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A Troubled Legacy

Making and Unmaking Race in the Museum

Abstract This essay explores how exhibitions in museums of natural history, American history, art and science have constructed and critiqued racial ideology and its legacies since the nineteenth century. Focused primarily on museums in the United States, the essay analyzes changing conceptions of race and identity, trends in museum practice, and how museums large and small have succeeded and failed in grappling with race, ethnicity, and their own histories as cultural institutions. Selective rather than comprehensive, the article explores these themes by examining notable exhibitions in each type of museum.

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Introduction

"What is race?" is a daunting question.

Race is protean. It is one of the sturdiest, most promiscuous products of modernity, a persistent, frequently invidious tool deployed in endless permutations and elaborations, repeatedly remade in shifting configurations of culture, politics, economics, law, and science. For many people and for much of its notorious history, race has been like Justice Potter Stewart's notion of pornography—people have trouble defining it, but they know it when they see it. What people mean when they use the term "race" has meant, and continues to mean, a wide variety of things, but it almost always has implied an identity rooted in the body. This essay employs a contemporary definition that sees race not as a natural category, a description of biological essence, but rather as a force in American life, an ideological system rooted in the pursuit of group and individual advantage that produces and is sustained by political, cultural, social, economic and scientific practices and their material consequences (Lopez, 2004, p. 8; Fields, 1982). This is a definition that turns American racial logic on its head. In this view, it is not race that produces disparities of wealth and power, but rather disparities in wealth and power that first made it possible to construct and deploy the ideology of race, and then to persistently, overtly and covertly, reinforce and recreate it. Inclusion and exclusion in the United States has been framed along racial lines for historically contingent reasons, not due to biological imperatives.

Museums of all sorts have been both key venues in creating race and, in more recent decades, also sites for exploring its manifestations and deconstructing, even subverting, it. It is a long history, one that would take much more than a single essay to digest exhaustively. This analysis is confined to a historical and theoretical overview of museological trends and selected exemplary exhibitions at museums of natural history, American history, art and science, primarily in the United States. It moves from the advent of exhibits devoted explicitly to racial types in early natural history museums, a period in which both folk and elite culture were comfortable with deterministic, essentialist notions of race, into the latter twentieth century, when those notions were challenged across a wide range of disciplines and by previously excluded or marginalized groups. By the 1960s, explicit reference to race slipped from national discourse, particularly in authoritative spaces like museums. Racial ideology persisted, however, framed sometimes as ethnicity, sometimes as culture, and most recently

through genetics. This essay explores how race has been constructed and critiqued, how museums large and small, elite and oppositional, national and local have grappled with transformations of race and identity and their own institutional legacies.

Natural History Museums: Anthropology Grapples with Race

Historically, museums and other exhibitionary spaces have been crucial agents in constructing race, both through scientific practices museums supported and in public exhibitions. Most familiar in this history are nineteenth-century presentations in natural history museums. Race was presented as a thing instantiated in the body, represented for the public through display of skulls, bones, brains, casts, photographs, and bronze busts, as well as graphs and charts that offered a quantitative, statistical dimension and authority to the otherwise visual logic of physical anthropology (Dias, 1998). In the United States, as early as the 1840s widely read treatises purported to demonstrate clear evidence of distinct racial types, grounded primarily in supposed differences in cranial capacity. By the end of the nineteenth century these claims were based on a wide, and constantly proliferating, range of bodily characteristics, measurements and indices, although the skull remained a key locus of racial difference well into the twentieth century. Skin color and geography, the other key factors in racial classifications, were so deeply assumed as evidence for racial types that they more frequently appear as initial organizing principles than as objects of investigation. Racial science is profoundly tautological, rooted in a common sense visual logic that races exist. From Carl Linneaus and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in the eighteenth century and on into the twentieth century, investigations were not devised to determine whether or not human variation could be sensibly resolved into biologically meaningful categories, but rather to observe, measure and describe types already assumed to exist. This is evident even today in much of the genetic analysis that purports to find evidence of racial groups (Morton, 1839; Nott & Gliddon, 1854; Stocking, 1968; Gould, 1996; Smedley, 1993; Stanton, 1960; Stepan, 1982; Duster, 2005; Serre & Pääbo, 2004).

The other common nineteenth century approach to race was ethnological—the ubiquitous "life group" (Jacknis, 1985; Penny, 2002; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1991; Haraway, 1989). In these displays, mounted first in

European exhibitions and later adopted by American museums, costumed mannequins were posed with artifacts to recreate a scene from daily life, not unlike zoological habitat groups or period rooms in art museums (Jacknis, 1985, pp. 81-82). In the United States, Franz Boas advocated life groups over vitrines full of functionally similar artifacts to highlight the particularity of cultures, the way that objects and practices were given meaning by their context, not their apparent functional and evolutionary commonality. As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has argued, ethnological life groups participated in a long imperial legacy of treating non-European people as object and spectacle. Mannequins in natural history museums were the museological counterpart to indigenous people paraded through European capitals, living colonial subjects displayed at World Fairs, and wax figures displayed in "galleries of nations" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1991, pp. 397-416). Though occasionally used as a method for a nation to explore its own "folklife" and create an "imagined community" of citizens—Arthur Hazelius installed snapshots of Swedish life in wax tableaus at the Museum of Scandinavian Ethnography and in "living style" at Skansen, his open-air museum—most often such ethnological displays were a vehicle for Europeans and Euro-Americans to reinforce a racial ideology that privileged European and American societies and whiteness, over the more "primitive" people who were the object of anthropology[1] (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1991, p. 401; Bennett, 1995; Andersen 1991; Macdonald, 1998, 2003; Torgovnick, 1990; Penny, 2002).

Natural history museums continued to portray the bodies and cultures of anthropology's "Other" well into the twentieth century, despite increasing debate within and outside the discipline and the museum about how to study and represent race (Barkan, 1992). In 1933, the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago mounted *Races of Mankind*, an exhibit devoted to portraying the full range of human variety in terms of static racial types, depicted via 101 life-size bronze sculptures by artist Malvina Hoffman (Teslow, 1998) (Figure 1). The exhibition, like earlier national galleries and anatomical displays, insisted on the visual logic of race. The evocative bronze figures, carefully individuated, were posed as if captured in a moment of life and presented with virtually no text save a short descriptive title, a small map, and notations as to racial "stock," implying that race was both plainly evident and in need of a rigorous science that could elucidate it (Bennett, 1998a, 1998b; Dias, 1998; Teslow, 1998).

By the 1950s an exhibit like *Races of Mankind* was no longer tenable in natural history museums.[2] The horrors of Nazi racial policies, ex-

Figure 1. View of the *Races of Mankind* hall, Field Museum of Natural History, 1933. On the right are Senegalese, Shilluk, and Ituri figures, all African peoples. On the left are Australian, Semang, Solomon Islander, and Hawaiian figures, all Pacific Islanders. © The Field Museum, #CSA77747.

panding post-colonial movements abroad, civil rights agitation at home, and the growing consensus that population genetics offered a more accurate and less typological picture of evolution and biological variation, including human diversity, all combined to make race and racial classifications increasingly problematic. In the decades following WWII, more and more anthropologists, biologists, psychologists, sociologists and other scientists either abandoned the study of overtly racialized subjects altogether, embracing Ashley Montagu's argument that race was "man's most dangerous myth," or they retreated to framing their questions in ways that did not invoke race. A significant, though increasingly marginalized, minority never fully embraced the growing perception of race as a social construction and persisted in arguing for the biological, evolutionary reality of race. The shifting consensus about the status of race as a legitimate field of natural science, combined with its increasing volatility as a social, political and economic issue in the United States and around the world, meant the old racial logic appeared on the margins in museums, if at all. In 1961, anthropologists at the American Museum of Natural History in New York mounted *Biology of Man*, an exhibit focused on human evolution, physiology, growth, and development, featuring elaborately magnified illustrations of organ systems ("Supplement," n.d.). But the old

typological racial scheme hadn't completely disappeared. In addition to giant nerve cells and three-dimensional models of reproductive organs, *Biology of Man* included one panel depicting two-dimensional, full color, life-size illustrations of the three primary races—caucasoid, negroid, and mongoloid. More covert racializing persisted as well in "Norman" and "Norma," life-size white plaster composite figures, modeled on European American men and women, meant to illustrate average body types. The conflation of healthy development, whiteness and Americanness was captured in *Time* magazine's estimation of Norma: "how the average girl looks with her clothes off" ("Supplement," n.d.; "The Shape," 1945). The American Museum's emphasis on evolution, physiology and development as the public face of what came to be more commonly called biological anthropology mirrored changes across the field.

By the 1960s, the old ethnological life groups and dioramas presented a dilemma for natural history museums as well. Beloved by the public and expensive to replace, many of them lingered for decades in museums all over Europe, Canada and the United States, leaving uncomfortable curators with displays that had become artifacts of outmoded anthropological and museological theory and practice (Jacknis, 2006). Whether museums resort to explanatory labels to ameliorate the effects of these problematic remnants of the past or remove them outright, the actions draw attention to the museum itself, its practices and its past, a stance Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has termed "performing museology" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2004). In replacing old dioramas, many natural history museums have avoided the objectifying, racializing effects of lifelike mannequins by eschewing representations of human beings altogether, a move that can create oddly soulless, de-humanized depictions of human cultures, or by replacing naturalistic mannequins with figures that represent human beings in a generic, patently artificial way.

The conundrum of how to ameliorate the objectifying "museum effect" associated with inanimate stand-ins for distant peoples has led museums back to living people (Alpers, 1998; Fabian, 1983). Framed now as collaboration and cultural exchange, natural history museums in recent decades have increasingly brought the subjects of their displays back into the museum, this time as consultants, authors, and occasionally as performers. In 1991, the Field Museum of Natural History hosted members of the Asmat, Dani and Sentani tribes of Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Deemed "The Ultimate Out-of-Towners" by the local newspaper, they had traveled to Chicago to participate in a brief exhibition, *The Asmat: Dynamics of Irian*, one

stop on a tour of the United States sponsored by the Asmat Progress and Development Foundation (Anderson, 1991; Hughes-Freeland, 1989). The men became part of the exhibit, sitting on a platform making artifacts in the grand central hall, flanked by a docent, and performing ritual dances decked out in traditional costume (except for penis gourds, which, in apparent deference to the sensibilities of Chicagoland and its tourists, were eschewed in favor of tight brown shorts.

Despite the willing participation of the Asmat, Dani and Sentani in the exhibition of their traditions, the effect remained the sort of "ethnographic present" that recent anthropology has vigorously rejected (Sanjek, 1991; Fabian, 1983; Clifford, 1988; Clifford and Marcus, 1986). The living people of Irian Jaya were not presented in their modern complexity but rather as exhibits of timeless primitivism. There was little sense of who these people were when they stopped performing for tourists, of their perspectives on their history as an anthropological object, nor the place of their traditions as they negotiated national politics, the global economy and cultural change.[3] Instead there was an echo, an unsavory whiff, of Buffalo Bill's Wild West show, the spectacle of a century earlier that promoted itself as employing "real Indians," a display of mutual exploitation in which Native Americans joined Bill Cody in creating the "white man's Indian," in exchange for a chance to make some money and avoid the grim life on reservations or in America's cities and towns (Berkhofer, 1979; Moses, 1999; Kasson, 2000).

Later exhibitions in natural history museums went further to reconceive their project, to implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, critique museum practice and avoid primitivizing and objectifying the people they presented by actively involving them in the construction and presentation of themselves and their past. A widely cited example of this was *Torres Straits Islanders: An Exhibition to Mark the Centenary of the 1898 Anthropological Expedition* at the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Herle, 2000). The goal was to critically review the expedition "and its legacies while presenting the strength and richness" of Islander culture, past and present. The narratives about Islander life and history exhibited and the objects, photographs, and recordings displayed, reflected the knowledge and wishes of the living Islanders. Voices and perspectives from Islanders past and present (including those of named individuals), anthropologists past and present, and colonials from 1898 were all represented. The Islanders' "stories," including anthropologists' methods of collecting them, their

partial and selectively told character, and the influence of missionaries and how local people responded to them, were conveyed in displays that put the enormous Torres Straits museum collections in a context of multiple knowledges, diverse interests, and complex social relations. Museum staff, in consultation with the Islanders, repositioned the artifacts in the exhibition as loci for mediating contacts and narratives between anthropologists, Islanders and museum visitors. This moved the Islanders to the center of attention, without framing them as spectacle.

The tribes themselves have recuperated their artifacts and history at local museums in British Columbia to emphasize "stories of revival, remembrance, and struggle" (Clifford, 1991). The U'mista Cultural Centre and the Kwagiulth Museum and Cultural Center, built in 1975, house artifacts once used in a banned potlatch ceremony. Confiscated by the Canadian government in 1921, turned over to the Victoria Memorial Museum and the Royal Ontario Museum, and sold to George Heye for his Museum of the American Indian, most of the potlatch masks and regalia have now been returned to a Kwakw*a*k*a*'wakw context of kinship, local ownership and ceremony[4] (Clifford, 1991, pp. 227-228; U'mista Cultural Society, 2006). At the Kwagiulth Museum, the objects are presented as "family and community memorabilia," with labels indicating what ceremonies they are used in, their tribal meaning, and which chiefs own them (Clifford, 1991, p. 229). At the U'mista Cultural Centre, curators have taken repatriated potlatch objects, additional Kwakw*a*k*a*'wakw artifacts, and the ethnological work of Franz Boas and other anthropologists, and framed them from their own standpoint. The native regional identity is reframed and reclaimed, repositioning themselves against the state and anthropology:

> Ever since the white people first came to our lands, we have been known as the Kwawkewlths by Indian Affairs or as the Kwakiutl by anthropologists. In fact, we are the Kwakw*a*k*a*'wakw, people who speak the same language, but who live in different places and have different names for our separate groups. (Clifford, 1991, p. 235).

James Clifford describes the U'mista Cultural Centre exhibit as "a message of hope and pride salvaged from tragedy," a very different sort of salvage ethnology that embeds the narrative of their identity and diversity within a story of ongoing struggle and adaptation. The Kwakw*a*k*a*'wakw museums are a form of resistance, replacing racialized national and anthropo-

logical constructions of "the Indian" with indigenous identities (Clifford, 1991, p. 240).

In the United States, the most recent advent of this sort of indigenous ethnological intervention is the controversial National Museum of the American Indian. Unlike most local, tribal museums in Canada and the United States, the NMAI is multi-tribal and multi-vocal. Run and curated by a majority of Native Americans, the exhibitions at the NMAI privilege native voices and indigenous perspectives, including sections turned over to community curators who were given free reign to select and interpret a set of events in their own histories (Berry, 2006). The museum is designed to challenge visitors' stereotypes and misconceptions about Native Americans, stressing diversity, resilience, and survivance among the multitude of American indigenous peoples. There is no single "Native" point of view and multiple tribes are represented in all areas, not only the exhibited objects and stories, but also in the museum's café. Despite being founded with George Heye's massive collection of more than 800,000 Native American artifacts from across the Americas, Director W. Richard West, Jr. was adamant that the museum's exhibitions not be object-centered, a deliberate rejection of traditional institutional anthropological practice (Phillips, 2006, p. 79; Jacknis, 2006). Continuing traditions and beliefs are stressed over extensive attention to the history of colonial oppression and its ongoing effects. According to West, the NMAI is "not retrospective. We live in the present and we look forward to the future" (Carpio, 2006, p. 623).

A number of scholars have criticized the museum for failing to acknowledge the extent and depth of colonial depredations against indigenous peoples and its effects, arguing that to truly change Americans' misconceptions about Indians and to show fully how impressive indigenous survival is, the museum must offer a more thorough account, from an indigenous perspective, of the violence, coercion and deception that they have survived (Carpio, 2006; Lonetree, 2006a, 2006b). Other critics, even those sympathetic with the museum's goal of deconstructing dominant histories and enduring stereotypes, have lamented missed opportunities to enlighten visitors on the variety, richness, and complexity of Native American history by giving fuller accounts of the histories of the many objects used to illustrate indigenous stories (Berry, 2006). The NMAI attempts on a national scale what tribal museums such as the U'mista Cultural Center have accomplished on a local level, but it struggles against

deeply ingrained assumptions about museums, particularly a museum positioned as an authoritative national resource. Nonetheless, by mobilizing their own voices and narratives, Native American museums provide a long-awaited institutional antidote to the "white man's Indian."

History Museums: A National Narrative?

If the realities of postwar America made race and human variation a fraught topic for natural history museums, it was a topic that history museums increasingly sought to tackle. Social activism and social history pushed museums to be more inclusive and more broadly representative, to address decades of exclusions, gaps and silences in a national narrative that had failed to address seriously America's complex, contested racial past and present. One of the most innovative, influential exhibitions to challenge history museums' blinkered collecting and display practices was *Mining the Museum*, curated by artist Fred Wilson at the Maryland Historical Society (MHS) in 1992. Scavenging the MHS collections, Wilson created juxtapositions that illuminated the way Maryland's history of slavery and its large African American population had been ignored or elided in favor of elite white culture. An ornate silver tea service surrounding a pair of plantation-era shackles was labeled simply "Metalwork, 1723-1880." A whipping post, retrieved from decades of storage, was positioned in front of Victorian drawing room chairs from the permanent collection, and the grouping labeled "Cabinetwork 1820-1860." Busts of luminaries such as Napoleon Bonaparte and Andrew Jackson were contrasted with empty pedestals for Maryland citizens Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass and Benjamin Banneker (Stein, 1993). Wilson's exhibitionary narrative offered a counter-history of African American life, while his museological meta-narrative exposed the power of museums both to conceal and to reveal those stories of the past.

Field to Factory, mounted at the National Museum of American History in 1987, was a landmark exhibition of social history. Curated by Spencer Crew, now Executive Director of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, the exhibition told the story of African American migration from the rural south to the industrial north prior to WWII (Crew, 1987). Designed to take the museum visitor on a path that mirrored the African American journey from depictions of life in the rural south, on-

ward to the journey north, and finally to life and work in the urban north, the exhibit was primarily concerned with conveying the nature of black life, the challenges African Americans faced, and the ways they resisted racism, adapted to change, and strove for a better life. A variety of objects (many collected expressly for the show because the Museum lacked artifacts of everyday life, especially African American life), lifelike wax figures, video, photographs, and audio were combined to illustrate the migrants' history and to illuminate the causes and effects of the migration. Spaces that African Americans inhabited on their journey, from a simple farm house in the south to second class accommodations on the train, to a beauty shop and a tenement apartment up north, were painstakingly recreated to convey tangibly what life was like for this broad segment of American society (Borchert, 1989, p. 227; Crew & Sims, 1998).

Visitors and reviewers remarked on a number of features that made *Field to Factory* stand out—the use of sound to help create a sense of place (including the sound of a washtub, birdsong, and blues music), the use of common objects and oral histories to tell a compelling story of ordinary Americans, and the way the exhibit successfully translated recent scholarship. But the feature most frequently heralded, one that was a harbinger of museological things to come, was the moment midway through the exhibit when visitors moving into the train station were forced to choose between two doors marked "Colored" and "White" (Heininger, 1988; Daniels, 1987; Borchert, 1989). It was the re-creation of that experience and the way it forced all visitors to reflect on life in segregated America that marks how differently Crew and exhibit designer James Sims approached their task. *Field to Factory* is an important moment in the history of museums and race, not only because it was one of the first significant exhibits devoted to African American history and lived experience at a major national museum, signaling the central place of such histories in American life, but also because the exhibit signals key shifts in museological practice that have dramatically changed the way museums communicate with the public. Chief among these changes are a movement away from traditional object-centered exhibitions and toward creating spaces that are more dialectical and dialogic, more interactive and self-directed, in which visitors have experiences and conversations, as well as movement toward much deeper and more visible involvement of a wide range of participants, particularly groups who are presented in exhibitions or who have a stake in the subject at hand (Crew & Sims, 1998; Heininger, 1988; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett,

2000a, 2000b; Bennett, 1998a; Clifford, 1997). Like critics of the National Museum of the American Indian, some critics of *Field to Factory*, particularly scholars, argued that racial violence was not given its due as a factor in the mass migration out of the Jim Crow South. Some scholars and museum professionals worried that more extensively addressing the nature and extent of racial terror would have overwhelmed the already complex story the exhibit was trying to tell; perhaps racial violence in America required an exhibition of its own or another venue (Heininger, 1988; Collier-Thomas, 1988).

A series of other exhibits and museums have subsequently taken on the task of addressing American racial oppression and violence, part of the proliferation of specialized and ethnic museums in recent decades. The Museum in Black (Los Angeles) and the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia, at Ferris State University (FSU) in Michigan, are both small museums devoted to documenting racist material culture and violence (Jim Crow Museum, 2006a). Run by Brian Breyé, the Museum in Black represents his lifelong commitment to collecting and displaying objects of African and African American history (Loukaitou-Sideris & Grodach 2004). The two-room storefront museum is stuffed with his eclectic collection of African material culture (arts, religious and ceremonial objects, farm implements, weapons, masks and costumes), remnants of American slavery (shackles and other implements of domination and control), and a room full of racist memorabilia of every variety (advertisements, dolls, household products, figurines), which is juxtaposed with information about African American leaders and inventors. The Museum in Black is intended as a site for local African Americans and the broad American public to encounter a full range of black history and to see racism and oppression alongside African and African American contributions, achievements and resilience.

As its name suggests, the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia has a more limited and more pointed agenda. Created and curated by FSU sociologist Jim Pilgrim, his "little room with a big purpose," traveling exhibits (*Hateful Things* and *THEM: Images of Separation*) and extensive website present Pilgrim's collection of more than 4,000 objects that littered Jim Crow America. These include household products like those featuring Aunt Jemima, minstrel show posters and sheet music, toys, such as a "jolly nigger" bank, and advertisements for establishments like the "Coon Chicken Inn" (Jim Crow Museum, 2006b). Like Breyé, Pilgrim's museum

is driven by his abhorrence of the objects his museum displays and a personal conviction that the racist history they illustrate and perpetuate desperately needs to be presented (Jim Crow Museum, 2006c).

A similar horror and compulsion propelled James Allen and John Littlefield to collect postcards of lynchings, finally presenting them in 2000 in *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America*[5] (Allen, 2000). It is hard to imagine a more graphic, compelling and disturbing exhibition of what those pallid terms "racial violence" mean. The photographic postcards, taken during and after lynchings, are repellent fragments of a past that mainstream historians and museums have too often chosen to forget. That most Americans could be shocked at the acts depicted and the existence of such souvenirs speaks to how thoroughly they had been erased from the collective memory. *Without Sanctuary* made it possible to have public conversations in classrooms, homes, and cultural institutions about whiteness and about racism. Those snapshots helped white Americans come to grips with the way racial terror and white supremacy have been part of normal, everyday life for America's white citizens, leaders and ordinary folk alike. In those postcards we see the grinning faces in the crowd: the men, women and children of all classes participating in the spectacle, the police chiefs, ministers and mayors who condoned and joined the violence.

Museums devoted to Asian American experience and history also have been active in remembering racism and ostracism. Both the Wing Luke Asian Museum in Seattle and the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) in Los Angeles have permanent exhibitions dedicated in whole or part to telling the history of Japanese incarceration during WWII.[6] *Camp Harmony D-4-44*, at the Wing Luke Asian Museum, features oral histories from local Japanese Americans as well as a replica of barracks at the Puyallup, Washington assembly center, complete with a barbed wire barrier, to convey the experience of incarceration (Wing Luke Asian Museum, 2006). Devoted to exploring 130 years of Japanese American history and life, the JANM has dedicated a number of exhibits to the wartime incarceration. Exhibits have featured photographs of the camps, correspondence from internees, reconstructed barracks, artwork treating wartime experiences, and explorations of the challenges Japanese Americans faced upon release from the camps (Loukaitou-Sideris & Grodach, 2004, p. 66; Japanese American National Museum, 2006). *America's Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese American Experience*, a temporary exhibition

mounted in 1994, coincided with 50-year commemorations of America's victory in WWII. It presented the history, politics and everyday experience of the camps through the voices and memorabilia of Japanese Americans. Both a pointed comment on the nature of the "good war" at home and a venue for Japanese Americans of all generations to remember and discuss a once shameful part of their past, the exhibit was a means for Japanese Americans to present to each other and to a broader American public a revised history of racism, resistance and patriotism (Yoo, 1996).

Like the National Museum of the American Indian, the JANM is committed to reframing Japanese immigrants and their descendants as a resilient, creative community that has made significant contributions to American society. They also are committed to highlighting the WWII incarcerations as a significant part of the difficult social, political and economic contexts that have shaped Asian American life. The Wing Luke Asian Museum and the JANM are much larger institutions than small, personally driven projects like the Museum in Black or the Jim Crow Museum, but they share the sense that their particular history and their communities need a specialized, dedicated space to most accurately and usefully convey their message to both their own group and a wider American audience. Like the National Museum of the American Indian, the Museum in Black, and the Jim Crow Museum, The Wing Luke Asian Museum and the Japanese American National Museum challenge stereotypes and dominant histories that have avoided or misrepresented varieties of American oppression. They do so by tackling head-on the histories of oppression and violence that have shaped not only life for African Americans and Japanese Americans but for all Americans.

The existence of small, personal exhibitionary projects, and to some extent the proliferation of "ethnic" museums, speaks to the reluctance of larger, better-funded and more visible institutions to present painful pasts. Even national museums devoted to previously marginalized populations have shied away from dealing extensively with difficult pasts, not wanting to become, as Amy Lonetree described the NMAI, "the Native American community's Holocaust museum" (Lonetree, 2006a, p. 59). The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC), which opened in 2004, is a prominent example of such an institution. Despite the fact that its signature artifact is a nineteenth-century cabin that was used as a holding pen by a Kentucky slave trader and that much of the exhibition space is devoted to presenting the history of slavery, and the efforts of slaves, free

blacks and abolitionists to subvert and escape that system, NURFC staff stress that the institution is not simply a museum of slavery. Indeed, following the trend toward emphasizing experience over objects, as seen in the United States Holocaust Museum and the Museum of Tolerance, the NURFC describes itself as a "museum of conscience" whose subject is freedom, a "celebration of courage, cooperation and perseverance." The Underground Railroad is "a lens through which to explore a range of freedom issues" that "offers lessons and reflections on the struggle for freedom in the past, in the present, and for the future" (NURFC, 2006a). The Freedom Center, like the NMAI and other ethnically-focused museums, sought to replace histories of victimization and brutal oppression with a narrative that stresses African American community, resilience, resistance, and self-liberation. In addition to the stories of slavery and abolition that highlight the efforts of "freedom seekers," the NURFC offers impressive interactive exhibits that push visitors to see American slavery and other forms of oppression as part of a much bigger story of human freedom struggles in a section that highlights both "freedom heroes," past and present, and ongoing varieties of "unfreedom," including not only slavery, but illiteracy, hunger, tyranny, racism, and genocide (NURFC, 2006b).

Positioning a museum about slavery and the Underground Railroad as a museum about freedom reflects the reluctance of major institutions to identify themselves with such a painful past. Lonnie Bunch, director of the new National Museum of African American History and Culture, has noted that slavery is a topic that Americans know little about and that makes them uncomfortable. A survey conducted in the 1990s found that most whites (8 out of 10) thought the history of slavery had little to do with them, nearly three quarters thought it was relevant only to African Americans, and even African Americans had little interest or were embarrassed by the topic (Bunch, 2005, p. 51). Given such attitudes among the American public, it is perhaps unsurprising that Freedom Center founders, Director Spencer Crew, and guest curator Fath Davis Ruffins, were reluctant to create an "African American Holocaust museum." But in its reluctance to address the history of racism and white supremacy in America more aggressively—as small museums and individual exhibits do—there is perhaps a lost opportunity to use its prominence to help all Americans confront an ugly past and understand its relation to the present we all share. There is a danger that amid the "Freedom Heroes," "Freedom Seekers," and "Freedom Conductors" the candid and open discussion of the

Figure 2. Kara Walker. *Camptown Ladies,* 1998. Cut paper and adhesive on wall. 9 x 50 feet. *Image courtesy Sikkema Jenkins & Co.*

"impact, legacy and contemporary meaning of slavery" and its critical relation to "the complex and troubling struggle to find racial equality" that Lonnie Bunch has called for will not be the principal message visitors take away from the Freedom Center. The National Museum of African American History and Culture is another opportunity to tell these hard tales on a national scale.

Art Museums: Reconfiguring Race

Like anthropology and history, art history was riven in the late twentieth century by a crisis of identity and method. The prevailing ethos of connoisseurship that focused on style, quality, and attribution was challenged by scholars, artists, and communities who sought to bring new methods and questions to bear on a wider range of artists and creative productions. Museums, devoted to the art historical canon of masterpieces by "dead white men," were challenged to open their doors to artwork by women, people of color, and other creative artists who had conventionally been excluded from the halls of such museums. They were challenged to mount exhibitions and installations that reflected new critical approaches more interested in race, class, gender, and empire than in connoisseurship and formalism. Major art museums now commonly exhibit contemporary artists whose work brings issues of race directly to the forefront, such as Kara Walker, whose work vividly re-appropriates stereotypically racist Victorian imagery to interrogate slavery, race and gender (Figure 2).

Kehinde Wiley brings poor African American men into the main-

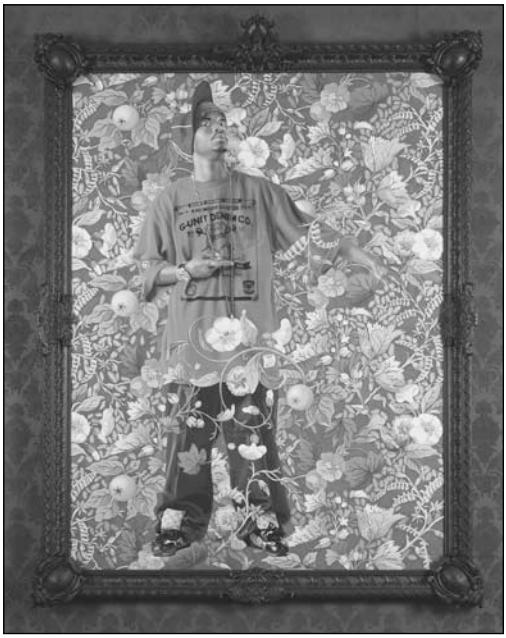

Figure 3. Kehinde Wiley. *Portrait of a Venetian Ambassador, Aged 59, II*, 2006. Oil on canvas. 8 x 6 feet (2.4 x 1.8 m) canvas. Courtesy of Roberts & Tilton, Los Angeles. Based on *Portrait of a Venetian Ambassador, Aged 59,* unknown Italian artist, possibly School of Verona, ca. 1592–1605. Exhibited in *Kehinde Wiley: Columbus*, Columbus Museum of Art, 2006.

stream art museum where they rarely have been welcome as guests, artists, or subjects, injecting a hip-hop aesthetic into the hushed spaces of high art. Kehinde Wiley challenges museums, visitors, and art patrons to reflect on those exclusions and the power relations behind them. His paintings combine the conventions of Baroque and Rococo portraiture with the aesthetics of hip-hop and contemporary black masculinity, putting himself and his African American models in positions that were once the exclusive province of wealthy white patrons and their privileged painters. He draws parallels between the colorful, accessorized hip-hop aesthetic and the elaborate ornamentation of the Baroque and Rococo and the commerce in both (San Francisco Art Institute, 2006). Wiley mimics canonical paintings, replacing the original sitter with a young, hip, African American man posed precisely in the place of St. John the Baptist or a Venetian ambassador, reproduced in vivid, photorealistic style at heroic scale (Figure 3). For *Kehinde Wiley: Columbus*, Wiley recruited models from a neighborhood near the Columbus Museum of Art. The men were photographed in their own clothing mimicking the gestures and stances from six portraits Wiley selected from the museum's collection, transforming "a Renaissance nobleman in crimson robes" into "a young rapper garbed in a G-Unit T-shirt" and "a pallid Saint Sebastian" into "a black martyr whose wounds

are replaced by tattoos chronicling the drama of his youth." (*Kehinde Wiley: Columbus* 2006, p. 6). The paintings were installed in a wallpapered salon that echoed the period room in which the Museum's Old Masters are hung. Like hip-hop, Wiley's work traffics in appropriation, sampling other artists' creative products to combine them into something new, something of his own. Wiley's appropriation of baroque style and portraiture is an aesthetic, conceptual and political intervention, an extension of the prestige of high art to his African American subjects and to himself.

For the Columbus Museum, the show was at once an embrace of contemporary art, a black artist and his black subjects, and a meta-museological critique, a performance of their critical stance with respect to their own history and complicity in the art historical canon Wiley critiques. A skeptic might contend that neither Wiley nor the Columbus Museum of Art is as transgressive and oppositional as they would have us believe. The Museum is willing to broaden the category of high art to include an African American artist whose work critiques their traditions, but only one who has been validated by formal training and major gallery representation. (Wiley has a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and an MFA from Yale and is represented by galleries in Los Angeles and New York. His paintings sell in the elite art market for more than $30,000 [*Kehinde Wiley: Columbus 2006*, p. 35; "Art Sales," 2007]). Wiley and the Museum traffic in these images for multiple ends, some idealistic, some self-serving. Paul Gilroy has warned that such "hyper visible" images of black bodies can wittingly or unwittingly participate in a consumer culture in which "racialized appearances have become invested with another magic." They can be used to supply "a signature of corporate multiculturalism in which some degree of visible difference from an implicit white norm may be highly prized as a sign of timeliness, vitality, inclusivity, and global reach" (Gilroy, 2000, pp. 21–23). Wiley's heroic subjects are anonymous, subsumed in the original titles of the European masters. A video documenting Wiley's search for models gave them voice outside the salon, but although they were compensated for their modeling, the hopes some of them express that these paintings will help them launch their own artistic and musical careers are likely to be unrealized. Wiley and the Museum would like us to believe that the paintings and the exhibition help bring usually estranged communities together, that they dignify and empower a frequently maligned population, but a cynic might worry that both the Museum and Wiley are primarily capitalizing on a thriving commerce in "blackness." Wiley cannot be expected to take responsibility for

Figure 4. Photographs of an African American woman exhibited at the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1900. W. E. B. DuBois, *Types of American Negroes* (1900), volume 2, number 195 (left) and 196 (right). Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Reproduction numbers LC-USZ62-124789 (left) and LC-USZ62-124790 (right).

the lives of his models, but it does not seem unreasonable to expect that his subjects might be more fully acknowledged as living individuals, that their particularity might extend beyond their representation in the painting to acknowledgement in the gallery and the catalogue of who these men are. We might well ask where the exploitation of black bodies ends and empowerment begins.

Kip Fulbeck contends with a different representational legacy. His Hapa Project recalls the work of W. E. B. DuBois a century ago in contesting the racializing visual logic of typological photographs (Smith, 1999). Faced with a racial science and a social context that pigeon-holed people of color as inferior and other, both DuBois and now Fulbeck, asked the same question: What am I? DuBois famously articulated the double-consciousness of the African American psyche, the tension fueled by a dual identity as black and as American—identities that the prevailing white supremacist ideology framed as incompatible—and the struggles of blacks to resolve that contradiction (DuBois, 1903/1999). In 1900, DuBois created his own portraits of African Americans and turned them to his own purposes (Figure 4). For DuBois, the photographs were a tool to demonstrate that African

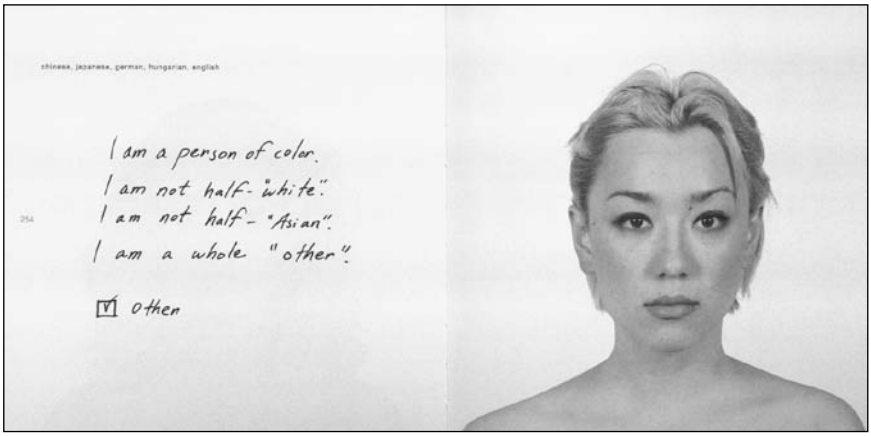

Figure 5. Woman who identified herself as Chinese, Japanese, German, Hungarian, and English. Photo from *Part Asian, 100% Hapa: Portraits by Kip Fulbeck* (2006) by Kip Fulbeck. *Courtesy of Chronicle Books LLC, San Francisco.*

Americans were successful, respectable, capable American citizens and that there was no contradiction between being black and being American, contrary to so much popular rhetoric and science (Smith, 1999). A century later, Kip Fulbeck, whose heritage is Chinese, Irish and English, grew up faced with the persistent effects of a racial ideology in which Americans expected people they encountered to fit neatly into preconceived ideas about who is white, black, Asian, or Latino. Like many people of mixed heritage, he was continually confronted by strangers, teachers, and even his own family with demands that he find an appropriate niche to explain how he fit into the racial landscape. Fulbeck uses the clinical photographic style employed by racial scientists, criminologists, and the state to grapple with the complexities of mixed-race heritage. Like DuBois, he turns the old racializing discourse and its visual tools to other purposes, powerfully subverting racial and ethnic typology and hierarchy.

Kip Fulbeck: Part Asian, 100% Hapa presents a selection of 80 portraits from Fulbeck's Hapa Project. Exhibited at the Japanese American National Museum in 2006, the show displayed men, women and children of widely varied appearance, ethnicity and experience, unified by a "hapa" identity that embraces variety and mixed heritage. Hapa, originally part of the Hawaiian term "hapa haole" for Asian-white mixes, now extends to all people of Asian ancestry. Mimicking typological photographs, Fulbeck documented his volunteer subjects without clothing or any other adorn-

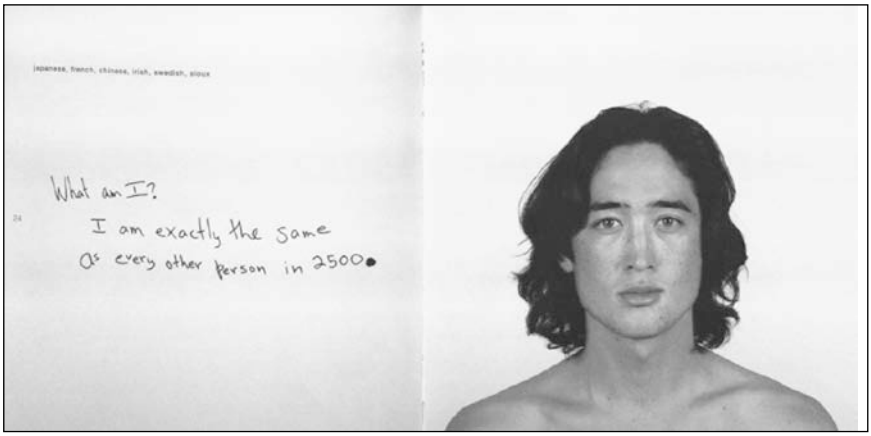

Figure 6. Photo from *Part Asian, 100% Hapa: Portraits by Kip Fulbeck* (2006) by Kip Fulbeck. *Courtesy of Chronicle Books LLC, San Francisco.*

ment, from the collarbone up, gazing directly into the camera, Paired with each color photo is a self-designated list of ethnic and racial groups describing their heritage and a hand-written response to the question, "What are you?" (Japanese American National Museum, 2006b). The power of Fulbeck's project is rooted in the rich variety of bodies and responses he has compiled. His Hapa photos stress the individual. Even without names or other biographical data, the ethnic origins described are so varied, visually the people are so varied, and the responses to "What are you?" are so expressive of individual personalities and perspectives, that each photo and the collection as a whole cannot be seen as defining a racial or ethnic group in traditional, narrowly racializing, objectifying terms. The racial/ethnic mixes enumerated go far beyond simple Asian-white, Asian-black or Asian-Latino binaries. One young woman identified herself as Thai, Indian, Scottish and Lithuanian. The man pictured on the cover of Fulbeck's book, identified himself as Japanese, French, Chinese, Irish, Swedish and Sioux (Figure 6). The range of responses Fulbeck's question elicited reflects the complexity of racial and ethnic identity, particularly for a "mixed" population:

> "I have been Persian, Mexican, Assyrian, Mestiza & the girl with a good tan."
>
> "When I'm asked about my race, I say that I am Black & Thai. I am not one or the other. I am both, and I shouldn't have to choose."

> "Mixed race, hapa, hapa haole, Korean, Korean American, Asian, Asian American, Eurasian, half Asian, half white."
>
> "I'm a mixed breed multiculti cross referenced bilingual bicoastal polymorphous smart talkin' brainiac maniac hapa culture vulture. I'm a New Yorker. I am the Phoenix with no name no home flying the compass points. I am Kate."
>
> "I am my Nisei mom's obsession to prove democracy's eventual triumph. I am the privilege of freedom—a white man walking away from whiteness. I am World War II. After Internment, my mom moved to Chicago where she met my WWII veteran dad. I am the world opening up. I am my parents defying war's prejudice & confusion by making babies to love."
>
> "What am I? Shouldn't you be asking my name first?"
>
> (Fulbeck, 2006, pp. 198, 244, 110, 104, 98, 152)

Fulbeck's project brilliantly subverts the visual, documentary logic of racial type photos in which the depicted individual was stripped of any identity or meaning beyond his or her ability to illustrate group characteristics. The Hapa Project belies the notion that race is plainly written on the body, an elemental identity readily discernable to all who look. Fulbeck, and many who volunteered to be photographed, view the recuperation of "Hapa," which had been a derogatory term, as a welcome group identity for people who had not had a unifying identity they wanted to embrace, a succinct answer to a nagging question, an answer that comes from them, not from outside. As Fulbeck says, "It's a powerful thing to actually define who you are" (Discover Nikkei, 2006).

Science Museums: Science Against Racism

At the Science Museum of Minnesota, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) is taking on the broader question that lurks behind and erupts throughout all the exhibits discussed here: "What is race, really?" (Science Museum of Minnesota, 2006). In collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota, the new exhibit, *RACE: Are We So Different?*™ is part of a broader American Anthropological Association project to intervene in American racial discourse and to offer "an integrated, comprehensive and learner-focused, interactive educational program on *Understanding Race and Human Variation*," which includes not only this traveling exhibition but also a website and educational materials (AAA, 2006). After decades of

absence from public discussion of race and racism, anthropologists, with funding from the National Science Foundation and the Ford Foundation and under the disciplinary structure of their national association, are making a concerted effort to reclaim a voice and a place of authority in these debates.

Alarmed by the resurgence of race or its proxies in medicine, pharmacology, and especially human genetics in the 1990s, many anthropologists perceived a need to craft an alternative expert, scientific discourse to counter persistent essentialized, deterministic, and racialized frameworks for understanding human variation (Mukhopadhyay & Moses, 1997; Harrison, 1999). Race is a topic anthropologists, especially cultural anthropologists, had largely abandoned in recent decades as a rejected, outmoded concept, one associated with a shameful disciplinary past.[7] As anguished as debates over fieldwork, ethnography and the authority of cultural anthropology have been, the participation of anthropologists in racial science—indeed the disciplinary foundations in that science—has been even more difficult for anthropologists to come to terms with. Anthropologists vigorously debated race from the discipline's earliest years in the late nineteenth century well into the 1960s, with a number of prominent voices disavowing essentialist, typological notions following WWII. Although race continued to be a vital national concern and a topic more and more scholars confronted, anthropologists, especially cultural anthropologists, turned inward, consumed with reorienting their discipline. *Understanding Race and Human Variation* signals their re-entry into the fray, a highly visible repudiation and rebuttal of the sorts of racial science and concepts of race once closely associated with anthropology.[8] Locating the exhibition in a science museum reinforces the perception that the AAA is countering the claims of physicians, biologists and geneticists—and the folk conception of race as biologically, scientifically grounded—with equally scientific arguments and evidence.

RACE: Are We So Different?™ uses an ambitious, three-pronged approach to address the complexities of race, past and present.[9] One section of the exhibit is devoted to the science of human variation, with an emphasis on clines and populations genetics—not types—as the best method for explaining the extent and patterns of human diversity, how this undermines commonly held notions of race, and what, if any, biological significance might attach to variation among humans. Topics include human migration out of Africa, simulations of gene flow, the nature of skin tone

and variation, and the complexities of racial classification, including selections from Kip Fulbeck's Hapa Project. A second section is devoted to looking at race as a very real sociological entity, with social, political and economic effects. The place of race in everyday life explores housing, wealth disparities, appropriation of Native American land, health and medicine (including the recent controversy over BiDil, the first drug approved for a racial group), education and Affirmative Action, and the census. The third section, history, is placed at the center of the 5,000 square foot exhibition, intended to educate visitors about where common ideas about race come from. The four History Stations include "Creating Race," "Human (Mis)measure," "Separate and Unequal," and "The Invention of Whiteness". The exhibit marshals a wide variety of current museological techniques to engage visitors including recreated living spaces, audio and video, photographs and maps, a space for conversation, and the interactive digital tools that are the hallmark of science museums.

The exhibition is intended to convey two broad messages. First, race, as historically and culturally constructed, is not a conceptual category that accurately describes or explains naturally occurring human variation: Race is not real. Second, as a social construct that shapes how people live, race is very real. These apparently contradictory messages are intended to address the two key features of popular notions of race: that it is rooted in essential biological features and processes and that everyday experiences provide evidence of this. Or as Vivian Ota Wang, of the National Human Genome Research Institute, put it, "You may tell people that race isn't real and doesn't matter, but they can't catch a cab. So unless we take that into account it makes us sound crazy" (Weiss, 2005).

Anthropologists want to acknowledge the complex role and toll of race in everyday life. They feel an obligation not just to counter recent deterministic, racializing science, but, as experts on the complexities of culture, to address issues of racism and social injustice. In an influential issue of the *American Anthropologist* devoted to race, Faye Harrison urged her colleagues to "interrogate and rethink race" and to develop "strategies for intervening more effectively in the 'culture of racism.'" She argues that anthropologists need to teach people "how to unlearn old lifeways in order to learn—and collaboratively create—a new culture for multiracial democracy" (Harrison 1999, p. 612).

The exhibit asks "Are We So Different?" Of course, the answer is supposed to be "No." Echoing Edward Steichen's *Family of Man*, the answer to

the AAA's overarching question is that we're really all the same. Except this time, instead of invoking a common "human nature," anthropologists invoke genetics to argue that all human beings are the product of evolution and continuous mixing, a commonality reflected in a genome that is overwhelmingly similar wherever one looks at living people. Presented convincingly, this is a powerful argument against a key element of American racial logic. But there is a danger in this neo-humanism, in elevating sameness at the expense of diversity. Asking "Are We So Different?" can be interpreted as denigrating difference, particularly blackness, and taken to an extreme, might suggest that the best way to eliminate racism and inequality is mixing to the point that all differences of appearance and behavior disappear. The more common trend of late is not the invocation of humanism and sameness, but the embrace of multiculturalism and diversity, including the rejection of rigid categories and dichotomies in favor of a proliferation of identities. For people who reject race as a biological category but embrace diversity, invoking sameness, or its cousin colorblindness, risks erasing differences and identities that provide meaning and enable resistance. The AAA exhibition must attempt to convince visitors that humans are fundamentally the same, without denigrating diversity, and promote diversity without reinforcing essentialist racialism (Harrison, 1999, pp. 618-619). Woven throughout the exhibition, even the project title and logo convey both messages: the message of sameness in the trademarked phrase "Are We So Different?" and the message of multiculturalism in mosaic faces (Figure 7).

Conclusion

The United States still struggles with the problems W. E. B. DuBois agonized over. To paraphrase his famous formulation, the problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of the twentieth—the color line (DuBois, 1903/1999). We still struggle with race and identity, with the relation between and unity and diversity, between some supposed essential, transcendent state (race? ethnicity?) and the imagined community of national identity and citizenship.

For most of American history, the problem of the color line was interpreted as the problem of color. Only recently has whiteness become a problem too. Part of the struggle in the last half of the twentieth cen-

tury has been to see and show how racialization has constructed whiteness, as well as color, how whiteness and non-whiteness are inextricably joined, co-created, interdependent, and that ethnic and racial formations have operated along a continuum in which various ethnics and racialized groups strove to move into the white class (or closer to it) and away from the black class. Simultaneously, scholars, theorists, activists and ordinary people have sought to value all races and ethnicities (e.g. Black Power, multiculturalism, mixed-race identities), and to move away from a black/white binary and the idea that whitening was necessary to gain access to wealth, power, and justice.

Some commentators are skeptical that Americans will really be willing or able to abandon essentializing racial discourse. Artist Kara Walker has argued that the obsession with race in the United States is a form of identity. "I think really the whole problem with racism and its continuing legacy in this country is that we simply love it. Who would we be without the 'struggle'?" (Walker Art Center, 2006). Literary theorist Walter Benn Michaels is also skeptical, disturbed by the emphasis on embracing diversity and racial or ethnic identities as valuable social constructions. He argues that "our enthusiasm for racial identity has been utterly undiminished by scientific skepticism about whether there is any such thing." Faced with the fallacy of biological race, his students "just stop talking about black and white and Asian races and start talking about black and European and Asian cultures instead." Benn Michaels worries that because "We love race, and we love the identities to which it has given birth," our society has turned away from a difference that is unpleasant and hard to change—economic inequality—and toward physical and cultural differences that can be re-framed as a positive good for society (Benn Michaels, 2006, pp. 5-7).

Museums have been and continue to be a site where these thorny issues are contested and identities constructed. As the large literature on the history of museums and exhibitions has shown, exhibits do not simply create and convey approved knowledge. They have been a technology through which modernity, with all its contradictions, is constituted and sites for waging political, social and cultural battles (Macdonald, 1998, p. 19). Tony Bennett has described the way museums have provided a "script" for a new social order, creating exhibitions that were "legible" for the masses as part of a project to create self-governing, self-directed liberal citizens (Bennett, 1998b, pp. 30-31). Indeed, this is a rationale driving anthropologists' efforts to re-enter museums and debates about race. Ac-

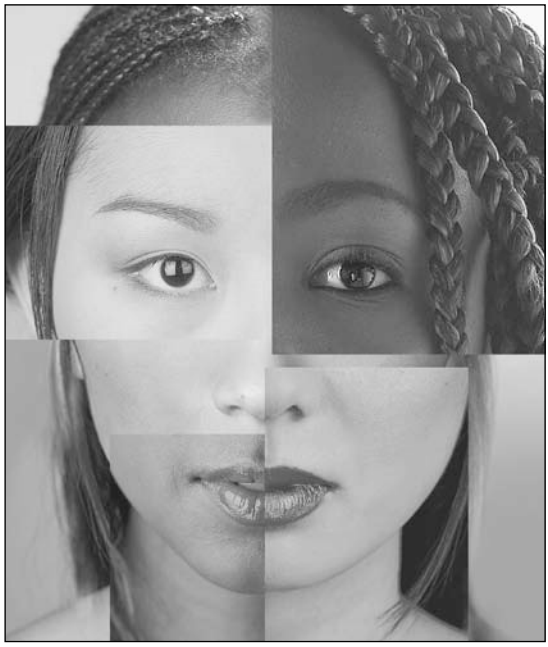

Figure 7. *RACE: Are We So Different?,* an exhibit by the American Anthropological Association that opened at the Science Museum of Minnesota in January 2007. *Photo courtesy of the Science Museum of Minnesota.*

cording to Faye Harrison, "Anthropologists have a special responsibility to help form and mobilize a critical consciousness that can challenge both government and citizens to fulfill the promise of democratic justice." But others, like Paul Gilroy, remain skeptical that "raciology" can be "readily re-signified or de-signified." He worries that it won't be so easy, even with all the authority of museological spaces and academic disciplines, to "re-articulate" the "dangerous meanings" of race into "benign democratic forms" (Gilroy, 2000, p. 12).

Certainly the burden of the past in natural history, history and art museums is heavy. Public expectations and the connotations still associated with museum spaces and display practices inflect and restrict what is possible. Major national museums have a hard time tackling controversial topics (as the Enola Gay uproar attests). Exhibitions that have been successful with difficult topics have tended to frame their claims through some form of local or personal authority (artistic visions, individualized assertions about race, narratives authored by groups about themselves). American politics and society seem to require separate spaces for racialized topics, spaces separate from institutions that lay claim to a national voice—not only local museums, but also the National Museum of the

American Indian, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. Americans don't seem ready to fully embrace populations with the most painful pasts as part of a national narrative, much less a national narrative that acknowledges the central role of racism in American history and life. Tony Bennett has contended that museums need to find ways to deal with their own troubled legacies and to find new ways to embrace not only alternative knowledges, but also new social relations among curators, communities, visitors, and the elements of an exhibition that create a museum environment characterized by a "a less hierarchical exchange of perspectives." It remains an open question whether museums will truly be able to create a "conversable civic space" that can reconfigure American racial discourse (Bennett, 1998a, p. 370). But surely they must try.

Notes

1. Glenn Penny argues that this was not the case for ethnological museum in nineteenth century Germany.
2. *Races of Mankind* finally was dismantled in 1968, following increasingly vocal criticism within and without the museum. A number of the sculptures remain on view, scattered around the museum, unattached to any exhibit, their anthropological merit disavowed in wall plaques mounted nearby.
3. I attended one the performances with a friend who had traveled to New Guinea and stayed with the Dani a few years earlier. He brought along photographs taken during his visit and discovered to their mutual delight that a number of the people in his snapshots were friends and relatives of men participating in the Chicago exhibition. That interaction was a far cry from those encouraged and facilitated by the Field Museum presentation. Jon Anderson's reportage on the Asmat tour of Chicago, despite it's condescending tone, also provided greater insight into the contemporary lives of indigenous Indonesians than did the museum.
4. The Royal Ontario Museum did not return their portion of the potlatch collection until 1988. Items sold to Heye eventually became property of the Smithsonian, only some of which had been repatriated to the Kwagiulth by 2001. Heye's extensive collection is the foundation for the National Museum of the American Indian. See Jacknis 2006.

5. The exhibition was presented first in New York at the Roth Horowitz Gallery (Jan. 13-Feb. 12, 2000), then at the New York Historical Society (Mar.14-Oct.1, 2000), The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh (Sept. 22, 2001-Jan. 2, 2002), and the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta (May 1-Dec. 31, 2002).
6. The National Museum of American History also mounted an exhibition on Japanese American incarceration. In 1987, to coincide with the bicentennial anniversary of the U.S. Constitution, the museum opened *A More Perfect Union: Japanese Americans and The United States Constitution*. In 1994 it became a traveling exhibit, and as of 2001 it continues as an online exhibition. See: http://americanhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/index.html.
7. The AAA statement about the race project, *Understanding Race and Human Variation*, notes that the Association "has addressed issues of race since the 1940s" before going on to highlight the 1998 Statement on Race and their recent participation in revising federal census categories. The idea that anthropologists had nothing to do with race until the 1940s, when some began to vociferously and publicly disavow essentialist concepts, is emblematic of the extent to which anthropologists are still estranged from and ashamed of their own disciplinary past.
8. The trademarked exhibition title and graphics suggest not only the material and commercial realities of the museum business, but also anthropologists' claim to the arguments presented in the exhibition as their intellectual property.
9. A very similar exhibition that takes up many of the same themes and can be seen as a precursor to the AAA exhibition is *All of Us Are Related, Each of Us Is Unique,* currently available on the web and at Syracuse University. The exhibition is a translated version of *Tous Parents, Tous Différents*, the work of Ninian Hubert van Blyenburgh, a Swiss biological anthropologist. Originally installed in 1992 at the Musée de l'Homme, it has traveled around Europe and the United States, as well as Canada, Australia and Hong Kong.

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