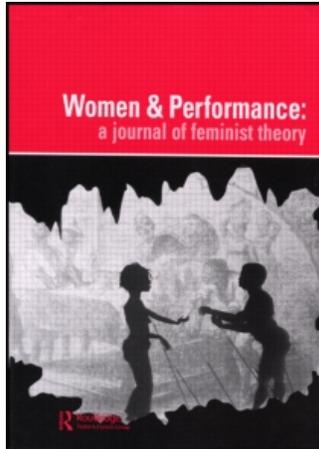


This article was downloaded by:[Lee, Sharon Heijin]
On: 8 April 2008
Access Details: [subscription number 791976111]
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t741771153>

Neoliberalism, race, and the (geo)politics of beauty

Sharon Heijin Lee ^a

^a Program in American Culture, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA

Online Publication Date: 01 March 2008

To cite this Article: Lee, Sharon Heijin (2008) 'Neoliberalism, race, and the (geo)politics of beauty', *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*, 18:1, 25 - 41

To link to this article: DOI: 10.1080/07407700801902809

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07407700801902809>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article maybe used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Lessons from “Around the world with Oprah”: Neoliberalism, race, and the (geo)politics of beauty

Sharon Heijin Lee*

Program in American Culture, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA

On 6 October 2004, viewers went “Around the world with Oprah” and received a rare glimpse inside the lives of 30-year-old women from 17 different countries. When Oprah turned her gaze (and that of middle-class American housewives) eastward, she highlighted South Korean women’s penchant for plastic surgery. Oprah’s “trip” to South Korea is emblematic of Western discourse surrounding South Korean Women’s plastic surgery consumption, most of which focuses on cosmetic eyelid surgery or the *sangapul* procedure as it is called in South Korea. Given its widespread popularity, the *sangapul* procedure has come to signify South Korean women’s acquiescence to not only patriarchal oppression but racial oppression as well. This essay goes beyond the psychologization of South Korean women in order to ask what such psychological musings obscure about the very political nature of beauty itself. Using “Around the world with Oprah” as a starting point, then, this essay examines beauty at the intersection of race, technology, and (geo)politics in order to show that, in an era of neoliberalism, plastic surgery is often rationalized as an investment in the self towards a more normal, if not better future. As this essay suggests, such a framing of plastic surgery is contingent on Oprah’s production of neoliberal feminism based on liberal notions of choice. Given her global reach, these neoliberal feminist subjects are not produced equally, however, but are discursively constructed along a First World/Third World divide.

Keywords: Oprah Winfrey; plastic surgery; neoliberalism; South Korean women; Korean American Women; neoliberal feminism; consumer choice

On 6 October 2004, viewers went “Around the world with Oprah” and received a rare glimpse inside the lives of 30-year-old women from 17 different countries.¹ Audiences learned that “21 percent of French women are overweight compared to a whopping 62 percent of Americans”.² Kuwaiti women were touted as having “extravagant lifestyles, complete with mansions and servants”.³ Oprah revealed that, on average, Cuban women have had three husbands by the age of 30. While these little-known “facts” may be interesting, the show highlighted them as unique and exotic precisely because of their marked difference from the perceived lifestyles and attitudes of 30-year-old American women. When Oprah turned her gaze (and that of middle-class American housewives) eastward, she highlighted South Korean women’s penchant for plastic surgery as their defining exotic characteristic.⁴

*Email: shalee@umich.edu

The show's South Korea correspondent, and host of *National Geographic ultimate explorer*, Lisa Ling announced, "30-year-old South Korean women are going under the knife in droves, shedding traditional Korean looks for more Western features... In Asian cultures, it's always been considered more beautiful if you have rounder eyes and more Western features."⁵ Obviously dismayed, Oprah tried to draw a parallel that her viewers might more readily relate to: "So is the idea not to look Asian?... I'm looking at those women. They still look Korean. That would be like me having surgery to not look black... I don't get it."⁶ Ling attempted to insert South Korean women's self-image and subjectivity into the dialogue by underscoring their assertions that motherhood, not beauty, defines South Korean femininity. The focus of the segment, however, remained not only on how much and what kinds of plastic surgery South Korean women undergo, but also their motivations for doing so. These motivations were painted as the products of internalized racism and described as decidedly self-loathing.⁷

Oprah's "trip" to South Korea, as mediated by Ling, is emblematic of Western discourse surrounding South Korean women's plastic surgery consumption, most of which—from *Oprah* to the *Wall Street Journal*—focuses on the cosmetic eyelid surgery or *sangapul* procedure as it is called in South Korea.⁸ Because of the racialized connotations of this particular procedure and the fact that it is by far the most popular amongst South Korean and Korean American women, debates surrounding the *sangapul* procedure revolve around questions of agency and choice. Most typically, these discourses reduce South Korean and Korean American women's plastic surgery consumption to a desire to "not look Asian", a "false consciousness" explanation exemplified by Oprah's and Ling's discursive treatment of South Korean women. Much as the veil has come to symbolize Middle Eastern women's oppression in both popular and academic discourses, the *sangapul* procedure has come to signify South Korean (and in many instances, Korean American) women's acquiescence to not only patriarchal oppression but racial oppression as well.⁹ In both cases, Western discourses obfuscate Middle Eastern and South Korean women's volition while essentializing and normalizing Western women as liberated feminist subjects.¹⁰

This essay seeks to go beyond the psychologization of these debates and of South Korean women in particular, in order to ask what such psychological musings—and their attendant discourses on "natural" and "normal" bodies—might instead obscure about the very political nature of beauty itself. As Victoria Pitts-Taylor writes, "the intensity of our focus on the subject" or patient "decenters other actors: the surgeons, the psychiatrists, the technologies, the media, the ideologies, the structure of medicine" (Pitts-Taylor 2007, 184). Using "Around the world with Oprah" as a starting point, then, this essay will examine beauty at the intersection of race, technology, and (geo)politics in order to show that, in an era of neoliberalism, plastic surgery is a neoliberal rationality that Oprah herself normalizes as such. Like other forms of self-management, self-care, and self-improvement, topics that lie at the core of Oprah's shows, plastic surgery, as well as racially marked forms of plastic surgery, is often rationalized as an investment in the self towards a more normal, if not better, future.¹¹ As this essay will show, such a framing of plastic surgery is contingent on Oprah's production of neoliberal feminist subjects vis-à-vis her espousal of a neoliberal feminism based on liberal notions of choice. Given her global

reach, these neoliberal feminist subjects are not produced equally, however, but are discursively constructed along a First World/Third World divide.

Neoliberalism and the rise of Oprah

The Oprah Winfrey show is not the only global phenomenon to have come out of Chicago. Neoliberal economic theory was popularized in the United States by Milton Friedman of the University of Chicago School of neoliberalism, who won the Nobel Prize in economics in 1976 (Harvey 2005, 22). According to David Harvey, Chile was the first country to undertake the neoliberal experiment. The United States supported a successful coup d'état against Socialist President Salvador Allende in 1973, allowing Augusto Pinochet to bring in "the Chicago boys", a group of Chilean economists who were trained at the University of Chicago School of neoliberalism (and were funded by the United States to do so), to restructure the Chile's socialist economy in favor of the business elite (ibid., 7–9). Keeping a watchful eye on the Chilean context, both the United States and Britain also turned to neoliberal policies in the early 1980s under the leadership of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, respectively.¹² Globally, neoliberal policies have spread over the last 30 years under US leadership of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, albeit unevenly.

As economic policy, neoliberalism promotes the freedom of the market through deregulation and privatization at the expense of collective good by cutting public expenditure of social services.¹³ Domestically, such policies had dramatic effects during the Reagan administration and thereafter. New markets opened due to the deregulation of everything from telecommunications to airlines. Deindustrialization and capital flight abroad became more and more common while labor unions came increasingly under attack. Meanwhile, corporate and top personal tax rates were cut, opening doors for monopoly consolidation.¹⁴ Yet, as many scholars assert, neoliberalism does not simply shift state functions to the private sector but also functions as a mode of governmentality that shifts strategies of government to private individuals. Thus, as Wendy Brown contends, the effects of neoliberal governmentality are far-reaching, from the "soul of the citizen-subject to education policy to practices of empire" (Brown 2003, 3). Neoliberalism works on an ideological level so that neoliberal subjects are interpellated as entrepreneurial actors in every sphere of life and are thus "controlled *through* their freedom" (ibid., 7). Moral autonomy is measured by a capacity for self-care and the ability to make choices that will benefit the citizen no matter how constrained those choices are. The model neoliberal citizen, then, calculates her or his choices within multiple spheres—economic, political, social—rather than attempting to alter these spheres. And, since everything is measured as a calculation or purchase, neoliberal governmentality affects everything from our evaluations of "right and wrong" to life choices, like college education or the decision to undergo plastic surgery.

Such a proliferation of neoliberal governmentality as common sense has required ideological and cultural work, however.¹⁵ In seeking to understand how consent for neoliberalism as a hegemonic discourse was constructed in the 1970s, Harvey asserts that "we must look . . . to the qualities of everyday experience" (Harvey 2005, 40–41). In this vein, *The Oprah Winfrey show* provides a window into examining how neoliberal

rationalities have proliferated within the contemporary US cultural landscape precisely because of Oprah's focus on the everyday. Significantly, Oprah departed from the modern-day talk show format established by Phil Donahue in favor of one that tells real people's stories. Instead of tackling politics, scandals, and world news—at least not exclusively—*The Oprah Winfrey show* examines “the trivial”, or the “microscopic texture of everyday life” (Illouz 2003, 51).¹⁶ Oprah does not just document everyday life, however, but significantly influences it through her everyday reach into the lives of her viewers vis-à-vis her daily television show and the rest of her multimedia global empire. In other words, Oprah's show is part and parcel of the ways in which civil society also engenders neoliberalism, which, as Michel Foucault describes, extends “the rationality of the market, the schemes of analysis it proposes, and the decision making criteria it suggests to areas that are not exclusively or primarily economic” (Foucault 1994, 73–80).

As Ronald Reagan's neoliberal policies took center stage in the United States, so too did *The Oprah Winfrey show* and Oprah herself as, in Eva Illouz's characterization, “a biographical icon” (Illouz 2003, 30). Unlike other celebrity success that hinges on beauty and youth, Oprah's notoriety has been built on her “therapeutic biography” (ibid., 34). Since her show went national in 1986, Americans have been privy not only to her humble beginnings as a Mississippi schoolgirl but also to her personal revelations about child abuse, poor self-esteem, and drug use. In sharing these stories, however, Oprah does not focus on the hardship itself so much as her ability to overcome the psychological obstacles these hardships posed. Time and again, Oprah has presented herself as “a female response to Horatio Alger, offering a feminine parody of the masculine myth of self-help” (ibid., 33).

Perhaps more importantly, however, her “therapeutic biography” is ultimately put in the service of her viewers. Oprah uses herself as an example of women's potentiality to achieve and self-manage despite gender, race, class, or psychological adversity. In so doing, Oprah positions herself as “every woman” although she is one of the most influential and wealthiest people not only in the United States but also in the world. Oprah consistently brings her own personal advisors and trainers on her show, making their knowledge and thus help available for mass consumption, usually through their mass marketed self-help books or programs. As such, Oprah fuses self-care with the consumer market by drawing

on the basic therapeutic creed that we are perfectible and that identity can and perhaps ought to be shaped by willful self-management and introspection. This creed is congruent with a structural feature of the consumer market: both therapeutic and consumer activities are set into motion by a state of perpetual dissatisfaction and a Sisyphean desire to fashion and improve one's own self. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* solicits the viewer-consumer within this fine and dual dynamic of dissatisfaction and self-improvement. (Ibid., 164)

By sharing her own story, Oprah impels her guests and her viewers to share their own therapeutic narrative and begin their own self-made journey to self-improvement, which often begins in the consumer market.

These therapeutic imperatives find synergy with the political and economic ones at the crux of neoliberalism. In particular, we find such rhetoric undergirding Republican Party values, which privilege discourses of individual solutions to social problems. In this capacity, *The Oprah Winfrey show* can be seen as a “technology of subjectivity”. Ahiwa

Ong suggests that “technologies of subjectivity rely on an array of knowledge and expert systems to induce self-animation and self-government so that citizens can optimize choices, efficiency, and competitiveness in turbulent market conditions” (Ong 2006, 6). Indeed, by marrying the therapeutic world with the consumer market and by employing multifarious self-help experts in multiple arenas, Oprah offers her viewers multiple modes of “self-animation and self-government”. Through confession and therapeutic advice from Oprah herself as well as professionals, through community-building amongst audience members and other guests as well as countless others on her website, *The Oprah Winfrey show*, simply put, helps people deal with their lives. In many ways, however, this “help” puts forth a logic that is in tune with the neoliberal rationalities that have become so commonplace in every sphere of life since the Reagan administration. Thus, *The Oprah Winfrey show* is a powerful global media form that buttresses neoliberalism as social ethos.

Given Oprah’s positionality as an African American woman and that her audience is largely female, her espousal of neoliberal rationalities is in many instances specifically raced and gendered. Oprah, the richest woman in entertainment and the only black female billionaire, is perceived as a beacon of both feminine and African American success.¹⁷ Moreover, Oprah has made it clear that a priority of the show is “to empower women”, to be what Corinne Squire calls “televisual feminism” (Squire 2000, 354–55). I argue that Oprah’s televisual feminism is a brand of neoliberal feminism that equates female empowerment with (consumer) choice.

According to transnational feminist cultural studies scholar Inderpal Grewal, this kind of consumerization of feminism has become widespread: “Empowerment, self-esteem, and self-help through spiritual and new age movements, exercise and health club attendance, and talk shows and books on the topic, along with new manifestations of cosmopolitanisms, became key to dominant feminist practices [by the end of twentieth century]” (Grewal 2005, 16). Just as Oprah’s show marries therapeutic discourses with consumer culture through the privileging of self-fashioning, so too does Oprah’s show, like Western feminism more generally, yoke feminism to consumer culture through a privileging of choice. As Grewal outlines, in activist circles internationally against domestic violence or in favor of reproductive rights, feminists have largely posed “having choices” as the opposite of “being oppressed”. This centering of choice as a representation of feminist agency created a situation in which “feminism was engaged in a struggle with neoliberalism but also dependent on it for its existence”, since “the concept of choice is essential to participation in democracy as well as to consumer culture” (ibid., 28).

As we shall see in the following section, neoliberal feminism, and Oprah’s espousal of it, is not neutral but, rather, serves to discursively construct South Korean women only in relation to American women, erecting a First World/Third World divide. Moreover, by psychologizing South Korean women, “Around the world with Oprah” elides the ways in which neoliberal rationalities govern the bodies of both Western and non-Western women.

Neoliberal feminism and *Around the world with Oprah*

Nowhere is the link between consumer culture, feminism, and neoliberalism more evident in “Around the world with Oprah” than in her treatment of American consumers of

plastic surgery. In the following segment, we see the logic of the market informing Oprah's interpretation of Americans electing plastic surgery procedures in Brazil:

WINFREY: Thank you. I hear Brazil is known as the Mecca of plastic surgery. It is, right?

Ms. LING: Huge numbers of operations happen and, in fact, a lot . . .

WINFREY: That a lot of American women . . .

Ms. LING: A lot of Americans, because it's significantly less expensive. I've traveled throughout South America—Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil—and I'm always shocked by how many American women I encounter there because it's less expensive and you can vacation in Rio while you're—while you're recovering.

WINFREY: Get a bikini wax, wear a thong, and go home.

Ms. LING: Yeah.¹⁸

Without a trace of irony, Oprah and Ling, on the heels of the South Korean segment on plastic surgery, deem Brazil the “Mecca of plastic surgery” and note that “Huge numbers of operations happen.” In marked contrast to the South Korean segment, American (ostensibly white) women are lauded for their economic investment as Oprah and Ling make note of American women's cost-effective choice to undergo cosmetic surgery and vacation at the same time. As such, Oprah and Ling highlight American women's abilities to “optimize choices, efficiency, and competitiveness in turbulent market conditions”.

Not only does this failure highlight American women's capacity for neoliberal rationality but it also animates liberal assumptions that Western subjects, guided by their individuality, are able to make choices in ways that non-Western subjects cannot. In other words, Americans electing plastic surgery in Brazil are not only choosing to do so for somehow “better” reasons than their Korean counterparts, but smart enough to do it for cheap, and in a tropical location at that. Thus, we see what Chandra Mohanty, in her now seminal “Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses”, characterizes as a First World/Third World divide.¹⁹ And the demarcation is clear: Western women are characterized as “educated, as modern, as having control over their bodies and sexualities, and [exercising] the freedom to make their own decisions” (Mohanty 1991, 56). The “average third world woman” is a necessary part of such discursive self-representations of Western women, thus seemingly stabilizing Western feminism even as it continues to be a contested site at home. In marked contrast, the “average third world woman” “leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being ‘third world’ (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.)” (ibid.).

In this case, however, South Korea's status as an “industrial tiger” complicates the construction of South Korean women as “average third world women”.²⁰ After its political independence from Japan in 1945 and the subsequent Korean War, South Korea rapidly industrialized in the 1960s and 1970s under the dictatorial regime of Park Chung Hee. By the 1980s, the fruits of such industrialization were realized by a burgeoning middle class with money to spend and a flourishing consumer culture within which to spend it. Thus, South Korea's rapid modernization created multiple spaces in which tradition and modernity collide. As a result, South Korea, like Japan, is often depicted as a place run amuck with technology, which often gets recoded as

perverted excess. In other words, South Korea's technological advancement and South Korean middle-class participation in bourgeois lifestyles, aptly symbolized by cosmetic surgery consumption, aggravate American anxieties much in the same way Japan's status as an economic threat to the US—vis-à-vis Japanese dominance of the automobile industry—did in the 1980s.²¹ Rather than the “poor, uneducated, tradition-bound” Third World woman, then, South Korean women in this instance are constructed as an “other” defined by the excesses of modern consumption. Moreover, this discursive representation exists alongside that of Western women whose consumption is implicitly represented as rationally self-controlled.

We see this dynamic in motion in “Around the world with Oprah”. Although “Around the world with Oprah” departs from the standard format of *The Oprah Winfrey show*, which typically exports American suffering abroad, offering instead a postmodern pastiche of international women's experiences for American consumption, we see the therapeutic narrative at play in Oprah's treatment of South Korean women (Illouz 2003, 167). Part and parcel of the therapeutic narrative is the identification of a psychological problem or maladjustment. Clearly here, since the South Korean plastic surgery craze is described as the outcome of South Korean women's desire to look “more Western,” Oprah (with the help of Ling) identifies South Korean women's malady as internalized racism:

Ms. LING: I think there's a desire—in Asian cultures, it's always been considered more beautiful if you have rounder eyes and more Western features. I mean, if you notice on my eye—I'm Chinese—I have this sort of flap of skin over my eyes. What's happening in Asia is they're lifting this skin and making it more deep-set, and it's happening so frequently in Korea that a lot of women do it before they even get married. They destroy all the pictures.

WINFREY: So is the idea not to look Asian? Because you—I'm looking at those women. They still look Korean.

Ms. LING: They still look Asian.

WINFREY: That would be like me having surgery to not look black.

Ms. LING: Not look black. Right.

WINFREY: You still look black to me, you know.

Ms. LING: I know.

WINFREY: I don't get it. Yeah.²²

In her efforts to put South Korean women's experiences within the US context, Oprah translates South Korean women's experiences as equivalent to that of Oprah “having surgery to not look black”, something that, in the American context, signals pathology of the worst kind. Significantly, the issue at hand is not cosmetic surgery itself but the implicit idea that South Korean women's choices are constrained by internalized racism, making some choices better than others. Thus, (unfettered) choice becomes a measuring stick for feminist liberation and Korean women fall short.

Oprah is able to draw this parallel precisely because she is not white; her blackness gives her the currency with which to name South Korean women's actions and desires as they relate to whiteness. This statement assumes that biological essentialisms correlate to race and that South Korean women and black women have a shared relationship to whiteness as *women of color*. Critical race theorist Kimberle Crenshaw

writes that in the same way that “women of color experience racism in ways not always the same as those experienced by men of color”, women of color experience “sexism in ways not always parallel to experiences of white women” (Crenshaw 1995, 360). Crenshaw thus critiques the idea of “woman” as a unitary, universal subject. Similarly, I argue here that there is no unitary, universal subject called “woman of color”. While South Korean women and black women are engaged in overlapping struggles as members of a globalized world, structured and dominated by institutionalized white supremacy, translating South Korean women’s experiences solely through the lens of African American women’s experiences effaces the specific historical contingencies and cultural meanings that create South Korean women’s contemporary situation. As such, Oprah’s statement effectively centers American women and represents South Korean women only in relation to that universal subject.

Accordingly, Oprah’s show, like other debates on plastic surgery, creates a distinction between non-racialized and racialized plastic surgery forms based on assumptions about “natural” and “normal” body types. In the following segment on 30-year-old Brazilian women, this logic regarding racially marked plastic surgery forms takes a different turn:

WINFREY: This is so cool, seeing how 30-year-olds live around the world. Our next stop, Brazil. Now if you’re a 30-year-old woman in Brazil, you’re spending quite a bit of time in a thong at the beach, so having a beautiful bum is a must. Listen to this: They do more bottom implants there than anywhere else in the world. Can you imagine?

Ms. LING: They gotta shake it.

WINFREY: They gotta shake it. Here we go. OK. Take a look.²³

Rather than the bewilderment and judgment resounding through Oprah’s reactions to the South Korean segment, the assertion that Brazilian women get “bottom implants” garners a more neutral, if not playful reaction. In fact, Oprah does not uphold trenchant feminist views that categorize all forms of plastic surgery as gendered bodily mutilations but instead seems to find Brazilian women’s engagements with “bottom implants”, an ostensibly racially marked plastic surgery form, normal, since “They gotta shake it.” Unlike Korean women, whom Oprah perceives as electing racially marked plastic surgery “not to look Asian”, the assumption undergirding this segment is that Brazilian women, known for their curvaceous backsides, want to look like themselves.²⁴

According to Kathleen Zane, such assumptions about the way people do and should look actually reify socially constructed hierarchical notions of racialized traits. Speaking specifically to assumptions about the “Asian eye”, Zane contends that, “Like the ‘Oriental’-ized script used for representing Asianness in titles or signs... the Asian eye (a slashed icon) is a racialized inscription identifying the Asian as Other” (Zane 1998, 167). That is to say, racialized physical traits from the “Asian eye” to the Brazilian backside are parts of a Western representational system that enacts power and domination through representation and thus posits the white body as “normal”. These assumptions obscure the fact that all forms of plastic surgery are both gendered and racialized, even those procedures performed on white women (and men). As Kathy Davis explains, “White women, with their ostensibly ‘unmarked’ identities, participate in the privilege and oppressive mentality of Northern European ideals of feminine beauty

when they have cosmetic surgery, making it a specifically ethnicized and racialized practice” (Davis, 2003, 99).

The type of intense scrutiny of cosmetic surgery patients of color exemplified by Oprah and Ling is particular to the United States as a reflection of its racial anxieties and has given way to “ethnic-appropriate” forms of plastic surgery in the United States. In her book, *Surgery junkies: Wellness and pathology in cosmetic culture*, Pitts-Taylor reads an episode of *Extreme makeover*, the first in a string of plastic surgery reality shows, featuring a Filipina woman. The show’s producers and doctors take great pains to present her makeover and “ethnic cosmetic surgery” in general as “more multicultural, less whitening, and thus more acceptable for people of color” (Pitts-Taylor 2007, 49). These sentiments seem to match up with Oprah’s lines in the proverbial sand: less whitening, more acceptable for people of color.

It would make sense, then, that Asian Americans electing the *sangapul* procedure would also receive the kind of discursive treatment exemplified by Oprah’s South Korea segment. Interestingly enough, however, some media reports treat Asian Americans differently than their diasporic counterparts. *The Los Angeles Sentinel* reported in 2002 that Asian American cosmetic surgery consumption had increased by 300% while Latinos experienced a 200% increase compared with a 34% increase in white patients between 1999 and 2001. The article cites three main reasons, taken from the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, for this jump in numbers—a growing middle class with expendable income, medical advances that reduce scarring for darker-skinned patients and, finally, the idea that “the American media has helped awareness that a single standard of beauty no longer exists in multi-ethnic America”.²⁵ Despite the fact that the article goes on to affirm that the *sangapul* procedure is the most popular (presumably amongst the Asian American patients), it asserts that minority patients “seek to enhance rather than shed their ethnicity”.²⁶

This juxtaposition between Oprah’s treatment of South Korean women and *The Los Angeles Sentinel*’s treatment of Asian Americans illustrates what Elizabeth Haiken calls “the Michael Jackson factor”. Haiken writes that “Jackson’s haunting face signals not only that all is not well in never-never land; it suggests that something larger has gone awry in twentieth-century North America” (Haiken 1997, 177). Racially marked plastic surgeries invoke uneasy feelings not only about the patient’s well-being but about the well-being of the American nation as a whole. In other words, “the fact that the image of America [Michael Jackson’s] face reflects is so unflattering accounts for much of our discomfort” (ibid., 182). The urge to avoid this “image of America” helps explain why the Asian American case is characterized so differently from the South Korean one.

Clearly, then, racially marked plastic surgery conjures up racial anxieties in the US context and in “Around the world with Oprah” Oprah maps both US notions of race and their attendant racial anxieties onto South Korean women. In so doing, Oprah obscures geopolitical and historical specificities of the South Korean context despite South Korean women’s attempts to insert their own subjectivities into the narrative. Returning, then, to Oprah’s South Korean segment, we see this silencing in effect when Ling states that “everyone I spoke with agrees the thing that most defines a South Korean woman is her role as a mother”.²⁷ Following this statement, Ling’s interviewee states that taking “care of my children is—I think is the very happiest thing in

my life". Another woman declares that "Korean women are very strong moms."²⁸ Oprah, visible with disdain, says, "I don't get it . . . But the women are really still concerned about their families," to which Ling replies, "Absolutely."²⁹ Implicit in Oprah's statement is that these two issues, South Korean women engaging in plastic surgery and their self-conception as good mothers, cannot exist simultaneously. In other words, "excessive" modern consumption does not a traditional mother make! Thus, not only are South Korean women silenced—and Oprah and Ling's commentary about them given more authority—but Korean women's reverence for the traditional role of motherhood is painted as irreconcilable with South Korea's (post)modernity. As such, Oprah's segment not only fails to address the historical and social forces shaping South Korean women's subjectivities but also *produces* Korean women outside of their own self-conceptions.³⁰

The colonizing effects of these discourses are powerful precisely because the effects are not isolated but, rather, inform relations between First World and Third World women as well as relations between various types of women within the landscape of the United States. Oprah's assertions that South Korean women want to "not look Asian" as well as her non-verbal reactions reproduce American audiences' opinions not only about South Korean women but also about Korean American women and perhaps Asian American women as well since Asian ethnic groups have historically been lumped together within US racial paradigms. Women of color within American national borders are often framed in similar ways as their international counterparts.³¹ Asian Americans, particularly marked by dominant American culture as "perpetual foreigners", are especially susceptible to the interchangeability between Asians abroad with Asians at home.

As such, ideas about Asian American women's foreignness and difference are fueled by representations like those in Oprah's South Korea segment. Orientalist claims about South Korea are ever more complicated, however, by Lisa Ling's positionality as an Asian American woman. Although Ling is not specifically Korean American, given that the racial schema of the US conflates all Asian ethnic and even Pacific Islander groups into one category, Ling's status as an Asian American serves these purposes adequately. Much like the other experts Oprah employs on her shows—life strategists, psychologists, home decorators—Ling, as a person of Asian descent, stands in as an "expert" on Asia, thus being authorized to make historical and even psychological claims.

Accordingly, Ling's assertion that "In Asian cultures, it's always been considered more beautiful if you have rounder eyes and more Western features" is particularly discursively violent towards South Korean women, given her "authority". Ling's use of the word "always" stabilizes and fixes Western facial features as the normative beauty ideal in Asia while also erasing historical contingencies that have made these ideals hegemonic or, more specifically, the historically uneven colonial and neo-colonial relationships through which the West has engaged with Asia. Thus, just as Oprah's blackness allows her to speak about women of color's relationships to whiteness, Ling's Asianness gives her license to speak for all Asians. The fact that Ling's (as well as Oprah's) race is put into service within this segment is clear when one imagines the discomfort that might result from a white correspondent making similar claims. Thus, the show's application of an a priori homogeneous notion of women (of color) to women in South Korea not only robs South Korea of their own historical and political agency and subjectivity, once again centering

American women as the ultimate referent to others' experiences, but also serves to homogenize Asian women and women of color's experiences more generally on the domestic front.

Ironically, Oprah and Ling liken South Korean women to US women of color in ways that flatten their crucial differences but fail to connect South Korean and American women vis-à-vis their neoliberal justifications for engaging in plastic surgery. In Oprah's South Korean segment, Ling notes that "Korean women say looking more Western means you have better chance of getting a good job and finding a husband".³² That is to say, Korean women do not describe their motivations for electing plastic surgery as a desire to "not look Asian" but rather as acts of self-entrepreneurship and management, the very neoliberal rationalities espoused by Oprah herself. Although both Ling and Oprah gloss over these explanations in favor of racialized ones, Elizabeth Lee's documentary film *good for her* offers a counterpoint to Oprah's Orientalist depictions of Korean women.

Written, directed, and produced by Korean American filmmaker Elizabeth Lee, *good for her* is a Fulbright Foundation funded documentary film that hit the Asian American film festival circuit in 2004, the same year that "Around the world with Oprah" aired. In *good for her* Lee attempts to tell a multilayered story about the multiple subjectivities of Korean women and begins this process with her own self-reflexive insights. She asks what if cosmetic surgery in South Korea may be "a means by which to access power in Korean society".³³ In order to find out, Lee explains, "I needed to take the conversations outside the confines of my Western head and bring it into classrooms, homes, and coffee shops in Seoul and seek my answers that way".³⁴ Notably, this self-reflexive and self-conscious process composes the first five minutes of Lee's film, signaling her attention to the possible and probable elisions her documentary, as an act of translation, might entail.

Through multiple sections titled, "power in being like others", "power external", "understanding her power", and "power internal", Lee offers a picture of Korean women that highlights their engagement with cosmetic surgery as agentic. The women in Lee's film reveal the multiple ways in which Korean women utilize or conceive of plastic surgery as a means of navigating the terrain of Korean womanhood in an unduly competitive society. For example, 24-year-old Jieun Oh, a student at Ewha University likens the *sangapul* procedure to making an investment: "I think changing yourself by means of plastic surgery is like making an investment on yourself and caring for yourself".³⁵ Such an investment has very real practical impetuses as well as implications. As another interviewee states, "the economic situation has gotten even worse [since the Economic Crisis of 1997]. There are so many people that need employment but only a handful get jobs. So naturally, the competition has become fierce. People try to have better English abilities than others. For women, a better face and height, which is also important".³⁶

Lee's interviewee alludes to the Economic Crisis of 1997 also known as the Asian Debt Crisis and, in South Korea, the IMF Crisis, which began on 21 November 1997 when South Korea became the subject of IMF bailout because it lacked the American dollars necessary to pay back loans from foreign financial institutions. Under the neoliberal regime of Kim Dae Jung, South Korea's first civilian president, who took office but a month after the crisis began, South Korea's unemployment rates soared and workfare policies were implemented (Song 2006, 40–42). According to Jesook Song, neoliberalism in

South Korea has become a “social ethos of moral–economic value that gains its explanatory power through a wide variety of social agents” (ibid., 55). As Song suggests, neoliberal governmentality, as evidenced by Lee’s subjects, is as much a concern in South Korea as it is in the United States.³⁷ Although Lee’s depiction of South Korean women is markedly different from Oprah’s given Lee’s attention to agency, like Oprah, Lee also fails to look beyond cosmetic surgery consumption as an individual choice in order to question neoliberalism as a “social ethos of moral–economic value”.

In “Under Western eyes revisited”, Mohanty reflects on her seminal essay some ten years after the fact. Mohanty illuminates that in writing about the difference between First and Third World women she had hoped to illuminate how “difference allows us to theorize universal concerns more fully” (Mohanty 2003, 226). Similarly, in underscoring the limitations of translating South Korean women’s experiences through the lens of US women of color, we also see that neoliberalism as both economic policy and governmentality and its attendant neoliberal feminism are universal concerns affecting both American and South Korean women (amongst others). While Oprah focuses on the racialized connotations of South Korean women’s plastic surgery consumption, Lee focuses on their ability to access power and negotiate South Korean femininity through that consumption. Neither, however, problematizes their subjects’ neoliberal rationalities nor the free market ideology governing their bodies. Moreover, neither connects booming rates of cosmetic surgery consumption in both the United States and South Korea. That is to say, by focusing on the individual, both Lee and Oprah neglect to ask what global conditions might allow for this kind of mass consumption of cosmetic surgery on the part of women all around the world. It is precisely such questions that the psychologization of South Korean women and an overdetermined focus on rational choice obscures.

Conclusion

The South Korean segment was cut out of subsequent airings of the show, narrowing Oprah’s trip around the world to a mere 16, rather than 17, countries. Presumably, outcries from South Korean and Korean American fans, as documented on *Oprah.com*’s message boards, as well as organized demands for a public apology prompted Oprah to leave the segment on the cutting room floor. Although this deletion perhaps signals the sensitivity of the Oprah genre to viewer commentary, no official statement or public apology was ever released. While *The Oprah Winfrey show* has undoubtedly brought much-needed attention to global and domestic issues of other sorts, raising awareness and resources for causes such as AIDS relief in Africa, to dismiss the lessons from “Around the world with Oprah” because of Oprah’s philanthropic work elsewhere misses the other types of cultural insight the Oprah show provides. Oprah Winfrey’s continued attention to the everyday makes her show, and “Around the world with Oprah” in particular, an ideal site through which to expose the (geo)politics of beauty and beauty practices at the intersection of race, technology, and neoliberalism.

The Oprah Winfrey show, purports to empower women as a feminist outlet for “women’s political, economic and educational advancement” (Squire 2000, 357). As we have seen, however, “women” is a category that rests upon the universalization of “American women”. And while “Around the world with Oprah” certainly tackles issues

relevant to many women—beauty, dissatisfaction, body image, and bodily transformations—it also illuminates how neoliberal feminism, as espoused by Oprah, manages and constructs women’s relationships to one another domestically and across national borders through the televisual medium. While Oprah is largely thought to cater to a white, middle-class demographic in the US, the show is exported to 120 countries around the world and, presumably, many of the women of these countries are Oprah’s mainstay viewers as well (Wilson 2003, 3). Thus, “Around the world with Oprah” provides many lessons with respect to transnational feminisms by exemplifying how the mapping of US racial logics onto other geopolitical contexts serves to discursively colonize. As such, Oprah’s South Korea segment flattens the historical specificities that shape South Korean women’s lives and instead constructs them only in relation to American women. Such representations are powerful precisely in their ability to perpetuate US cultural hegemony while obscuring the political and economic structures that uphold US hegemony in general.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the journal’s guest editors, Eva Illouz and Eitan Wilf, for their suggestions and their patience in reading many versions of this article. I have also benefitted greatly from the criticism of editorial board members Joshua Chambers-Letson and Barbara Browning as well as external reader, Kathy Davis. My deepest gratitude also goes to Nadine Naber, Mimi Nguyen, Sarita See, Henry Em, Vicente Diaz and Miriam Ticktin – mentors who have spent many hours improving (and inspiring) my work and this piece in particular. A sincere thanks also to Kate Collier, Candace Fujikane, Nancy Abelmann, Hye Seung Chung, Brian Chung, Isa Quintana, Matthew Stiffler, John Lee, Julie Remala, Haeyon Kim, Groovetheory, the Community of Scholars cohort 2007 and the countless others who have offered their advice, suggestions and comments. Thank you to my parents, Myungho and Songza Lee, for their unwavering confidence and lastly, a most loving thanks to Dean Saranillio who put as much effort into this article as if it were his own.

Notes

1. “Around the world with Oprah”, *Oprah: The Oprah Winfrey show*, ABC, 6 October 2004.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Oprah’s magazine readers may shed light on her television demographic, which seem to be largely female and middle class. According to <www.Oprah.com>, 13,265,000 people read *O*, Oprah’s magazine. Of these, 90% are women with a median age of 43.1 years and a median household income of US\$66,422. The website does not provide demographics according to race or region. <www.Oprah.com> (accessed 15 April 2005).
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. To be sure, plastic surgery has reached unparalleled heights in South Korea since the 1980s (when its economy peaked before the Economic Crisis of 1997), surpassing even American consumption. While reports vary, a Korean weekly magazine reported in 1989 that somewhere between 20% and 30% of all unmarried Korean women in their early twenties had cosmetic surgery performed on their eyes, noses, mouths, or breasts. A more general statistic notes that, in 2000, 13% of Koreans engaged in some form of cosmetic surgery compared to 3% in the US. And, as stated previously, amongst the various procedures available to patients—everything from the standard breast enlargement to calf reductions—cosmetic eyelid surgery or *sangapul* procedure is the most popular bodily alteration (Hart 1991, 256; Pyon 2000, 1).

8. In 1993, the *Asian Wall Street Journal* (this same article appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* the same month) featured an article entitled “Urge to ‘go Anglo’ sends Koreans scurrying to the cosmetic surgeon”. The article notes that the doctor’s patients include “Korea’s young and affluent women (and some men) who want to ‘go Anglo’ with Caucasoid features” (Glain 1993, 1).
9. For a brief discussion and overview of the veil in academic writing, see Sondra Hale’s “The West and veiling”, < <http://www.international.ucla.edu/cnes/home/article.asp?parentid=14575> > (accessed 9 December 2007).
10. Scholars of gender and Middle Eastern studies have written against teleological narratives regarding modernity and women’s emancipation. In *Women with mustaches and men without beards: Gender and sexual anxieties of Iranian modernity*, Afsaneh Najmabadi contests understandings of modernity as necessarily liberatory using Iranian women’s unveiling as a case in point. Najmabadi asserts that Iranian women’s bodies were disciplined in new ways once they unveiled. Because the veil no longer contained the sexual energies thought to be inherent in women, it was replaced by an “invisible veil” or veil of chastity, which “was to be acquired through modern education, as an internal quality of the self. The body of modern woman was to contain its own unruly sexuality and shy away from its own public presence” (Najmabadi 2005, 152). Women’s behaviors—embodied and discursive—changed significantly as a result of their newfound “freedom”.
11. Throughout the piece I choose to use the term “racially marked plastic surgery” rather than “racialized plastic surgery”, since all forms of plastic surgery, even those undertaken by white consumers, are racialized. The term “racially marked” instead nods to the ways in which nonwhite subjects and their acts are always already marked.
12. About using Chile as a test case for neoliberal policy Harvey writes, “Not for the first time, a brutal experiment carried out in the periphery became a model for the formulation of policies in the centre (much as experimentation with the flat tax in Iraq has been proposed under Bremer’s decrees)” (Harvey 2005, 9).
13. Elizabeth Martinez and Arnaldo Garcia outline five main points of neoliberalism in “Neo-liberalism defined”: (1) total freedom of movement for capital, goods, and services; (2) cutting public expenditure of social services, (3) deregulation, (4) privatization, and (5) replacing the concept of “the public good” with “individual responsibility”. These scholars assert that neoliberalism has amounted to nothing short of neocolonialism abroad. “Neo-liberalism defined”, < http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/econ101/neoliberal_Defined.html > (accessed 27 June 2007).
14. Harvey takes issue with assumptions that neoliberalism is a set of economic policies that have inadvertently classed effects. Harvey asserts that from their onset in the United States and abroad the neoliberal turn has served to reconsolidate class power.
15. In “A short history of neoliberalism”, Susan George reminds us that neoliberalism is a constructed set of ideas through which a small group of elites has struggled to capture hegemony. George contends that, once we realize that it is a constructed set of ideas, we can realize that another set of ideas can someday replace it. < <http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/econ101/neoliberalism.html> > (accessed 27 June 2007).
16. My use of Oprah’s first name throughout this article (Oprah as opposed to Winfrey) is intentional. Because she demands to be known globally, not as “Ms. Winfrey” but merely as “Oprah”, I use her first name to highlight the unforeseen effects of the familiarity she herself cultivates.
17. “In pictures: The richest 20 women in entertainment”, < http://www.forbes.com/2007/01/17/richest-women-entertainment-tech-media-cz_lg_richwomen07_0118womenstars_slide_2.html > (accessed 9 December 2007).
18. *The Oprah Winfrey show*, 6 October 2004.
19. In her newer “Under Western eyes revisited”, Mohanty (2003) admits that she now prefers the “One-Third/Two-Thirds Worlds” demarcation to the more outdated “Western/Third World”. While the former is a non-essentialist categorization, she asserts that it “misses the history of colonization that the terms Western/Third World draw attention to” (227). In order to highlight

- the US's continued neocolonial relationship to Korea, I have chosen to use these terms throughout this essay. American media forms and media empires like Oprah's continue to have discursively colonial relationships with non-Western nations even if they are, like Korea, Second World economically.
20. In his chapter, "Jameson's rhetoric of otherness and the 'national allegory'", Aijaz Ahmad contends that the First World/Third World binary falls apart when one considers that "countries of the Pacific rim, from South Korea to Singapore, constitute the fastest growing region within global capitalism. The list could be much longer, but the point is that the binary opposition which Jameson constructs between a capitalist First World and a presumable pre- or non-capitalist Third World is empirically ungrounded in any facts" (Ahmad 1992, 101).
 21. Perhaps the most well-known consequence of American anxieties, animosities, and fears towards Japan's success within the automobile industry is the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin in Detroit during an altercation with two ex-employees of Ford who thought he was Japanese.
 22. "Around the world with Oprah".
 23. Ibid.
 24. Technically, Korean women are attempting to look like other Korean women. Somewhere between 25% and 50% of Koreans are born with the epicanthic fold. Moreover, significant circulation of Korean dramas and pop music around the world has made Korean beauty hegemonic within Asia and Asian American communities. In many cases, Korean and Asian American women strive not to emulate whiteness so much as to emulate the looks of Korean actresses and pop stars (Kobrin 2004, 1).
 25. "Rise in minority patients, other trends in facial plastic surgery", *Los Angeles Sentinel*, 16 May 2002, A13.
 26. Ibid.
 27. *The Oprah Winfrey show*, 6 October 2004.
 28. Ibid.
 29. Ibid.
 30. According to feminist scholar Cho Haejoang, compulsory motherhood remains consistent with current demands on South Korean women to be at once maternal, youthful, and sexy as well as career oriented just as Ling's respondent suggests when she says "Korean women are very strong moms" despite their cosmetic surgery consumption (Haejoang 2002, 165-96).
 31. In her book, *Compositional subjects: Asian/American women*, Laura Kang (2002) shows how representations of Asian and Asian American women are necessarily related. By focusing on four popularized figures of Asian/American women—writing self, desiring body, national citizen, and transnational worker—Kang shows how Asian/American women have been figured through mutually imbricated modes of identity formation.
 32. *The Oprah Winfrey show*, 6 October 2004. Such assertions point to what Nikolas Rose and Carlos Novas have described as new forms of "biological citizenship", which open up new possibilities for self-care. As Rose and Novas argue, new forms of medical technology have produced specifically active forms of citizenship wherein practices of biological choice are taking place within a "regime of the self" through which people are increasingly seeing themselves as enterprising individuals, actively shaping their lives through acts of choice. In other words, people are not only increasingly active in their choices regarding health, recovery, and self-care but are increasingly holding themselves responsible for the aspects of their health and body that are under their control. Significantly, Rose and Novas (2004) point out how medical technologies are particularly salient means through which modern citizen subjects remake themselves, echoing the imperatives of neoliberal governmentality that proffer individuals as responsible for their own self-cultivation and management.
 33. *good for her*. Dir. Elizabeth Lee. Fulbright Foundation, 2006.
 34. Ibid.
 35. Ibid.
 36. Interestingly, male plastic surgery patients usually cite employment as their main motivation although, as we see here, it is also a popular motivation for women. While plastic surgery rates for South Korean men, as for American men, have increased in recent years, women still

dominate the market. American men also cite competition in the job market as their number one reason for electing plastic surgery.

37. Neoliberal governmentality is perhaps even more of a concern for South Korean people than for Americans or at least manifests in more obvious ways within South Korea's structure of labor. For example, photos are required along with resume's making appearance an immediately crucial factor on the job market.

References

- Ahmad, Aijaz. 1992. *In theory: Classes, nations, literatures*. London: Verso.
- Brown, Wendy. 2003. Neo-liberalism and the end of liberal democracy. *Theory & Event* 7, no. 1: 3.
- Cho, Haejoang. 2002. Living with conflicting subjectivities: Mother, motherly wife, and sexy woman in the transition from colonial-modern to postmodern Korea. In *Under construction: The gendering of modernity, class, and consumption in the Republic of Korea*, ed. Laurel Kendall, 165–195. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1995. Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics and violence against women of color. In *Critical race theory: The key writings that formed the movement*, ed. Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gay Teller, and Kendall Thomas, 357–383. New York: New Press.
- Davis, Kathy. 2003. *Dubious equalities and embodied differences: Cultural studies on cosmetic surgery*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Foucault, Michel. 1994. The birth of biopolitics. In *Essential works of Foucault, Vol. 1, Ethics: Subjectivity and truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow, 73–80. New York: New Press.
- Glain, Steve. 1993. Urge to “go Anglo” sends Koreans scurrying to the cosmetic surgeon. *Asian Wall Street Journal*, November 24, 1.
- Grewal, Inderpal. 2005. *Transnational America: Feminisms, diasporas, neoliberalisms*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Haiken, Elizabeth. 1997. *Venus envy: A history of cosmetic surgery*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hart, Dennis Michael. 1991. *From tradition to consumption: The rise of materialist culture in South Korea*. Seoul: Jimoodang Publishers.
- Harvey, David. 2005. *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Illouz, Eva. 2003. *Oprah Winfrey and the glamour of misery: An essay on popular culture*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kang, Laura. 2002. *Compositional subjects: Asian/American women*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Kobrin, Sandy. 2004. Asian-Americans see negative side to eyelid surgery. *Chicago Tribune*, August 25, Women's eNews, 1.
- Mohanty, Chandra. 1991. Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. In *Third World women and the politics of feminism*, ed. Chandra Mohanty, Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres, 51–80. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- . 2003. *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Najmabadi, Afsaneh. 2005. *Women with mustaches and men without beards: Gender and sexual anxieties of Iranian modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ong, Aihwa. 2006. *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Pitts-Taylor, Victoria. 2007. *Surgery junkies: Wellness and pathology in cosmetic culture*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

- Pyon, Elizabeth. 2000. Plastic surgery boom changing faces of Korea. *Korea Herald*, February 4, 1.
- Rose, Nikolas and Carlos Novas. 2004. Biological citizenship. In *Global assemblages: Technology, politics and ethics as anthropological problems*, ed. Aihwa Ong and Steven J. Collier, 439–63. Boston: Blackwell.
- Song, Jesook. 2006. Family breakdown and invisible homeless women: Neoliberal governance during the Asian debt crisis in South Korea, 1997–2001. *Positions* 14, no. 1: 40–42.
- Squire, Corinne. 2000. Empowering women? The Oprah Winfrey show. In *Media studies: A reader*. 2nd ed, ed. Paul Marris and Sue Thornham, 354–367. New York: New York University Press.
- Wilson, Sheryl. 2003. *Oprah, celebrity and formations of self*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Zane, Kathleen. 1998. Reflections on a yellow eye: Asian I(eye)cons, and cosmetic surgery. In *Talking visions: Multicultural feminism in a transnational age*, ed. Ellen Shohat, 161–186. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.