International Journal of Communication 17(2023), 5420–5439 1932–8036/20230005

"They Expect Us to All Be Yellow": Rhetorical Construction of Asianness in Blackface Controversy Around Jella's Yellowish-Brown Tanning Makeup on YouTube

SEONAH KIM
University of Washington, USA

This study investigates the online controversy surrounding Jella, a South Korean beauty creator and influencer whose beauty performances have raised suspicions of engaging in Blackface. Performing in yellowish-brown tanning makeup, Jella has received ambivalent reactions from viewers around the globe. While some viewers applaud Jella for presenting unique beauty styles, others critique her for appropriating the Black aesthetic in her cosmetically darkened look. Through an in-depth analysis of comments from transnational viewers of her YouTube channel, I explore rhetorical strategies commenters use to defend Jella and her beauty identity. Contextualizing their rhetorical strategies within the globally and regionally shaped racial contexts, I critically triangulate the cultural connotations of Asianness, Blackness, and Whiteness constructed through transnational viewers' understandings of race and skin color. In so doing, I seek out the rhetorical possibilities and limitations of (re)articulating Asianness in relation to Blackness that Jella's cosmetically darkened representations can have in digital media.

Keywords: Jella, digital Blackface, triangulation, Asianness, colorism, and Blackness

Jella젤라 (hereafter Jella) is a South Korean (hereafter Korea) beauty influencer who creates makeup tutorials, skincare how-to, cosmetic reviews, and daily vlogs. With more than 840,000 subscribers and 69 million views (as of March 2023), Jella's beauty-related content production is unique in that she caters to dark-skinned women who use tanned or bronze, sun-kissed skin-color foundations. Jella's makeup style is depicted as "yellowish-brown tanning makeup" and is differentiated from other Korean beauty creators' performances of mainstream beauty (Park, 2019, para. 1). Jella's distinct makeup can be seen as a form of resistance to mainstream beauty discourse in the Korean context, where light skin is historically preferred for cultural and social upward mobility (Li, Min, & Belk, 2008).

However, Jella's resistance to mainstream Korean beauty discourse is complicated when her makeup and style are circulated through the transnational space of digital media and consumed by non-Korean viewers around the globe. In fact, Jella's makeup style has generated online debates about whether Jella does Blackface. In 2019, a post on Reddit titled "Apparently Jella is Being Accused of Doing Blackface?" (Beauty-freak, 2018) sparked comments from Reddit users either defending or judging whether her makeup

Seonah Kim: seonah@uw.edu
Date submitted: 2022-09-05

and style could be considered a case of digital Blackface. That same year, a Black fashion model and beauty creator (identified as) Eloho posted a video titled "Asian INFLUENCER in BLACKFACE. Reaction Video" (I Am Eloho, 2019), in which she explicitly called Jella out on her inappropriate consumption and presentation of Black beauty and culture.

Not surprisingly, Jella's YouTube beauty channel has become a significant platform for the ongoing debate surrounding her use of Blackface in makeup tutorials. What sets this debate apart is the defense put forth by her transnational viewers, who bring complex and conflicting notions of skin color and race into discussions about Jella's racial identity. Specifically, the vocal defense of transnational viewers disrupts binary discussions based in the United States, which often center around the Black-White dyad in examining Blackface, and it highlights the active role that Asian bodies play in building racial scripts and constructing racial hierarchies (Bonilla-Silva, 2004; Molina, 2014). Thus, my interest in this controversy lies in understanding the rhetorical strategies employed by Jella's transnational viewers, which do not fit neatly into the framework of Blackness versus Whiteness and investigating how U.S.-based notions of race and skin color are being played out in transnational spaces of digital media.

Figure 1. A thumbnail image of Jella's popular makeup tutorial video titled, "(ENG 👀) 핑크빔 뿜뿜 메이크업/ 젤라 jella [Pink Beam Makeup]" (Jin, 2018a, 10:47).

To analyze viewers' rhetoric in response to Jella's beauty performances, it is essential to critically examine the phenomenon of digitally performed Blackface. This phenomenon involves non-Black individuals intentionally using images and cosmetically altered personas to present themselves as Black individuals and commodify Blackness within the realm of digital media (Tosaya & Joseph, 2021). For instance, in 2018, Emma Hallberg, an Instagram model from Sweden who identifies as White, came under fire for appropriating Black culture and aesthetics. Despite being a White woman from Sweden, she presented herself to her audience with shiny dark skin and glamorous makeup; by using dark facial makeup and sporting cornrows, a traditional Black hairstyle, she portrayed herself as a light-skinned Black woman (Rasool, 2018).

The act of digitally performing Blackface is a type of racial tourism, where individuals engage with digital representations of Blackness without fully investing in or acknowledging the impact of historically constructed anti-Blackness in society. Under the postracial condition in digital media, individuals embrace the idea of being portrayed as a racial other in the virtual realm, as a form of humorous expression in Internet culture, and subsequently use virtual self-representations to playfully engage with this notion (Phillips, 2019). This creates an opportunity for avid consumption, resulting in digital Blackface, which can be viewed as a contemporary form of cross-racial mimicry that renders Black identity and culture a consumable commodity (Stevens, 2021).

What remains largely absent in the discussion of digital Blackface is how Asian beauty artists and influencers accused of doing Blackface fit within larger conversations about racial appropriation and beauty. It is important to examine Asian influencers' engagement with and exploitation of Blackface to garner attention in digital media because it makes difficult to confine digital Blackface solely to White influencers and, in turn, complicate the dominant discourse about the racial binary interpreting Blackface performances in digital media. Particularly within the transnational space of YouTube, where viewers from across the globe converge to share and comment, there exist multiple and contrasting interpretations of Asians' cross-racial performances, and these readings, situated in different contexts, interact with, and impact one another.

As a case study of this phenomenon, I investigate how Jella's transnational viewers interpret her beauty and react to the Blackface controversy by triangulating discourses surrounding Asians engaging in the cosmetic darkening of their identity in digital media. Specifically, I examine the rhetorical construction of Asianness, which is being pulled and pushed in different directions by non-Korean audiences who have supported Jella's cosmetically darkened appearance in her beauty channel. By "non-Korean viewers," I refer to those globally and regionally shaped with distinct racial and ethnic ideas and experiences. Accordingly, I draw on research from the interdisciplinary discussions about cross-racial embodiment between Asian and Black people within and beyond U.S. racial contexts to provide textural readings of Asianness.

In this article, my textual reading of Asianness is informed by Kim's (1999) critical analysis of racial triangulation to underscore the importance of including Asian bodies in the examination of racial discourses and performances within the realm of digital Blackface. In this light, I analyze non-Korean viewers' rhetoric about Jella to offer nuanced readings of Asianness in relation to Blackness transnationally articulated. Through this analysis, I aim to shed light on fresh and alternative understandings of Asianness, utilizing their contextualized understandings and embodiment of race and skin color as rhetorical spaces for "AfroAsian encounters" (Prashad & Okihiro, 2006). I argue that this space serves as an opportunity to highlight the mutual influence and relationship between Asianness and Blackness and to challenge persistent racialized cultural stereotypes that have been characterized and constructed within the confines of the White-Black binary.

As findings of the article, I illustrate three ways non-Korean viewers defend Jella from the accusation of doing Blackface, constructing the rhetoric of Asianness. First, viewers critique skin-color politics in performing beauty as Asians and target White influencers who are free from the accusation of doing Blackface. Through their critique, viewers expose the imposition of imperialist ideology on Asian bodies, categorizing them as the "yellow race." Second, in their defense of Jella, self-identified Asians, specifically South and Southeast Asian viewers, provide a critical perspective on the prevalent issue of colorism within Asian popular culture. Third, viewers articulate what constitutes Blackface and determine Blackness through explicitly racist comments about Black people. Based on the analysis, I claim that Jella's cosmetically darkened appearance creates a rhetorical space for Asians to critique colorism and recognize heterogeneity in Asianness. However, this effort falls short of being fully inclusive or resistive when transnational viewers also celebrate Jella's appearance through the rhetoric of "less Blackness" and mixed raciality.

Triangulating (Digital) Blackface

The concept of Whiteness is a political construct that exists in a parasitic relationship to Blackness, as evidenced by the Blackface minstrel shows that were prevalent in nineteenth-century American culture. Blackface minstrelsy involved White Americans delving into the visual realms of Black racial fantasy to stage and construct Black-and-White boundaries (Lott, 1992). It went beyond just denigrating Black bodies and consuming their otherness for entertainment. Blackface minstrel shows were designed to present slavery as amusing and natural and thus normalized it (Lott, 1992). As a form of racial subordination, Blackface minstrelsy served as a site where racial hierarchy, especially the White-Black racial binary, was reaffirmed, and White supremacy was upheld through the exaggerated performances of Black otherness.

To complicate this White-Black dyad in theorizing Blackface minstrelsy, it is important to admit and incorporate the role of Asian Americans in constructing racial dynamics and producing cultural scripts of racism in the United States. According to Kim (1999), Asian Americans are valorized as a model minority group to relatively evaluate African Americans as a lazy, aggressive, and failed minority group and to reinforce White dominance in the United States. This Asian Americans' narrative is deployed in a racial context to promote the notion of meritocracy over African Americans, demanding that individual effort alone is sufficient to overcome the challenges posed by racial injustice. These two racial minorities are valorized differently to maintain White supremacist social order in the United States, reflecting each other.

Kim's (1999) triangulation provides a framework for understanding the cultural significance of Blackface minstrelsy as a site where Asianness and Blackness are triangulated to expose and challenge White supremacy, and an interracial coalition can be anticipated. Roxworthy (2013) explored this notion by examining young Japanese American women who performed Blackface in Japanese American Internment Camps and called for more "nuanced readings of blackface performances that fall outside the black-white binary" (p. 124). By triangulating White imperialism, Blackface minstrelsy, and Japanese foreignness, Roxworthy (2013) situated yellowface as a representation and performance of culturally possessing or excessive bodies in a mirroring position to Blackface as bodies lacking cultural and social resources.

The triangulation model is also applicable for analyzing and criticizing how the media (re)produces Whiteness through the construction of Blackness and Asianness in contemporary cultural spheres. Analyzing character development in the popular film *Rush Hour* (Birnbaum, Glickman, & Sarkissian, 1998), Banerjee (2006) demonstrated how desirable representations of Asianness are constructed through comparison. This construction is described as the "simultaneity of blackface and yellowface minstrelsy" (Banerjee, 2006, p. 205) since Jackie Chan's portrayal of a model minority reinforces stereotypical depictions of African American characters in the movie. These stereotypes serve to maintain racial hierarchy and White dominance in Hollywood by pitting African and Asian Americans against each other.

Considering Asianness in the interpretation of Blackface performances or the cultural appropriation of Blackness further opens up new or different understandings of Blackness and Asianness. For instance, Waegner (2006) examined the work of Nikki S. Lee, a Korean American photographer who darkened her face to immerse herself in African American hip-hop culture and considered her passing as a new form of empowerment for Blackness and Asianness. It is because Lee explicitly acknowledged her performance as racial passing and leveraged it to envision an Asian and Afro-American coalition. Her passing thus challenges the notion that these two racial minorities occupy incompatible cultural and political positions in the United States (Waegner, 2006). Sharma (2010) takes up a similar discussion in her investigation of South Asian Americans, or "desis," who incorporate hip-hop into their lives. They perform Blackness to critique their place in the White-Black dynamics and interrupt the Black-only hip-hop racial configuration in the United States. This performance is framed as "both/and" and "cross-racial" identification, contesting the essentialist views of both Asian and African Americans.

The use of digital cultural production is another area where cross-racial identification between Asianness and Blackness is found, as it is heavily shaped by visual capital and technology (Nakamura, 2007). For instance, Lopez (2021) examined how Asian Americans used African American GIFs to express their emotions about the film *Crazy Rich Asians* (Jacobson, Simpson, & Penotti, 2018) on Twitter. While critical of non-Black people using Black reaction GIFs as a form of digital Blackface, Lopez (2021) also interpreted this as Asian Americans recognizing their interlocking emotions with other racial minorities when they use Blackness to communicate their feelings. Furthermore, Chun (2013) analyzed the linguistic performance of Black masculinity by Kevin Wu, a Chinese American YouTuber. Although Wu's performance on YouTube features familiar images of racialized Black masculinity, the transnational reach of his video allows for alternative interpretations that challenge and undermine hegemonic stereotypes of Asian masculinity.

Particularly, Chun's (2013) study offers an important view of YouTube as a transnational space to contextualize comments about Jella and her cosmetically darkened beauty performance, which this article will analyze, as it highlights the changing racial salience in a transnational community of digital media. The production and circulation of cross-racial performances through digital media's transnational space creates a discursive arena where viewers can bring diverse and divergent perspectives on these performances. In digital media, viewers work within their own contextualized and racialized identities, thus bringing transnationally nuanced interpretations to their consumption of cross-racial performances (Swan, 2018). These transnationally hybrid interpretations of cross-racial performances also give rise to alternative understandings of racialized visuals and performances, which foster culturally resistant discourses that defy traditional notions of racialized identities in digital media (Chun, 2013).

To examine Jella's cosmetically darkened beauty performance within the transnational racial discourses of digital media, it is crucial to consider the specific regional racial contexts of Asia. One example of cross-racial performances and the embodiment of Blackness can be found in Japan during the 1990s through the *kogyaru* style, a popular subculture embraced by teenage Japanese girls. This subculture was characterized by frequent visits to tanning salons, darkened faces, brown-dyed hair, heavy makeup, and vibrant clothing choices (Kawamura, 2006). In Japan, the reactions to and evaluations of the *kogyaru* style were ambivalent. The Japanese media criticized this trend, using terms like "nega-makeup" (negative makeup) or "panda makeup" to describe the facial expression of *kogyaru*, depicting the fashion as ugly, primitive, and animalistic (Kinsella, 2005). However, despite the criticism, the *kogyaru* style was also seen as an emerging subculture that resisted traditional gender roles and beauty standards in Japan, resisting patriarchal notions of femininity (Ho, 2017).

The discussion of resistance through the consumption and performance of dark skin or skin darkening practice extends to Korean popular culture as well. For instance, in her examination of Blackness in Korean hip-hop, Oh (2014) argued that Korean hip-hoppers engage in a versatile boundary-crossing through the (re)appropriation of Blackness and their representation obscures distinctions between Blackness/non-Blackness, Asian-ness/non-Asianness, and Korean-ness/non-Korean-ness. However, as Condry (2007) challenged, the interconnectedness of media and cultural hybridity does not automatically translate into actions that promote greater equality in race and gender representations on a global scale. In the realm of Korean hip-hop, in fact, Black bodies are appropriated and consumed as symbols of capitalist values by Korean hip-hoppers who take financial and sociocultural advantages on the Black racial fantasy of coolness in Korea (Kim, 2020).

The various aspects and perspectives on Asians' cross-racial embodiment of Blackness presented in this section emphasize that the framework of the White-Black binary is not necessary for understanding race in the transnational space of digital media. Instead, different introductions exist for (re)interpreting the meanings of Asianness and darkness. This recognition of different starting points can complicate the sociocultural and historical lens through which Blackness has been conceptualized in the United States and generate different ways of understanding Blackness as well as Asianness in transnational contexts. As an attempt to accomplish this, I focus on the complex intersection of race, skin color, and beauty, which are constructed regionally and globally, to interpret viewers' reactions to Jella's cosmetically darkened representations in digital media.

Method: Critical Textual Analysis

I use critical textual analysis to collect and examine written comments posted in response to Jella's Q&A video (Jin, 2018b). The Q&A video is a suitable subgenre for examining the discursive co-construction between creators and viewers because vloggers often use an intimate tone when addressing issues and questions sent by audiences and fans (Torjesen, 2021). I specifically selected the Q&A video titled, "[ENG] 💌blackface? 50만 기념 Q&A수면용 영상/젤라Jella [Blackface? Celebrating 500,000 subscription Q&A Videos for Sleep]" (Jin, 2018b), since it addressed personal information related to Jella's skin color, childhood experience, and cosmetic tanning.

In the video, Jella directly mentioned her naturally dark skin complexion and shared her personal story about why she started tanning her skin in response to questions about her skin and racial identity from non-Korean viewers. Regular viewers of Jella's beauty community wrote comments to defend her based on the information she shared during the Q&A. The video's title also indicates that Jella clearly responded to the Blackface controversy, making it an ideal video to analyze for this article.

To collect data, I used YTDT (YouTube Data Tools; Rieder, 2015), which provided information about the video, the number of views, likes, dislikes, shares, and comments. I organized 873 comments (as of January 2022) and went through three coding phases. The comments were in both Korean and English, and I intentionally selected English comments for this article's focus on the non-Korean audience's construction of meanings related to skin color and racial identity. Based on the data collected, I explored how different text categories interacted and generated analytic themes, such as colorism, Asian race, and anti-Blackness.

Then, I conducted an in-depth reading of the coded themes to identify the ideological and cultural reasoning implied in each analytical theme. The sample comments were selected based on the article's goal. For instance, despite their small number, explicit racist comments were purposefully selected and displayed in the anti-Blackness theme because they displayed problematic racial notions about Blackness. This, in turn, elucidated viewers' rhetorical constraints in generating productive critiques of skin color and race in their defense of Jella.

Analyzing comments as units of analysis, I am also mindful of the ethics involved in collecting, organizing, and analyzing digitally produced and circulated media content. Since it is challenging to distinguish between private and public in digital media spaces like YouTube (Lange, 2007; Kim, 2021), I avoid citing viewers' names or IDs directly. Instead, I anonymize viewers' information and use pseudonyms such as viewers, audiences, or commenters to refer to them.

The Asian Problem: They Expect Us to All Be Yellow

In defending Jella, some viewers criticize the racial politics that limit Asians from performing diverse types of skin beautification. This critique highlights the dilemma Asians face when it comes to skin color modification, specifically skin lightening and darkening, within the context of the White-Black binary. To illustrate the rhetorical process in which the theme of "Asian problems" is constructed by viewers, I first examine comments that discuss this dilemma. For instance, one viewer addresses the double bind of modifying skin color as Asians by critiquing how Asians are accused of performing Blackface while White people are not:

> how is that white people get away with tanning all the time and when asians tan it's all about the blackface. literally when asians appear in the media people always complain about their skin tones; either they're whitewashing or they're exercising the blackface like stuff. (personal communication, November 2018)

Similarly, another viewer expresses their frustration with performing beauty as an Asian and blames tanned White people for escaping from the public accusations of Blackface:

> Did you ever blamed TANNED WHITE PEOPLE?? YOU might think they are sexyyy but you r blaming tanned asians dont luv their skin tone. If there's anything to say then GO TO TANNED WHITE PEOPLE and BLAME THEM LIKE THIS OKAY. (personal communication, September 2019)

In addition to these examples, other commenters specify these White people, such as Emma Hallberg, a Swedish influencer accused of digital Blackface, and further differentiate Jella's performance from typical cases of Blackface in digital media, calling her out as "a recent Instagram white Swedish girl" (personal communication, November 2018).

The critique of self-indulgent White influencers is further complicated by the racial dilemma surrounding Asian skin color in beautification. One viewer goes as far as rearticulating the issue with self-indulgent White people as an "Asian problem," highlighting the power dynamics at play in the global racial system: "Asian problems: Asians with lighter skin are whitewashing, while Asians with darker skin are blackface... LOL. Their logic: Asians can't whitening nor tanning but other races can... Bruh" (personal communication, November 2018). Responding to this comment, a different viewer who is assumed to be an Asian says, "Because they expect us to all be yellow. Lol" (personal communication, November 2018). The rhetorical frame of "Asian problems" politicizes the conundrum of portraying beauty with Asian bodies as it reveals the racialization of Asians through Oriental narratives. Asian bodies have been under the surveillance of the imperial gaze to maintain an Orientalist image of Asia where Asians are expected "to all be yellow" since Asian subjectivities are constructed as byproducts of Eurocentric knowledge systems (Chen, 2010; Said, 1979). The ideological construction of "Yellowness" is linked to the racialized othering of Asian bodies as threats, carriers of disease, and attackers from the East. In the United States, for example, the persistence of the yellow peril ideology has deemed Asian and Asian American individuals as perpetual outsiders and global threats, legitimizing racial violence and exclusion toward them (Lee, 2007).

The ideology of "Yellowness" is both somatic and cultural, as the most immediate trigger for discrimination against Asian bodies is often based on corporeal aspects, with these somatic aspects of Asians strategically selected and emphasized in modern colonial knowledge to construct the idea of the "yellow," Mongoloid, or Asian race (Miyake, 2021). In this context, the comments above can be interpreted as a critique of the essentialization of Asianness as "yellow" in terms of physical appearance. This also relates to the politics around Asians' skin alternation, which is always under the ideological surveillance of the Eurocentric gaze on Asian bodies and cultures. By identifying who (they) expects whom (us) to be "yellow," since "they" do not allow "us" to be either lighter or darker than what they should be, viewers reveal the construction of Asianness as the object of the White imperial gaze, which is often deprived of agency or subjectivity (Vats & Nishime, 2013).

Furthermore, when viewers compare the "Asian problem" with tanned White people, they reveal that this imperialist gaze encompasses the privileges of White bodies, which are considered racially transparent, neutral, and a blank slate since the invisibility of skin color and race of a certain social group is the result of their grip on power (Frankenberg, 2008). As illustrated above, viewers express their frustration with White influences getting away with tanning but often not being accused of doing Blackface. Since the construction of racial boundaries is based on power dynamics, these comments indicate the privilege of Whiteness, which allows White people to cross those boundaries without feeling limited or stereotyped. Coupled with these comments that explicitly blame White influencers, the undetermined subject, "they," who perpetuate the yellow position of "us," can be assumed to be a racially privileged White subject.

The construction of "Yellowness" by viewers also hints at the racial politics of placing Asians between White and Black bodies. Historically, Asian skin color has been situated and evaluated within the racial context of the White-Black dyad, as Asians' racial positions are used to maintain the line between the two groups (Kim, 1999). Moving along the White-Black racial dichotomy, Asian and Asian Americans have been forced to keep an intermediate position that does not threaten the privileged status of Whiteness and remains politically and socially abject, unlike Blackness in the United States (Kawai, 2005). Regarding skin color and beauty politics, the intermediate position of Asians is (re)demanded when Jella's skin color becomes a moving target between white/light and black/dark since there is not one skin tone that all Black people or all White people have. Hence Jella's Asianness can be accepted if she maintains her intermediate position by appearing "yellow," and when her skin tone does not fit into this middle position, her Asianness is called into question and dismissed as either whitewashing or Blackface, disrupting the binary opposition between Black and White.

In the given discussions, the construction of "Yellowness" by viewers finally unmasks and questions the imperialist gaze of evaluating Jella's not-Asian-enough appearance and potentially serves as pan-Asian rhetoric. According to Kibria (1997), developing a pan-Asian consciousness involves politicizing individual experiences based on shared histories, cultures, and experiences of racial discrimination and oppression. Even though this short comment exchange does not invite more other Asian/American voices to amplify pan-Asian awareness, it rhetorically addresses a collective racial position of Asianness through the word "us," being impositioned as "yellow" between the White and Black racial dichotomy.

Voices of South and Southeast Asians and Critiques of Colorism

The construction of "Yellowness" is further complicated and diversified, with comments arguing that skin tone varies through race, so people cannot always assume someone with a dark skin tone, other than Black people, is practicing Blackface. Interestingly, this claim is made by Asian viewers who disclose and identify themselves as dark-skinned Asians in their comments. For instance, one viewer identifies her as "a tanned Chinese girl" (personal communication, November 2018), and says she was born dark and uses a dark-colored foundation to match her face color to the rest of her body. Similarly, another viewer identifies as "a Korean that has tan skin" (personal communication, January 2021) and rebukes that people accusing Jella of being racist are real racists because they expect all Asians to be pale.

Among the many self-identified Asian viewers who support Jella, the voices of South and Southeast Asians are particularly prominent. These viewers' comments highlight the racialized nature of perceiving all Asians as having pale skin. South and Southeast Asian viewers problematize the homogeneous image of Asia as racialized, with light-skinned East Asians (e.g., Koreans, Chinese, and Japanese) assumed to be the only "real" Asians, while dark-skinned Asians outside the East Asian region are ignored. One viewer, for instance, remarks:

> I'm laughing at all you uneducated air heads. Asians come as dark as blacks do, how do I know? Because I'm south ASIAN. We too are Asian, south Asians come as Indians, Bengalis, Pakistanis and more. You all cherry pick Chinese, Koreans, Japanese etc. as Asian but you exclude the rest of us Asians who are the same but come as dark as the rest. Asians come in ALL skin tones, not just blacks… (personal communication, November 2018)

This point is also found in another viewer's comment:

> Y'all acting like Asians are only Chinese, Korean and Japan. Guess what? There are plenty of darker Asians like Filipinos and guess what? Indians are classified as Asian. Now before someone accuses you of blackface, tell them to educate themselves. (personal communication, November 2018)

While self-identified Chinese and Korean viewers assert that East Asians can have naturally dark skin, South and Southeast Asian viewers' comments center on the omission and invisibility of dark-skinned Asian bodies in constructing the imagery of Asianness. Such invisibility has perpetuated the marginalization of South and Southeast Asian people, both within and outside Asia (Lee, Kim, & Lee, 2015; Wallitt, 2008). Through their comments, South and Southeast Asians assert their existence to add heterogeneous layers of Asianness and combat representational exclusion.

It is also noteworthy that South and Southeast Asian viewers' comments function to instruct other viewers about the heterogeneity among Asians. The first commenter informs diverse ethnic and national bodies, such as Indians, Bengalis, and Pakistanis, constituting the category of South Asia, and the second commenter highlights Indians and Filipinos as Asians. These points made by South and Southeast Asian viewers reflect Nakamura's (2015) argument that people of color and their intervention in racism and sexism require them to engage in instructing others about their bodily experiences and feelings in digital media (Nakamura, 2015). South and Southeast Asian viewers' claims on the heterogeneity of Asian skin color and race are thus pedagogical and collective, as they insist on their inclusion in Asianness by highlighting the diversity within them.

With the amplified voices of South and Southeast Asians in the comments, it is not difficult to find viewers who attribute this ignorance to popular cultural media that create and circulate a specific standard and representation of Asianness. For example, one viewer voices the problem of representations in Asian popular culture:

> People are so ignorant to think that all Asians are white just because of what you see in Asia pop culture. Pale skin is much preferred in most Asian countries, but dark-skinned people exist too! In fact, most people are not paperwhite like you see with K-pop and J-pop stars. As a tanned Asian girl this really upsets me that people think we are racist for having a darker natural skin tone... wtf. (personal communication, November 2018)

With an issue of representing skin color in Asian popular culture, another viewer directly points out the beauty standard portrayed through K-pop in Asia: "The point is in most korean media especially in television or kpop people want to have lighter skin since it is the 'beauty standard'. some even say that dark skin isnt ideal or pretty idk" (personal communication, June 2018). With the personal narratives shared by dark-skinned Asians, the controversy about Blackface in Jella's beauty community is reframed as an issue of colorism in Asia. The comments illustrate that viewers' frustration comes from the fact that Asian popular culture lacks the visibility of dark-skinned Asian celebrities, resulting in the skewed production of Asian beauty representations as pale. These comments critique colorism in Asian popular media, represented through light-skinned K-pop and J-pop celebrities.

This is an acute critique, considering that K-pop, a big part of the increased popularity of Korean culture, has reinforced light-skin privilege across Asia (Lam, 2019). The figures of K-pop girl groups are idolized as beauty standards, comprising slim bodies, thin faces, and fair and white skin (Tresna, Sukamto, & Tondok, 2021). These images of K-pop idols with fair and light skin infiltrate societies and continue to shape the ideal body standard that excludes dark-skinned Asians. Beyond constructing beauty standards, K-pop representations can evoke a new desire to have light/white skin in other Asian countries as it signals both aesthetic and economic possibilities for newly developing countries in the Asian region. Tu (2019) interprets this aspiration as a sense of Whiteness (re)constructed and (re)coded through East Asian pale/light skin, specifically Korean, Japanese, and Chinese skin in South and Southeast Asian countries. The following comment exemplifies this point: "You just see mainstream, especially Korean society, push this trend to look like the damn snow which eventually spread to other South East Asian countries. Vietnam especially you see girls covered up head to toe as if it's winter" (personal communication, November 2018).

The rise of East Asian media culture has de-Westernized or de-Americanized the media cultural industry, demystifying unidirectional media production and circulation from the West to the East and thus reconfiguring global cultural power relations (Iwabuchi, 2010). However, the production of East Asian media is also not free from American influences, and the Korean media industry emerges as a part of the nation's sub-empire building project to reproduce and promote a liberal ideology of cultural consumption (Shim, 2006). Indeed, colorism in Asia is a deep-seated problem shaped and reshaped by multiple historical and sociocultural conditions in and across Asia, hierarchizing people in order of shades of skin (Bettache, 2020). The favoritism of light skin is, then, a structured feeling and preference when light skin becomes a signifier of racial, national, social, and cultural privilege in and outside Asia. As the commenters illustrate, Korean popular culture and media production accelerate this structured preference for light skin in other Asian countries, particularly Southeast Asian countries.

To defend Jella, South and Southeast Asians challenge colorism by considering issues of idealized body images and the unfair perception of dark-skinned Asians in Asian popular media. This pushback is significant because these viewers embrace and claim their darkness to critique the cultural politics of privileging lightness in construing beauty and identity in Asia (Jha, 2015). Thus the point of different shades among Asians made by South and Southeast Asian viewers is a regionally nuanced political gesture to poke a hole in the positioning of Asians as a homogeneous racial group in and outside Asian regional contexts. Through their comments of defending Jella, South and Southeast Asians identify themselves, diversify the imagery of Asianness, and finally challenge colorism.

Anti-Blackness and Mixed Raciality

Jella's defenders have also constructed a rhetoric of anti-Blackness to protect her and her beauty representation from accusations of Blackface. Unlike other comment examples presented, the following comments are explicitly racist and have no grounds to justify the resentment poured out toward Black people. Although these comments contain racist undertones, I have chosen to showcase them to reveal the rhetorical constraints that viewers have when defending Jella and appreciating her beauty.

In the following comments, viewers assume that Black people are stirring up the conversation about Blackface on Jella's beauty channel: "Ugh some black people are so embarrassing and annoying on the internet" (personal communication, November 2018), "they weren't trying to look black dumbass but biracial lmfaoo Black people need to stop being delusional" (personal communication, November 2018), and "you are not black and have no right to answer for the black community. Move on. ☺" (personal communication, November 2018). In these examples, viewers assume that the "Black community" is accusing Jella of doing Blackface and proceed to attack them by calling them "embarrassing," "annoying," and "delusional." While White people are condemned for their liberal consumption of Black beauty and culture, there is no specific reason to blame Black people in these comments. Instead, hatred is directed toward them, with one viewer calling them "delusional" and "dumbass." By attacking Black people, viewers demonstrate their internalized anti-Blackness and perceive Blackness as powerless and absurd while critiquing White people for their abuse of power and perpetuation of the imperial gaze.

In addition to expressing random contempt toward Black people, one commenter singles out Blackface as an issue that only the "Black community" must confront, excluding other racial groups. Although blackface is a critical discursive space for the Black community in digital media (Davis, 2020), this comment isolates the Black community as the only group resisting the racialized appropriation and consumption of Blackness. By doing so, it denounces resistance raised by the Black community and hinders interracial alliances formed to challenge racist attempts to consume otherness to strengthen one's multicultural capacity (Tate, 2021). Lacking intersectional awareness to comprehend racial justice and social movements (Collins & Bilge, 2020), this comment reinforces racial inequality and anti-Blackness by limiting the possibility of interracial coalitions in digital media.

Additionally, a viewer dismisses the issue of Jella performing Blackness by describing Black people as "delusional" and arguing that Jella is performing the aesthetic of being a mixed race rather than a Black person by artificially darkening her skin. This notion of Black people being labeled as "delusional" can be intensified with other comments that define Blackface solely based on essentialized racial characteristics of Black individuals and assert Jella's innocence on the grounds that she does not conform to these features. For instance, one viewer says, "She's not trying to be 'black' by receiving artificial tanning, she has come to terms with her dark skin tone and come to love it because of that. She didn't try to be a different race through the tanning" (personal communication, June 2020). Other viewers reiterate the notion that Jella does not try to alter her race by simplifying the visual aspects of Black people through their racially stereotyped facial features: "Blackface? Um, all she's doing is making her skin a tad bit darker. She isn't making her hair like a black girl's or doing that stereotypical bs like overlining her lips or whatever" (personal communication, November 2018).

Similarly, another viewer comments, "It's wearing a darker foundation. She's not making herself have big lips or a wide nose, she's not making a specific way to make fun/encourage stereotypes" (personal communication, April 2019). According to these viewers, accusing Jella of doing Blackface is unwarranted because she wears a darker foundation to appear tanned rather than intentionally engaging in racist mockery by mimicking stereotypical Black racial features. They note that these physical features are often seen as the primary signifiers of Blackness and emphasize that Jella does not have them, absolving her of suspicion of doing Blackface. This comparison highlights the clear distinction between Jella's use of a darker foundation and deliberate, malicious Blackface.

Despite their racist remarks, it is also important to note the nuances made by viewers, acknowledging the historically exaggerated and mocked stereotypical physical features of Black people by Blackface performers in their comments. They evaluate acts of performing racialized Black bodies as "stereotypical bs," arguing that Jella is innocent because she does not incorporate those racially fetishized performances to "make fun/encourage stereotypes" of Black people. Additionally, one commenter mentions Black girls' hair as a way to racialize Blackness, implicitly indicating that hair style and texture have been a significant cultural and political site of struggle for Black women who have braided their hair "in the exercise of private, personal prerogatives taken for granted by women who are not Black" (Caldwell, 1991, p. 369). Although viewers show awareness of these physical elements racially representing and fetishizing Black people, this awareness is restricted when they use these features to claim that Jella does not perform race change and reaffirm somatic differences between Asian and Black bodies.

Furthermore, the ideology of mixed-race identity is crucial to rearticulate the rhetoric of Blackness in relation to Asianness in Jella's beauty community. As illustrated, one viewer critiques Black people as "delusional," since Jella never wants to be a Black person but a mixed race. In addition, other viewers comment that Jella looks mixed race, with one viewer even stating that Jella, with dark makeup, resembles a "half Japanese and half native Hawaiian mixed" (personal communication, July 2018) individual. Importantly, when the rhetoric of biracial and mixed-racial identity is used to maintain Jella's beauty persona, it is considered a compliment rather than an attack. One of the previous comments attacking Black people implies this nuance by suggesting that non-Black people want to look biracial rather than Black people.

This celebratory tone in constructing a mixed-race identity is not new or refreshing since the appearance of multiracial identities has been used as a signifier of neoliberal multiculturalism, a contemporary cultural agenda that celebrates and commodifies the diversity brought by multiracial identities (Washington, 2017). Postracial politics is a key engine behind this celebration, providing a justification for visual representations of race and gender that supposedly transcend identity categories through the consumption of other races (Vats & Nishime, 2013). Additionally, the currency and marketability of mixed-race beauty are essential in making racially ambiguous individuals consumable in digital media (Nishime, 2017), given the visual-oriented nature of social media platforms such as YouTube.

Viewers' interpretation of Jella as biracial further implies the visual politics of reading race, particularly Asianness. In the comment above, the viewer mixes a Japanese with a Native Hawaiian to imagine Jella as biracial. Given the previous comments that Jella does not attempt to change her race by wearing a dark foundation and distinguishing Asians' physiognomy from Black people's, the racial mix between Japanese and Native Hawaiians can be viewed as a safe choice to consume Jella's appearance, without crossing the racial line to be seen as a Black person. However, the fact is that Jella is neither Japanese, Native Hawaiian, nor mixed Japanese Native Hawaiian. By assuming her Korean identity as

Japanese and coding her artificially tanned skin tone through the visuals of Native Hawaiians, the viewer repeats the visual markers of essentializing East Asian bodies and exoticizes the darkness of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. This idea thus stresses and simultaneously obscures the politically contested nature of the pan-national and pan-ethnic entity "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders," which is especially unique to the U.S. racial phenomenon (Hall, 2015).

In this sense, viewers' mixed-racial imagination of Jella's cosmetically darkened appearance can be seen as a way to leave her room to avoid critiques of Blackface by highlighting her "less Blackness" (Lee, 2021). Instead of imagining her as a Japanese and Native Hawaiian mixed race, viewers could also consider her a dark-skinned Asian person from South or Southeast Asia. By interpreting her with mixed-racial possibility, viewers consume her as an "ambiguous mulatto" (Sharpley-Whiting, 2007), not a dark Asian, and add value to her "exoticness," resulting from her mysteriously and ambiguously dark appearance as a Korean. However, this mixed-racial discourse ironically invokes racial scripts of Blackness (Molina, 2014), where a Black-toned or Black-touched look is accepted and celebrated as cool (Washington, 2017), while actual Black people face anti-Black racism, police brutality, and cultural and political segregation, specifically in the U.S. context. This script extends to oppression and discrimination against other dark-skinned bodies, particularly dark-skinned Asians and Pacific Islanders, when viewers understand Jella's beauty representation through mixed raciality instead of dark Asianness.

Conclusion

By analyzing defenders' comments, I have demonstrated the rhetorical possibilities and limitations of conceptualizing Asianness in relation to Blackness through Jella's beauty community. This community offers a contesting space where resistive and perpetual discourses on skin color and race intertwine. While some viewers critically point out the racially intermediate position of Asianness and expose the power and domination of Whiteness, others use anti-Black rhetoric to defend Jella's cosmetically darkened appearance. Thus, defenders' critiques fail to effectively challenge the White imperial gaze, which has historically racialized and sexualized Black people in oppressive ways.

Furthermore, when viewers highlight Jella's mixed raciality to justify her cosmetically darkened beauty, it solidifies the White privilege that assumes Blackness needs to be moderated and enhanced by other races, preferably light-skinned races, to be celebrated in society. These limitations arise from ideological forces that situate Jella's beauty and appearance within the White-Black racial binary. Within this binary, defenders may hesitate to associate Jella's dark appearance too closely with Blackness, fearing accusations of Blackface. As a result, the cross-racial coalition between Asianness and Blackness is discouraged when viewers interpret Jella's cosmetically darkened representation, mainly through the racial binary in their defense.

Despite its limitations, I argue that Jella's beauty community has the potential to create a third space where alternative meanings of Blackness/darkness can be (re)presented and (re)negotiated by dark-skinned Asians (Bolatagici, 2004). By decoupling lightness from Asianness and darkness from Blackness, South and Southeast Asian viewers share their embodied identities and experiences as dark-skinned Asians; in so doing, they push back against dominant representations of Asianness and amplify heterogeneous Asian voices in digital media. Therefore, constructing new/different imagery of Asianness is not a game that "you can never win" (personal communication, November 2018), as one viewer expresses. Instead, the amplified voice of dark-skinned Asians offers a hopeful glimpse into empowerment, producing self-representations that are otherwise muted and invisible in mainstream media.

Finally, this third space can be envisioned when the Blackface controversy around Jella is triangulated with the consideration of Asianness centered on construing Blackness and Whiteness. Moving beyond the White-Black racial binary allows for the creation of new interpretations of Asianness and darkness and exposes the underlying White imperialist ideology in cultural perceptions of skin color and race in digital media. This approach also contextualizes Jella's beauty practices within regionally specific colorism topics that reveal the heterogeneity of Asianness.

In the transnational context of digital media, Jella's cosmetically darkened appearance is interpreted by viewers from diverse cultural and social backgrounds, featuring the need to examine multiple perspectives on Asians' cosmetically darkened or cross-racial representations. This examination should consider the possibilities and limitations of such representations to prevent the repetition of dominant ways of conceptualizing Asianness that perpetuate the link between Asianness and Whiteness while positioning it against Blackness and reducing it to an intermediate position. By expanding the scope of Asianness beyond the White-Black racial binary, this article argues that new understandings of Blackness/darkness and Asianness can emerge, which facilitates the formation of a third space where alternative meanings can be negotiated, and diverse voices can be amplified in digital media.

References

Banerjee, M. (2006). The rush hour of black/Asian coalitions? Jackie Chan and blackface minstrelsy. In V. Prashad & G. Okihiro (Eds.), *AfroAsian encounters: Culture, history, politics* (pp. 204–222). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Beauty-freak. (2018, November 25). *Apparently Jella is being accused of doing blackface?* [Online forum post]. Reddit. Retrieved from https://www.reddit.com/r/BeautyGuruChatter/comments/a07pqt/apparently_jella_is_being_accused_of_doing_black/

Bettache, K. (2020). A call to action: The need for a cultural psychological approach to discrimination on the basis of skin color in Asia. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 15*(4), 1131–1139. doi:10.1177/1745691620904740

Birnbaum, R., Glickman, J., Sarkissian, A. (Producers), & Ratner, B. (Director). (1998). *Rush hour* [Motion picture]. Burbank, CA: New Line Cinema.

Bolatagici, T. (2004). Claiming the (N) either/(N) or of 'Third Space':(Re) presenting hybrid identity and the embodiment of mixed race. *Journal of Intercultural Studies, 25*(1), 75–85. doi:10.1080/07256860410001687036

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2004). From bi-racial to tri-racial: Towards a new system of racial stratification in the USA. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 27*(6), 931–950. doi:10.1080/0141987042000268530

Caldwell, P. M. (1991). Hair piece: Perspectives on the intersection of race and gender. *Duke Law Journal, 1991*(2), 365–396. doi:10.2307/1372731

Chen, K. H. (2010). *Asia as method: Toward deimperialization*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Chun, E. W. (2013). Ironic blackness as masculine cool: Asian American language and authenticity on YouTube. *Applied Linguistics, 34*(5), 592–612. doi:10.1093/applin/amt023

Collins, P. H., & Bilge, S. (2020). *Intersectionality*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Condry, I. (2007). Yellow b-boys, black culture, and hip-hop in Japan: Toward a transnational cultural politics of race. *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique, 15*(3), 637–671. doi:10.1215/10679847-2007-008

Davis, C. (2020). Digital blackface and the troubling intimacies of TikTok dancechallenges. In T. Boffone (Ed.), *TikTok cultures in the United States* (pp. 28–38). New York, NY: Routledge.

Frankenberg, R. (2008). The mirage of an unmarked whiteness. In S. Seidman & J. C. Alexander (Eds.), *The new social theory reader* (pp. 416–421). London, UK: Routledge.

Hall, L. K. (2015). Which of these things is not like the other: Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders are not Asian Americans, and all Pacific Islanders are not Hawaiian. *American Quarterly, 67*(3), 727–747. doi:10.1353/aq.2015.0050

Ho, M. H. (2017). Consuming women in blackface: Racialized affect and transnational femininity in Japanese advertising. *Japanese Studies, 37*(1), 49–69. doi:10.1080/10371397.2017.1297677

I Am Eloho. (2019, February 11). *Asian INFLUENCER in BLACKFACE. Reaction video* [Video file]. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuwyKFPh1UQ&t=164s

Iwabuchi, K. (2010). Globalization, East Asian media cultures and their publics. *Asian Journal of Communication, 20*(2), 197–212. doi:10.1080/01292981003693385

Jacobson, N., Simpson, B., & Penotti, J. (Producers), & Chu, J. M. (Director). (2018). *Crazy rich Asians* [Motion picture]. Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Pictures.

Jha, M. (2015). *The global beauty industry: Colorism, racism, and the national body*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Jin, B. [Jella 젤라]. (2018a, August 11). *(ENG 👀) 핑크빔 뿜뿜 메이크업/ 젤라jella* [Pink beam makeup] [Video file]. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pz_gW3zpfuU

Jin, B. [Jella젤라]. (2018b, November 6). *[ENG] 💌blackface? 50만 기념 Q&A수면용 영상/ 젤라jella* [Blackface? celebrating 500,000 subscription Q&A videos for sleep] [Video file]. YouTube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLHAP1ahQco&t=252s

Kawai, Y. (2005). Stereotyping Asian Americans: The dialectic of the model minority and the yellow peril. *The Howard Journal of Communications, 16*(2), 109–130. doi:10.1080/10646170590948974

Kawamura, Y. (2006). Japanese teens as producers of street fashion. *Current Sociology, 54*(5), 784–801. doi:10.1177/0011392106066816

Kibria, N. (1997). The construction of 'Asian American': Reflections on intermarriage and ethnic identity among second- generation Chinese and Korean Americans. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 20*(3), 523–544. doi:10.1080/01419870.1997.9993973

Kim, C. J. (1999). The racial triangulation of Asian Americans. *Politics & Society, 27*(1), 105–138. doi:10.1177/0032329299027001005

Kim, D. (2021). The growing up Asian American tag: An Asian American networked counterpublic on YouTube. *International Journal of Communication, 15*, 123–142.

Kim, S. Y. (2020). Black K-pop: Racial surplus and global consumption. *TDR/The Drama Review, 64*(2), 88–100. doi:10.1162/dram_a_00921

Kinsella, S. (2005). Black faces, witches, and racism against girls. In L. Miller & J. Bardsley (Eds.), *Bad girls of Japan* (pp. 143–158). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. doi:10.1057/9781403977120_10

Lam, E. (2019, October 22). *Colorism and the Cambodian ideal of white beauty*. Heinrich Böll Stiftung. Retrieved from https://kh.boell.org/en/2019/10/22/colorism-and-cambodian-ideal-white-beauty

Lange, P. G. (2007). Publicly private and privately public: Social networking on YouTube. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13*(1), 361–380. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00400.x

Lee, C. S. (2021). Contested everyday cultural citizenship: "Mixed race" children and their ethnicized citizenship in South Korea. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 44*(7), 1231–1249. doi:10.1080/01419870.2020.1786143

Lee, E. (2007). The "Yellow Peril" and Asian exclusion in the Americas. *Pacific Historical Review, 76*(4), 537–562. doi:10.1525/phr.2007.76.4.537

Lee, E., Kim, S. K., & Lee, J. K. (2015). Precarious motherhood: Lives of Southeast Asian marriage migrant women in Korea. *Asian Journal of Women's Studies, 21*(4), 409–430. doi:10.1080/12259276.2015.1106856

Li, E., Min, H., & Belk, R. (2008). Skin lightening and beauty in four Asian cultures. In A. Y. Lee & D. Soman (Eds.), *Advances in consumer research* (pp. 444–449). Duluth, MN: Association for Consumer Research.

Lopez, L. K. (2021). Excessively Asian: Crying, crazy rich Asians, and the construction of Asian American audiences. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 38*(2), 141–154. doi:10.1080/15295036.2021.1883193

Lott, E. (1992). Love and theft: The racial unconscious of blackface minstrelsy. *Representations, 39*(39), 23–50. doi:10.2307/2928593

Miyake, T. (2021). 'Cin ciun cian' (ching chong): Yellowness and neo-orientalism in Italy at the time of COVID-19. *Philosophy & Social Criticism, 47*(4), 486–511. doi:10.1177/01914537211011719

Molina, N. (2014). *How race is made in America: Immigration, citizenship, and the historical power of racial scripts*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Nakamura, L. (2007). *Digitizing race: Visual cultures of the Internet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Nakamura, L. (2015). The unwanted labour of social media: Women of colour call out culture as venture community management. *New Formations, 86*, 106–112. doi:10.3898/NEWF.86.06.2015

Nishime, L. (2017). Stunning: Digital portraits of mixed-race families from Slate to Tumblr. In L. K. Lopez & V. Pham (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to Asian American media* (pp. 131–141). New York, NY: Routledge.

Oh, C. (2014). Performing post-racial Asianness: K-Pop's appropriation of hip-hop culture. *Congress on Research in Dance Conference Proceedings, 2014*, 121–125. doi:10.1017/cor.2014.17

Park, J. H. (2019, January 23). [2030 POWER LEADER 30 | Beauty] 진보라(28) 젤라뷰티 크리에이터. [[2030 POWER LEADER 30 | beauty] Jin Bora (28) Jella, beauty creator]. *Forbes Korea*. Retrieved from http://jmagazine.joins.com/forbes/view/324686

Phillips, W. (2019). It wasn't just the trolls: Early internet culture, "fun," and the fires of exclusionary laughter. *Social Media+ Society, 5*(3), 1–4. doi:10.1177/2056305119849493

Prashad, V., & Okihiro, G. (2006). *AfroAsian encounters: Culture, history, politics*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Rasool, A. (2018, November 16). Some white influencers are being accused of "Blackfishing," or using makeup to appear Black. *TeenVogue*. Retrieved from https://www.teenvogue.com/story/blackfish-niggerfish-white-influencers-using-makeup-to-appear-black

Rieder, B. (2015). YouTube data tools (Version 1.0) [Computer software]. Retrieved from https://tools.digitalmethods.net/netvizz/youtube/

Roxworthy, E. (2013). Blackface behind barbed wire: Gender and racial triangulation in the Japanese American internment camps. *TDR/The Drama Review, 57*(2), 123–142. doi:10.1162/DRAM_a_00264

Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

Sharma, N. T. (2010). *Hip hop desis: South Asian Americans, blackness, and a global race consciousness*. New York, NY: Duke University Press.

Sharpley-Whiting, T. D. (2007). *Pimps up, ho's down: Hip hop's hold on young black women*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Shim, D. (2006). Hybridity and the rise of Korean popular culture in Asia. *Media, Culture & Society, 28*(1), 25–44. doi:10.1177/0163443706059278

Stevens, W. E. (2021). Blackfishing on Instagram: Influencing and the commodification of Black urban aesthetics. *Social Media+ Society, 7*(3), 1–15. doi:10.1177/20563051211038236

Swan, A. L. (2018). Transnational identities and feeling in fandom: Place and embodiment in K-pop fan reaction videos. *Communication Culture & Critique, 11*(4), 548–565. doi:10.1093/ccc/tcy026

Tate, S. A. (2021). "I do not see myself as anything else than white": Black resistance to racial cosplay blackfishing. In M. L. Craig (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to beauty politics* (pp. 205–214). Abingdon, UK: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Torjesen, A. (2021). The genre repertoires of Norwegian beauty and lifestyle influencers on YouTube. *Nordicom Review, 42*(2), 168–184. doi:10.2478/nor-2021-0036

Tosaya., L., & Joseph., R. (2021, April 27). A look into digital Blackface, culture vultures, and how to read racism like black critical audience. *Flow Journal*. Retrieved from https://www.flowjournal.org/2021/04/a-look-into-digital-blackface/#comments

Tresna, K. A. A., Sukamto, M. E., & Tondok, M. S. (2021). Celebrity worship and body image among young girls fans of K-pop girl groups. *Humanities Indonesian Psychological Journal, 18*(2), 100–111. doi:10.26555/humanitas.v18i2.19392

Tu, L. N. T. (2019). White like Koreans: The skin of the new Vietnam. In S. H. Lee, C. H. Moon, & L. N. T. Tu (Eds.), *Fashion and beauty in the time of Asia* (pp. 21–40). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Vats, A., & Nishime, L. (2013). Containment as neocolonial visual rhetoric: Fashion, yellowface, and Karl Lagerfeld's "idea of China". *Quarterly Journal of Speech, 99*(4), 423–447. doi:10.1080/00335630.2013.833668

Waegner, C. (2006). Performing postmodernist passing: Nikki S. Lee, tuff, and ghost dog in Yellowface/Blackface. In V. Prashad & G. Okihiro (Eds.), *AfroAsian encounters: Culture, history, politics* (pp. 223–242). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Wallitt, R. (2008). Cambodian invisibility: Students lost between the "achievement gap" and the "model minority". *Multicultural Perspectives, 10*(1), 3–9. doi:10.1080/15210960701869298

Washington, M. S. (2017). *Blasian invasion: Racial mixing in the celebrity industrial complex*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.