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Underrepresented: The Lack of Black Designers Featured in Harper's Bazaar and Vogue

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INTRODUCTION

During the Fall 2012 New York Fashion Week events, only two Black designers showcased collections of the 127 designers (Mullins par. 1). For the purposes of this research, the term "Black designers" encompasses all peoples of the African diaspora as well as those more recently born in Africa. Spring 2015 Fashion Week showcased 25 Black designers ("25 Black Designers" par. 1), a significant increase, which occurred only after designers, editors, bloggers and other social media journalists widely-critiqued the lack of diversity seen on the runways (Williams par. 6). Activists such as Bethann Hardison speak on the fact that models of color are continually being passed up by racist White designers (Wilson, "Fashion Designers" par. 1; Wilson, "For True Diversity" par. 3). Arguably, the issue of underrepresentation extends beyond just Black designers attaining recognition in the fashion industry. With the increase of Black designers represented at the live high-fashion shows and venues, it would be assumed that this would be paralleled in the high-fashion print media, giving new presence in editorials such as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*. However, there is still minimal to no presence of Black designers in high-fashion magazines. "The text and images presented in the media directly reflect the values and interest of the advertisers, who are usually White men" (Hazell and Clark 6); and this phenomenon is evident in high-fashion magazines.

Historically, Blacks have had to create print media catered to their community because of the lack of coverage they received in mainstream print media. The first Black magazine, entitled *The Colored American Magazine*, was published in May 1900 and ran until November 1909 featuring news, lifestyle articles, and beauty advertisements ("The Colored American"). This discriminatory trend continued with mainstream media which resulted in the creation of two of the most popular Black publications in the United States of America today—*Ebony*, published in 1945, and its sister magazine, *Jet*, published in 1951. More recently, *Arise* magazine of London, first published in 2009, and *Vogue Black* of Italy, first published in 2008, emerged onto the high-fashion print media sector. The issues featured some Black designers and all Black models as a result of the lack of coverage in high-fashion magazines. However, by 2015 both *Arise* and *Vogue Black* ceased publication/development, presumably because "black models don't sell" product ("Vogue Italia" par. 4).

The lack of notable Black designers in the industry has been claimed as the reason why there is a lack of Black designers being featured on the runways or in high-fashion magazines such as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*. Columnists have differing theories as to why the numbers are now lower than ever. "'There were more high-profile black designers in the 1970s than there are today,' [stated Bethann Hardison], 'We are going backwards'" (Friedman 2; Adams par. 1). Institutions of higher learning are said to be to blame, with the Fashion Institute of Technology having 8% of its student population being African American, Parsons the New School for Design at 3.31% and the Pratt Institute at 1.9%. Cost to attend these schools is the main factor. Also, according to Friedman, young African Americans are not choosing to go into fashion because they are not seeing it as a viable career, as a result of the lack of representation of African Americans in the industry. It is a vicious cycle. African Americans in the industry are not being made to feel welcome in prominent organizations such as the Council for Fashion Designers of America, which only has 12 African American members out of the 470

current members (Friedman par. 5; Adams par. 1), representing the fact that inclusion is still not a main priority for the mainstream population in the fashion industry. Another theory that surfaced from the media is that the 1970s and '80s were breakthrough eras for Black designers and models, but then the AIDS epidemic took three influential Black designers. Might they lived, more doors would have been opened for Blacks in the fashion industry (Goff par. 17). This theory has less logical reasoning supporting it and is a scapegoat for the real issue in the industry.

The lack of coverage and support that Black designers face as a result of racism and discrimination has a reciprocal effect on their economic standing in the high-end fashion industry. Several Black designers have gained success in the hip-hop/urban/streetwear genre of fashion catered towards the young Black community in the past. Companies that were popular in the 1990s, such as Karl Kani and FUBU, have gained earnings of more than $50 million and $6 billion respectively (Giddings and Ray 5). More recently, brands such as Sean John and Baby Phat have gained earnings of $525 million (Sean John Clothing, Inc History) and $980 million (Phat Fashions LLC). However, in the high-end luxury fashion market, whose main clientele are older, wealthy, and typically a majority White population, Black designers have struggled to make their mark. Most Black designers in this market have annual revenues of under $1 million (Friedman). A lack of presence in high-end fashion magazines may be one of the contributing factors here, with their main readership consisting of the same older, wealthy, and typically majority White population.

There has been lay/popular research focusing on the lack of support Black designers receive in the fashion industry (Adams; Brown; Kearney; Mullins; Williams; Woodberry), but no academic data has been published regarding this topic or the lack of features Black designers have in the high-fashion magazines. Thus, it was important to evaluate the amount and types of coverage that Black designers received in the magazines. The unjust normalcy of the elimination of certain people in

the industry has a major effect on the rich diversity that the industry could have and the economic growth of all people. It is time for academic publications backed by research to uncover this dogma; therefore, I employed the following research questions:

1) How often and within what capacity are Black designers featured in *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*?
2) Has there been an increase in the amount of coverage Black designers received from 2000-2012?
3) Has there been an improvement in the types of features Black designers received from 2000-2012?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A Critical Race Theory (CRT) lens reveals the coverage or lack thereof that Black designers receive. CRT emerged out of the legal systems and has a direct lineage to the Civil Rights activists in the 1960s. CRT developed out of Critical Theory and Marxist philosophy, which fought to make meaning of engrained class struggles and oppression (Tate 196). I used CRT in the current study to aid in the understanding that racism is engrained in the fabric and system of the American society ("What is Critical Race Theory?" par. 2), and is the "normal order of things" in American society (Ladson-Billings 37). I employed CRT to bring to light how race interacts with other identities (gender) and to demonstrate how institutionalized racism restricts individuals not belonging to the dominant culture from access, opportunities and power. In this case, it is the lack of notoriety given to Black designers in top fashion magazines.

I developed *The Critical Race Theory Converging Lens* inspired by the physics converging lens ray diagram (Fig. 1). This figure shows a single starting entity: social constructs which result in oppressive situations for non-dominant cultures. The double convex CRT converging lens allows the social constructs to be reflected into an axis point—the deconstruction of normalized oppression—that is then dispersed into various rays with the main emphasis on social equality.
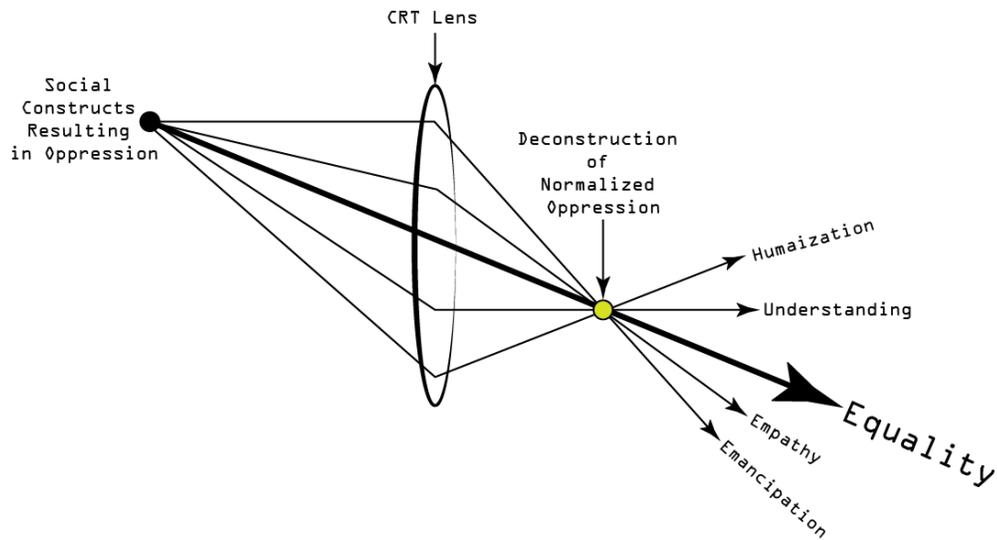
Critical Race Theory Converging Lens

Figure 1. The Critical Race Theory Converging Lens Toward Equality

The goal of CRT is to deconstruct the phenomenon at hand and to reject the traditions of liberalism and meritocracy. Legal discourse says that the law is neutral and colorblind; however, CRT challenges this legal "truth" by examining liberalism and meritocracy as a vehicle for self-interest, power, and privilege. CRT also recognizes that liberalism and meritocracy are often stories told from those with wealth, power, and privilege ("What is Critical Race Theory?" par. 2). As stated earlier, White men control the media world and their interests and values are always on the forefront (Hazell and Clark 6). In the media, the concept of meritocracy barely, or never, reaches Blacks in high-end fashion unless they are of celebrity status, at which point they are welcomed with open arms. "Critical race theory can thus be understood as a study of 'hegemony': how domination can persist without coercion. It can also be understood as a study of collective denial" (Harris 1). The denial is on the part of mainstream society and their belief that racism is no longer an

issue. Fashion journalist Mariana Liao more recently claimed that the fashion runways are becoming more diverse; however, she questioned whether the inclusive way of being would last. Discriminatory traditions are hard to break and the fashion industry is no exception. Will removing the whitewashing of the runways also remove the whitewashing that is happening in print media? Is the industry only being more inclusive because others are putting pressure on designers? Is inclusivity trendy now and designers are following the wave (Hickey par. 3-4)? Only time will tell.

METHODS

My research focused on the lack of coverage Black designers have in two top fashion magazines: *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. I acquired periodicals from my own collection, microfilm, and the Vogue Archives. I utilized a qualitative content analysis inspired by Evans et al.'s methodology for contemporary teen magazines—*Sassy*, *Seventeen* and *Young Miss*— to gather the data. I completed the methodology in four parts: (1) magazine selection, (2) list of Black designers developed, (3) content-coding scheme development, and (4) content classification for pattern analysis development. The final sample included 48 issues: 24 issues of *Harper's Bazaar* (12 from the year 2000 and 12 from 2012) and 24 *Vogue* issues (12 from the year 2000 and 12 from 2012). I chose the years 2000 and 2012 because I wanted to examine if there had been an increase and/or enhancement in Black designer exposure over a decade of time. Just as Evans et al., who selected magazines that were "widely circulated" and had long standing, I selected *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* because they are top ranking fashion magazines. Both boast a readership of over five million. Originally, the magazine sample was to include the comparable title *Elle* as a third periodical however, I could not gain access to the archives.

VOGUE AUDIENCE (According to the Condé Nast Vogue's media kit)	HARPER'S BAZAAR AUDIENCE (According to Mediamark Research and Intelligence, LLC)
• 87% women readers	• 89.5% women readers
• Median age 37.9	• Median age 46.2
• Median household income $68,519	• Median household income $70, 206
• Some college education 68%	• Some college education 77.6%
• Employed 65%	• Employed 64%
	Note: Mendelsohn Affluent Reader Profile specified a median income of $150,907 and a net worth of $1,132,421

Table 1. Sample demographics for *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*

I developed the list of Black designers with considerable research because they are not very well known and are often underground with minimal to no exposure by mass media. Designers had to meet certain criteria in order to be added of the list: (1) they must cater to a similar type of customer as the *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*; (2) their work had to be of similar caliber to designers frequently featured in *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*; (3) the designers had to be known for dressing high-profile celebrities such as Rihanna, Beyoncé, and Michelle Obama (all of whom have been featured on the covers of *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*); (4) they had to be working under their own name instead of another designer's or house's name. For example, Patrick Robinson with Armani Exchange was listed with contingencies because he is not designing under his own name. A similar example is Oliver Rousteing, creative director at the luxury fashion house Balmain, whose name was often featured in the magazines in association with the company.

Similar to the work of Evans et al, I developed the content-coding scheme development and the content classification for pattern analysis on a charting matrix. The matrix for the current study tracked each

designer and their features for each of the 48 issues. During the content coding scheme development, I evaluated placement (beginning, middle and end of the magazine; top, middle, bottom of the page) and size of the feature. Spread layout and placement is critical in magazine development and the most important features get the best locations, such as the top of the page (Nikola par. 4-7).

RESULTS

Research Question 1

Evaluating the presence or lack thereof that Black designers have in fashion magazines was important because the economic standing of these designers striving to survive in the high-end fashion market is a direct result of being featured or not being featured in fashion magazines. The first research question asked: How often and within what capacity are Black designers featured in *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*?

Types of Feature

The data revealed that, on average, Black designers were featured in six of the 12 issues for a given year, averaging two features of a Black designer per issue. They were featured in a variety of capacities as well. The most coverage that Black designers received was when their name was mentioned with one of their pieces shown (45% of the time). Twenty percent of the time, Black designers were mentioned with piece shown, a small 30-50-word write-up, and an image of the designer. Black designers did not and currently do not advertise in fashion magazines. The exception is designer James Moore, who had the only paid advertisements in *Harper's Bazaar* of his namesake collections. Designer Oliver Rousteing for Balmain had a paid advertisement; however, it was under the name of the company instead of his name. Similarly, Rachel Roy had the only two-page feature of a Black designer's work shown in

Vogue. She collaborated on a collection with Macy's, and the company paid for an advertisement of the new collection.

Size and Place of Feature

Out of 48 issues, Black designers were featured in 11 total write-ups. Of those 11 total write-ups, 64% of the time Black designers were given a 1/8 to ¼ page feature. The write-up could also include an image of the designer along with a single garment or an entire outfit shown. Thirty-six percent of the time, Black designers were given a ¼ to ½ page write-up and the placement for these features was usually in the lower sections of the page or in the center sections closest to the binding. These locations are said to be the least important locations in the magazine (Nikola par. 4-7). *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* both featured designers every month in full page or two full page write-ups. *Harper's Bazaar* had no full page write-ups on Black designers. Black designer Lawrence Steele was given the only full page write-up out of the 48 issues evaluated. His write-up was featured in *Vogue's* July 2000 issue. *Vogue's* willingness to feature a Black designer in this capacity could possibly be a result from having had a Black editor, Andre Leon Tally, who was on staff at that time. CRT reveals how institutionalized racist thought causes discrimination in the industry until someone speaks up about the injustices and demands equality.

Editorials and Celebrities

Fashion editorials are where the designers and the magazine editors can flex their creative skills. High fashion editorials are the portions of the magazine that are most used for inspirational images for moderate priced, mainstream designers and mass retailers. Editorials are prime real estate in fashion magazines, and in only three instances were Black designers featured in editorial shoots. Lawrence Steele was featured in an editorial in 2000 *Vogue* and 2000 *Harper's Bazaar*. The other instance of a Black designer with an editorial was in 2012 *Vogue* with work by

Duro Olowu. Otherwise, Black designers' garments were not used in editorial photo shoots.

Magazines also often featured celebrities wearing designers' garments. Once a celebrity is seen wearing a designer's clothing, the attention it produces results in a major economic increase for that designer because other clients begin making orders for the same, or a similar, look. Black designers are not exempt from this phenomenon, and many have gotten their claim to fame by having celebrities wear their fashions. Celebrities are always featured in fashion magazines and have now dominated the cover of the magazine month after month. Having a feature with a celebrity wearing a designer's garments in a fashion magazine amplifies his/her economic growth potential even more. *Harper's Bazaar* did not show celebrities wearing Black designers' garments. In only one instance did *Vogue* show a celebrity wearing a Black designer's garment and that was in an illustration Lawrence Steele created of a design for Halle Berry. CRT brings to light how the normalcy of racism puts limitations on the level of success Black designers are able to acquire.

The September and March Issues

The largest issues of the year for fashion magazines are first, the September issue, and second, the March issue, because they are the times of transition between the selling seasons—Spring/Summer to Fall/Winter or vice versa. Designers and retailers pay higher fees to have their garments advertised and featured in these issues. The September 2000 *Harper's Bazaar* issue contained 565 pages, and it had no Black designers featured. The September 2000 *Vogue* issue was 689 pages long, and it also had no Black designers featured. The September 2012 *Harper's Bazaar* was 550 pages, and it featured Black designers in six instances; of those, all were a mention of the designer's name with a piece shown. The September 2012 issue of *Harper's Bazaar* also featured a special advertising section paying tribute to some influential designers. Black designer B. Michael was one of those. The September 2012 *Vogue*

boasted 916 pages, and it featured Black designers in only six instances. Of those six features, three were special advertisements including write-ups about designers. In this issue, *Vogue* also featured a special advertisement for *Arise* magazine, which showcased a selection of the featured Black designers shown in *Arise*. The 2000 March *Harper's Bazaar* issue included a special section that paid tribute to Black designers showing a total of seven Black designers in this one issue.
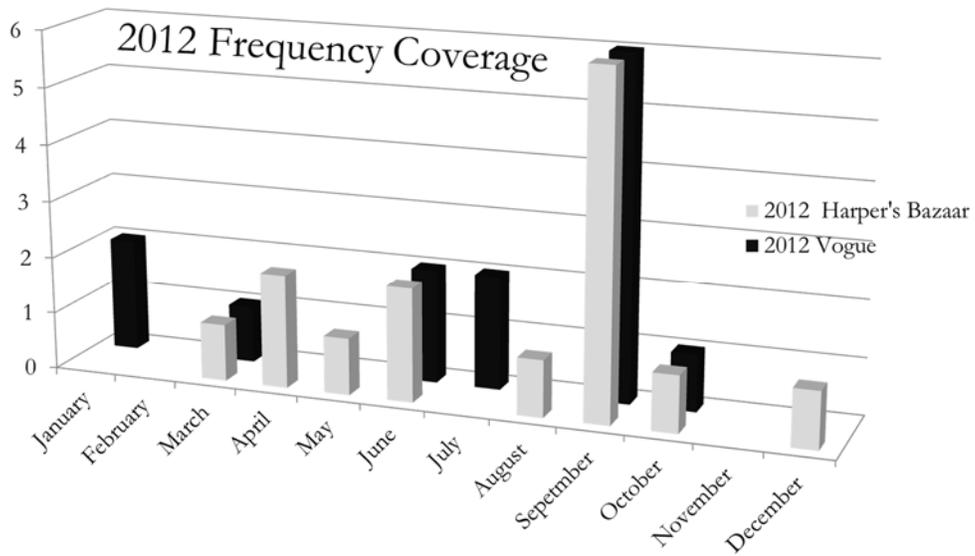
Research Question 2

The second research question asked: Has there been an increase in the amount of coverage Black designers received from 2000-2012? It was hypothesized that as societal ideas overall become more progressive, so would print media. It was found that the number of instances where Black designers were featured did increase from 2000 to 2012. However, the growth is minute in comparison to how many non-Black designers are being featured. On average, a high fashion magazine is comprised of 99% non-Black designers. Less than 1% of the magazine focuses on Black designers. The magazines continue to get larger, and more and more pages are added, which allows for the opportunity to feature more Black designers. However, they are still almost nonexistent. In all *Vogue* 2000 issues, there were only eight instances where a Black designer was featured. In all *Harper's Bazaar* 2000 issues, there were only ten instances where a Black designer was featured. Both *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* 2012 issues included a total of fifteen instances where a Black designer was featured. See Table 2 and Table 3 for a visual of these numbers.

The tables show that *Vogue* has been very consistent in how it has spread the features out over the course of 2000 and 2012 showing 1-2 Black designers in most issues throughout both years. However, Table 2 demonstrates that *Harper's Bazaar* featured Black designers sparingly in 2000; but in 2012 the features for Black designers were more spread over the entire year.
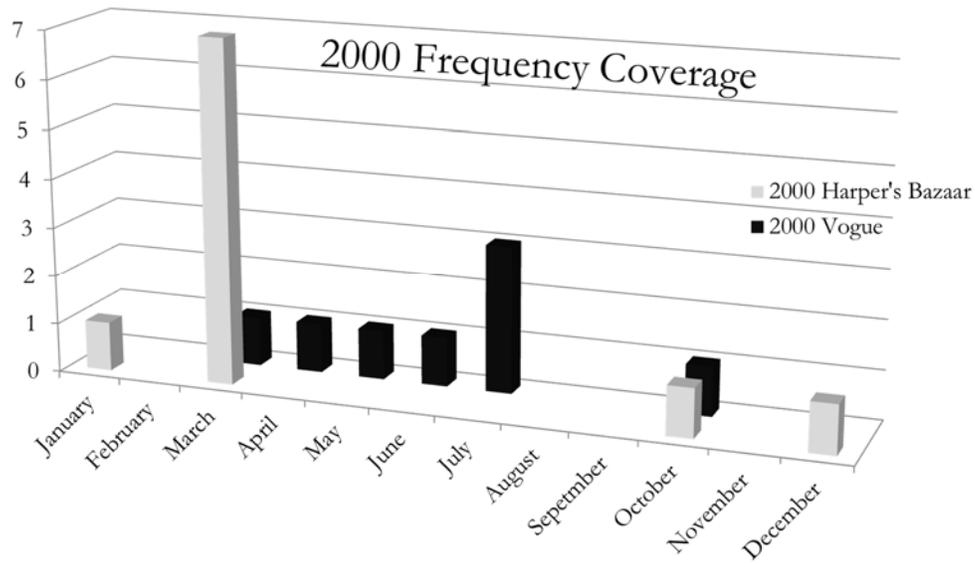
Table 2. Frequency of Black Designers in *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* in the year 2000

Table 3. Frequency of Black designers in *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* in the year 2012

Research Question 3

The third research question asked: Has there been an improvement in the types of features Black designers received from 2000-2012? Findings showed that Black designers did not have better placement or an increase in size for their features. The types of features they received remained consistent as well. However, the data revealed an unexpected result in the types of features for Black designers.

Token Black Designers

The concept of being the token is an example of the "interest convergence" that Ladson-Billings described in her CRT-focused work as an insincere attempt to align the oppressed with that of the dominant culture. Just as in many television shows and films, the token Black person allows racist messages to be present in the kinds of roles given to Black actors as well as in the general portrayal of Blacks in the media ("The Token Black Friend" par. 2). The token is a member of an underrepresented group, who is operating on the turf of the dominant group (Laws 51). According to Laws, tokenism is likely to be found wherever a dominant group is under pressure to share privilege, power, or other desirable commodities with an otherwise excluded group. Tokenism is the means by which the dominant group advertises a promise of mobility between the dominant and excluded classes. Tokenism does not allow for other non-token Black designers to be recognized. Being the token designer breaks down barriers for his or her career, but it also allows the dominant population to believe that they have "filled their diversity quota." Tokenism can paradoxically hinder a designer's career as well because it involves mobility, which is severely restricted in quantity and quality (Laws 51).

In the 2000 issues of *Vogue*, Lawrence Steele was the token Black designer being featured with the same legitimacy as all other designers. As detailed earlier, this designer was the only one to have a full page write-up, and he was also one of the only designers to have an editorial shoot with his garments. Lawrence Steele was featured five times in the

2000 issues of *Vogue*. Jewelry designer Monique Péon was *Harper's Bazaar's* 2012 token Black designer. She was the only Black designer in this magazine to have a full page photograph of her work shown. Monique Péon was featured a total of seven times in the 2012 issues. However, as compared to her male counterpart, Lawrence Steele, Monique Péon's features were usually small, 1/8 or ¼ page in size. In this case, tokenism and gender discrimination are prevalent in the fashion magazine features. This finding suggests that there is continued need for diversification in high-fashion publications. See Tables 4 and 5 for a visual of the tokenism frequency for Lawrence Steele and Monique Péon. During the content classification, I evaluated the type of feature the designers had in the magazines. While coding the data, I found that the designers were featured in multiple dimensions in the magazines. The types of features were coded on the matrix as such:

- • = mentioned;
- * = mentioned with piece shown;
- ** = mentioned with piece shown and write-up;
- *** = mentioned with piece shown, write-up, image of the designer;
- W = write-up of the designer;
- I = image of the designer; or
- A = paid advertisement from the designer.

Designers	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept (largest)	Oct	Nov	Dec
Vouge 2000												
Anthony Mark Hankins												
B. Michael												
Bryon Lars												
Chris Aire												
Christopher Augman												
Carly Cushnie												
David Tlale												
Duro Olowu												
Edward wilkerson												
Gavin Douglas												
Gigi Hunter												
Helmer												
James Moore												
Joe Casley-Hayford												
Kendra Francis												
Kenneth Flanagan												
Kevan Hall												
Laura Smalls												
LaQuan Smith												
Lawrence Steele			*p. 322		*p.168	*p.92	I p.132 Wp.139 *p.140					
Liya Kebede (lemlem)												
Manalé Dagnew												
Mata ano (Ayaan & Idyl Mohallim)												
Monique Péon												
Ozwald Boateng (men's)												
Oliver Rousteing-Balmain												
Patrick Robinson-A/X												
Rachel Roy												
Rodney Epperson												
Sean Combs				***p.96						I p. 86		
Stephen Burrow												
Ten Thousand Things (Ron Anderson)												
Tori Nichel												
Tracy Reese												
Tracy L. Cox & Troy Arnold												

Table 4. Tokenism frequency for Lawrence Steele in 2000 *Vogue*

Harper's Bazaar 2012												
Designers	Dec/Jan12	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept (largest)	Oct	Nov	Dec/Jan 13
Anthony Mark Hankins												
B. Michael												
Bryon Lars												
Chris Aire												
Christopher Augman												
Carly Cushnie			* p.435									
David Tlale												
Duro Olowu												
Edward wilkerson												
Gavin Douglas												
Gigi Hunter												
Helmer												
James Moore												
Joe Casley-Hayford												
Kendra Francis												
Kenneth Flanagan												
Kevan Hall												
Laura Smalls												
LaQuan Smith												
Lawrence Steele												
Liya Kebede (lemlem)									*p.542			
Manalé Dagnew												
Mataano (Ayaan & Idyl Mohallim)												
Monique Péon				*p.145	*p. 84	*p.72		*p.110	*p.296 *p.359	*p.155		
Oliver Rousteing-Balmain						**p.87			*p.473			
Patrick Robinson-A/X												
Rachel Roy				*p.119					*p.542			
Rodney Epperson												
Sean Combs												
Stephen Burrow												
Ten Thousand Things (Ron Anderson)									*p. 248			
Tori Nichel												
Tracy Reese												• p.40
Tracy L. Cox & Troy Arnold												

**Table 5.** Tokenism frequency for Monique Péon for 2012 Harper's Bazaar

Gender Discrimination in the Fashion Industry

Black women designers are not only subjected to discrimination because of their race.

Societal barriers are more of an issue for Black women because they are considered a double minority suffering through a "double burden" of being Black and female (St. Jean and Feagin 16). Black women, in many capacities of their career, have been deemed as less competent and less knowledgeable (St. Jean and Feagin 19). The complex discrimination Black women and others who are considered a double or triple minority (ex. a person of color, a female, and low socioeconomic status) have faced are being more critically fleshed out by way of intersectionality theory (Davis 68; Cho, et al. 786). Civil rights activist, critical race, and feminist scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw developed intersectionality theory as an analytical strategy to examine the discriminatory crossovers in social inequality. Recent reports suggest that all female fashion designers are still being discriminated against in the industry with only 14% of the 50 major brands being run by females (Pike par. 3). "Men dominate the fashion industry as designers and CEOs, and also tend to advance more quickly than the women" (Akin-Olugbade par. 2).

The data revealed that Black women designers were featured less in *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar's* 2000 issues. Only 25% of the Black designers featured in the *Harper's Bazaar* 2000 issues were women and the *Vogue* 2000 issues only featured two Black designers, both of whom were men (Lawrence Steele and Sean Combs). As stated earlier, by 2012 the number of Black designers featured increased slightly along with an increase in the number of Black women designers being featured. See Table 6 for a visual break down of Black designer features by gender. Since there were higher numbers of women featured in the 2012 issues, I conducted an evaluation of the types of features women received versus the men. As mentioned earlier, prime real estate for fashion magazines is the editorial shoots, and the only Black designers that were featured

in this capacity were two men. In the *Harper's Bazaar* 2012 issues, both men and women were featured in the capacity of being mentioned with a garment of theirs shown. The only Black designer given a more upscale feature in *Harper's Bazaar* 2012 was Oliver Roustein of Balmain, a male. In June 2012, just after the first anniversary of being at Balmain, Roustein was featured with a garment as well as a write-up. In the *Vogue* 2012 issues, there was more diversification in the types of features Black designers received. Carly Cushie was the only Black woman designer featured with an image of herself in the *Vogue* 2012 issues. Rachel Roy was the only Black woman designer featured with an advertisement of her garments in the *Vogue* 2012 issues. Only Black men designers were featured with write-ups in the *Vogue* 2012 issues. CRT explains that race is just a product of a wider social force (Ladson-Billings). Here race and gender play a part in the level of notoriety accessible to Black female designers.
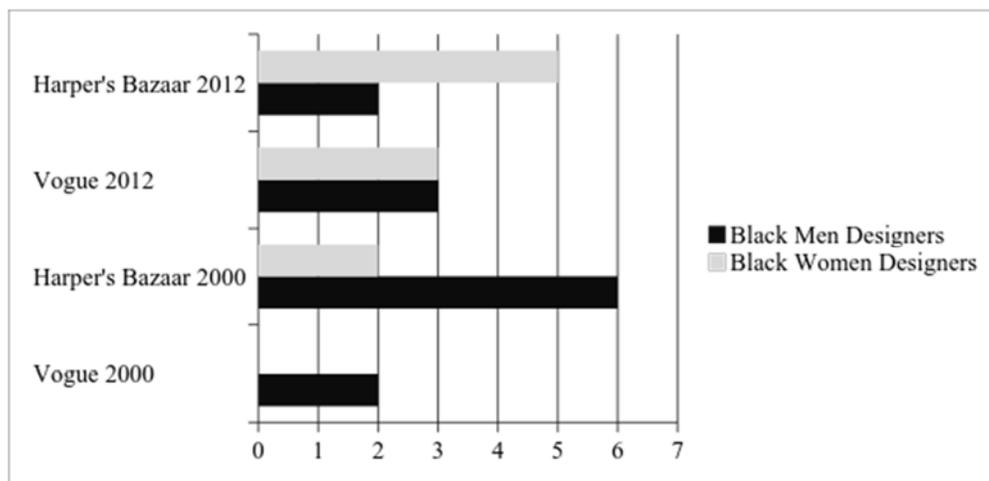
Table 6. Gender breakdown of Black designers in 2000 and 2012 *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As a result of institutionalized racism and discrimination, the elimination and lack of notoriety of Black designers is the normal order in the fashion industry. The data revealed that there was minimal increase of Black exposure in periodicals from the years 2000 to 2012 for both Harper's Bazaar and Vogue. The data also showed that the magazines were limited in how Black designers were featured; most of the time Black designers were not featured at the same caliber as all other designers. If a write up was done, it was not as lengthy or featured in the same size or in prime locations within the magazine as other designers. Findings demonstrate that Vogue had more diversity in its features of Black designers, possibly because it also had a Black editor on staff. Conversely, Harper's Bazaar showed Black designers in the same overall capacity throughout the 24 issues reviewed. Special features and advertisements allowed more Black designers to be displayed in these periodicals. The Harper's Bazaar March 2000 special issue allowed for small write-ups highlighting the work of Black designers.

The intersectionality of being a Black woman designer resulted in greater discrimination. The women of this study received fewer features than their male counterparts. They also received less upscale features, and were generally shown in the same capacity throughout—mentioned with a garment shown. Very few women were given write-ups. In fact, the only write-up featuring Black women designers was in the Harper's Bazaar March 2000 special issue celebrating Black designers.

Being featured in a high fashion magazine is a boost for the economic growth of the designer. Mainstream periodicals must be willing to make their features more inclusive in order to help enforce a fair economic playing field for all designers in the luxury market. Looking at this social construct from the lens of CRT, the findings suggest that there is a continued need for the Black culture to produce its own periodicals showcasing its own work. Magazines such as the London

based periodical *Arise* are still crucial in promoting the success of Black designers, despite having recently shut down. It is time for a magazine in the United States that is strictly a high-fashion periodical focused on displaying the work of Black designers.

IMPLICATIONS

A rendition of this study is suggested in order to evaluate the possible increase in diversity of high-fashion periodicals by 2020. Further research into the rise and fall of Black periodicals *Vogue Black* and *Arise* is also suggested in order to learn from their short-lived legacy. The fashion industry boasts that it is one of the most diverse industries in the world with large racial, ethnic, and sexual minority populations working in the industry. However, as the data showed, this fact is not portrayed in the magazines we read, or on the runway, or in the economic sectors of the fashion industry. As stated by Hazell and Clark, media directly reflects the values and interests of the people who are in charge and, in the case of both *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*, discriminating White men reign. They continue to be blinded by the normalcy of race and gender discrimination. In order to ignite change, the continued use of critical philosophies such as critical social theory, feminist theory, queer theory, and critical race theory as a framework for the studies focusing on social injustices in the fashion industry is a necessity. 1

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[1] An even stronger message could have been made regarding the discrimination Black designers face in high-fashion magazines if the author could have gotten access to the *Elle* archives. This periodical was not available via database or through microfilm at the time the data were collected. In the 2000 and 2012 *Vogue* issues featured on microfilm, on average about 2-4 pages in each issue were missing. These pages may have had pertinent information which may have altered the results of the study. *Harper's Bazaar* 2000 issues were also retrieved on microfilm. Unfortunately, the images were very dark which made it hard to read the details. Also, on average, about 3-4 pages were missing out of each issue.

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