.html> (accessed 3rd November, 2020).
31. *Ibid.*

32. Radu, A. (2013) 'Mammy and Miss America — From plantation to the fashion industry', *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 92, No. 1, pp. 778–783.
33. Wekwerth, Z.M. 'Responding to online firestorms on social media: an analysis of the two company cases: Dolce & Gabbana and Gucci', unpublished master's thesis, University of Twente.
34. Wadlington, C.A. (2007) 'On the fashion front', *Network Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 28–29.
35. Radu, ref. 32 above.
36. Wekwerth, ref. 33 above.
37. Radu, ref. 32 above.
38. Kwun, A., Holland, O., Chung, S. (2020) 'Fashion gaffes are a reflection of the industry's diversity problem', available at: <https://www.cnn.com/style/article/fashion-gaffes-industry-diversity-problem/index.html> (accessed 16th August, 2020).
39. Chung, S., Holland, O., Wang, S. (2018) 'Dolce & Gabbana cancels China show amid "racist" ad controversy', available at: <https://www.cnn.com/style/article/dolce-gabbana-shanghai-controversy/index.html> (accessed 17th February, 2021).
40. Kwun *et al.*, ref. 38 above.
41. *Ibid.*
42. Tillet, S. and Friedman, V. (2020) 'It's time to end racism in the fashion industry. But how?', *New York Times*, 24th June, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/24/style/fashion-racism.html> (accessed 16th August, 2020).
43. *Ibid.*
44. Alleyne, A. (2020) 'The fashion industry says it stands against racism. Critics aren't buying it', available at: <https://www.cnn.com/style/article/fashion-industry-black-lives-matter/index.html> (accessed 16th August, 2020).
45. Tillet and Friedman, ref. 42 above.
46. *Ibid.*
47. Collins, ref. 28 above.
48. *Ibid.*
49. Beauboetuf-Lafontant, T. (2009) 'Behind the Mask of the Strong Black Woman: Voice and the Embodiment of a Costly Performance', Temple University Press, Philadelphia, PA.
50. Harris-Perry, M.V. (2011) 'Sister Citizen: Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America', Yale University Press, New Haven, CT and London.
51. Beniflah, J. (2020) 'Is corporate America ready for a multicultural America? A dynamic capabilities perspective', *Journal of Cultural Marketing Strategy*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 22–35.
52. O'Kane, C. (2019) 'Gucci removes \$890 "blackface" sweater, apologizes after receiving backlash', available at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/gucci-blackface-sweater-gucci-removes-890-blackface-sweater-apologizes-after-receiving-backlash/> (accessed 17th February, 2021).
53. Leslie, N.S. (2017) 'The state of the multicultural marketing and advertising in the USA', *Journal of Cultural Marketing Strategy*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 124–140.
54. Tillet and Friedman, ref. 42 above.
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.*
57. hooks, b. (2015) 'Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center', Pluto Press, London.