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"Look, a [picture]!": Visuality, race, and what we do not see

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that understanding vision and visuality as associated but distinct terms has significant implications for the ways in which we engage with racial constructions of identity. Expanding the ways in which we visualize race beyond simply the visual offers us a more comprehensive approach to understanding the construction of and response to race in the twenty-first-century United States. This article moves from theoretical implications of non-visual visualizations like tactile visuality and audial visuality through photographs taken by blind photographers to ask how race and racial identity are implicated in conversations about both vision and visuality.

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> Photography revolutionized perception, making the invisible visible. But as it enlarged the visual world, bringing new things into sight, it also demonstrated how much ordinarily remains imperceptible. [. . .] The exposure photography proffers is the recognition of a world paradoxically visible in its invisibility. Photography brushes against the unseen, and photographs bring us to the edge of sight. —Shawn Michelle Smith[1]

Vision and visuality are associated but distinct terms: vision refers to the way that light is optically and neurologically processed through eyesight, while visuality refers to a process of imagination and invention and, therefore, is in the province of rhetoric. Whereas vision is physiological, visuality orders and narrates "the chaotic events of modern life in intelligible, visualized fashion."[2] Vision is about what is processed via the eyes; visuality is the process of piecing together the relationships between events in the world. Visibility, as a third term, vacillates between vision and visuality, referring either to what can be seen via vision or to what can be visualized. Visibility is about the frame of the image and about possibility: whether or not something, or someone, can be seen or imagined in relationship to others. Nicholas Mirzoeff claims that visuality, a term that was coined by Thomas Carlyle in the mid-nineteenth century to refer to "the visualization of history," is a practice that "must be imagined, rather than perceptual, because what is being visualized is too substantial for any one person to see and is created from information, images, and ideas."[3] The rhetorical implications of these distinctions are significant as the continued confluence of vision and visuality encourage an anemic visuality that disregards other sensational modes of engagement that limit the rhetorical resources for invention, judgment, and response.

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Vision, from a physiological and biological perspective, is clearly the dominant mode of our engagement with the world, at least in Western modes of experience. As Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen note in *Reading Images*,

> Seeing has, in our culture, become synonymous with understanding. We "look" at a problem. We "see" the point. We adopt a "viewpoint." We "focus" on an issue. We "see things in perspective." The world "as we see it" (rather than "as we know it," and certainly not "as we hear it" or "as we feel it") has become the measure of what is "real" and "true."[4]

We equate seeing with knowing and understanding, ignoring the contributions of our other senses. In this article, I explore the possibility of utilizing senses like hearing and touch for the practices of visualization, arguing that these senses can and should contribute not just to understanding, but also to visualizing and visuality. Visibilities and invisibilities have significant rhetorical applications and implications. Jordynn Jack argues that "images and their descriptions partake of and produce ideological commitments, leading viewers to see things in accordance with scientific, political, and aesthetic values,"[5] from which it follows, as Gillian Rose claims, that images are a kind of discourse that "will make certain things visible in particular ways, and other things unseeable, for example, and subjects will be produced and act within that field of vision."[6] Thus, in many ways, pictures and vision produce the visualization of the social world even as they simultaneously are produced by it.

This interdependent relationship between vision and visuality is especially significant with regards to race. The connections between visuality and race are deep and longstanding: race is something that is often identified visually, and the categories and relationships of race are visualized in the sense that we imagine and construct the relationships of race to positionalities and interactions in the world. We often turn to visuals to place ourselves in relationship to the world, and images can draw us into recognition that may not otherwise be possible. Victoria Gallagher and Kenneth S. Zagacki claim that a "central function of pictorial rhetoric is the evocation of humanity by moving beyond abstract or idealistic categories to depictions of social experience that are recognizable to common audiences and that add moral import to the decisions or developments before them."[7] Extending this insight, I argue that a more robust understanding of visuality creates the space for a more complex recognition of race and the way in which race is imagined in twenty-first-century American experiences, including a productive engagement with issues brought into the public eye through events in Ferguson, Baltimore, and around the United States. By engaging with different forms of visuality, including those not so directly or singularly tied to vision, we are able to ground our visuality, to feel it, to hear it, and to imagine the ways in which it can be shaped and recreated, thus opening spaces for critical engagement with visualities of race that counter histories of essentialization and racism.

This article will explore the significance of racial essentialism, the discursive construction of both race and visuality, and the role of photography in addressing the tensions between visibility and invisibility. In order to engage the tensions between visibility and invisibility, I develop a framework based on a re-conceptualized and expanded notion of visuality to interpret and evaluate the work of two blind photographers and a blind photography collective. In order to expand the canon of visuality, I use an image by American photographer Pete Eckert to theorize the potential of an audial visuality and an image from the late Mexican photographer Gerardo Nigenda to theorize the entailments of a

tactile visuality. In conversation with an image by Victorine Floyd Fludd of the *Seeing With Photography Collective*, I argue that essentializing race as visual reduces the opportunities to engage with the visualization of race. An anemic visuality is one that does not have the rhetorical resources to adequately engage the problems posed to contemporary culture, including but not limited to the racial violence and discrimination in the United States. Instead of essentializing race as a visual given, I argue that we need to reconcile the theory and practices of visualization beyond vision, and engage with the other sensory implications for how we understand the socio-cultural constructions of racial identities.

Essentialism and race

Blackness has a long and complicated history with visuality. Frantz Fanon famously recalled a white child exclaiming, "Look! A Negro!"[8] For Fanon, this hail—and the many others just like it—institutes a "crushing objecthood" that, above all else, overdetermines identity and eliminates any possibility for mutual recognition.[9] In instances like this, vision works to block other ways of imagining human relationships. When we look at pictures ("Look! A Picture!" instead of "Look! A Negro!"), apprehending them only as visual, not *visualized*, we foreclose their larger context of visualization.[10] Hence, grasping what we see in the larger context of visualization (which includes the meaning of and relationships between things) opens up the way we interact with images, thereby illuminating the multi-faceted discursive construction of race.

All around the United States—from Ferguson to Madison, New York City to Detroit, Cleveland to Baltimore to McKinney and others—serious questions have been raised about the visual categorization of individuals and the split-second decisions based on them. In every one of these places, police officers have been taken to task for responding with excessive and, sometimes, deadly force against black men, women, and children. How might we make better sense of this deceptively simple correlation between raced vision and (biased) action? I want to suggest that, whatever else may be going on, an anemic visuality which reduces visualization to only visual cues is at play. Furthermore, with Fanon, I contend that expanding the ways in which we visualize race offers us a more comprehensive approach to understanding the construction of and response to race in the twenty-first-century United States. That is to say, a simply visual understanding of race limits the possibility for visuality and visibility.

Although race is visual, it is also related to imagination and visuality. Indeed, Osagie K. Obasogie astutely points out the ways in which blind people also experience race visually, claiming that "despite our tendency to treat vision as a series of neutral interactions with the world, social conditions and practices can produce the very ability to see human difference."[11] Through qualitative interviews, Obasogie demonstrates how blind people are taught about race and experience it visually, though not through vision. Obasogie concludes that "the very presumption that race is self-evident is part of a constitutive social process that produces a visual understanding of race at the same time it masks its own existence by making race seem obvious."[12] Indeed, what we see (or do not see) as race and the ways in which we visualize racial identifications are deeply implicated with one another. As Reva Siegel astutely notes, racial color*blindness* is a "rhetorical system [that] is used to characterize the social practices that enforce and perpetuate the

differential status of racial groups."[13] Colorblindness is an instance in which a physiological condition is made to function ideologically: not seeing race enables the very discrimination that colorblindness, at least in theory, purports to end. In response to the problematic ways of visualizing the black body, colorblindness has arisen as a significant discourse in the twenty-first-century United States. However, imagining a colorblind or a post-racial world by trying to argue race away, as Kelly Happe aptly notes, "fails to account for how it [race] operates in the contemporary moment *not* as an idea, propaganda, or false consciousness, but as an ideology."[14] Race is deeply implicated in issues of sight and insight, vision and visuality. When race is understood merely as something we see, it is easier to take race as a visible and, thus, biological fact. Although an anemic visuality does not offer the resources for visualizing the ways in which race is maintained and the ways that it adapts, a robust sensorial visuality does offer the rhetorical resources to recognize and respond to differently raced bodies.

Discursive vision and visuality

When we imagine vision and visuality as the same thing, we ignore the impact of visualization on our vision. While Cara A. Finnegan and Jiyeon Kang remind us that, at least within rhetorical conceptions of the public, "images and vision often are interpreted through a logic of subtle iconoclasm that makes visuality subservient to dominant linguistic/rational norms,"[15] I argue that visuality and practices of visualization need to be built upon more than vision. Visuality as conceptualized here is clearly an ideological process; the influence of ideology and visualization grasping ophthalmic and physiological vision is *itself* an ideological accomplishment. As Jonathan Crary argues, "Vision and its effects are always inseparable from the possibilities of an observing subject who is both the historical product *and* the site of certain practices, techniques, institutions, and procedures of subjectification."[16] Vision entails much more than just the objects we see; vision cannot be disentangled from our historical and cultural positionalities. While vision at its most fundamental level is the optical and neurological processing of light, the actual processing of images involves a plethora of influences about what gets seen and recognized, and what else is maybe within the realm of the seen, but never actually processed. For example, in the phenomenon of change blindness something that is theoretically visible in the line of sight remains blind to perception.[17] James Elkins uses refractive errors of eyesight as a simile when he makes the connection that "some people also *think* as if they were nearsighted or farsighted: they comprehend only the most immediate problems or the most distant abstractions, and they remain oblivious to the bulk of the world."[18] Elkins continues to explain that there are correlations in more serious ophthalmologic conditions as well. Glaucoma, where the eyes develop a narrowing tunnel of blackness, is analogous to people who become obsessive in their focus on something. Other conditions like cataracts or macular degeneration "create black spots directly where we want to look,"[19] similar to situations in which people avoid seeing certain objects, perhaps because they are too painful or because they require too much of us to see them.

These different types of blindness lead to striking discrepancies between black and white respondents when asked about the role of race in Ferguson, Missouri and the ensuing events there. A Pew Poll taken in the immediate aftermath of the Ferguson

shooting "found that overwhelming numbers of blacks believe the events in Ferguson raise important issues about race. [. . .] By contrast, nearly half of whites thought race was getting too much attention in the case."[20] The discrepancy is not new: in 2011 researchers found that while black respondents perceived decreases in anti-black bias, white respondents reported the perception that anti-black bias was decreasing more quickly than black respondents reported, and the decrease in anti-black bias was perceived to be accompanied by a rise in an anti-white bias.[21] Important here is the relationship between what can be seen with the eyes (vision), who or what gets recognized in what ways (visibility), and how histories and relationships between entities can be imagined (visuality/visualization). Both vision and visuality are co-constitutive of reality (visibility); vision and visuality are both produced by and reproduce the images available to us. The ways in which some things are visible and some things are invisible interrelates on both a physiological and an ideological level. Indeed, well beyond physical problems of eyesight, the correlation between refractive errors and ways of seeing demonstrates the ways in which seeing is rhetorical. In illuminating the psychology of rhetorical images in a discussion of Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, Charles Hill explains how "the rhetor's ultimate goal, whenever possible, is to make the relevant object, concept or value fill the audience's entire 'field of consciousness.'"[22] Hill continues: "In other words, when particular elements are given enough presence, they can crowd out other considerations from the viewer's mind, regardless of the logical force or relevance of those other considerations."[23] Rhetoric exploits the limits of sight, seeking to enhance a particular image or visuality at the expense of reinforcing other cultural and social blindnesses.

Photographic visuality

Photographs are a singularly productive site for exploring the ways in which vision, visibility, and visualization interact with one another and with race. Victoria Gallagher and Kenneth Zagacki explain that studying photographs rhetorically enables scholars to "demonstrate how visual images can work both to articulate and to shape public knowledge through offering interpretive and evaluative versions of who does what to whom, when and where."[24] However, when vision stands in for the entire process of visualization, insight is limited. As Shawn Michelle Smith rightly points out, "Photography expanded the realm of the visible, but it also exposed its limits, both physiological and technological. Enabling one to see more, it simultaneously demonstrated how little is ordinarily visible, giving one the unnerving sense of living in a world only partially perceived."[25] This is to say, for as much as photography is able to show us, it also makes us conscious of what is there but not given to the eyes. As Pete Eckert puts it:

> Vision is so strong that it masks other senses, other abilities; it even overrides visualization. Sighted photographers always talk about the difficulty of what they call "seeing." I tell them "If you can't see, it's because your vision is getting in the way."[26]

Here Eckert notes the ways in which vision, as in eyesight, can get in the way of visualization: seeing is tied to visualization, and is hampered at times by sight. Or in the words of Jacques Derrida, "We are thus not blind to the visible, but blinded by the visible."[27]

What we see in real time, or what we see in visual forms like photographs, is deeply related to our social commitments and ideologies. Thinking of sight as a rhetorical act

and effect offers the chance to challenge the naturalness or inherentness of what we see, and to inquire into how our vision is constructed. As Gallagher and Zagacki note

> it is in its capacity to make things visible that photography functions transformatively, and thereby rhetorically, by mediating between the universal and the particular, enabling viewers to experience epiphanic moments when issues, ideas, habits, and yearnings are crystallized into a single recognizable image.[28]

Because visibility is about possibility, it offers to bring to the forefront the resources of rhetoric and visualization. Notably, photographs taken by blind photographers stand at a critical juncture in the dialectic between blindness and sight, as they challenge the way we often understand visuality as a purely optical phenomenon. These photographs offer a chance to engage explicitly the processes and practices of seeing that are habitual and implicit. Primarily, they help us to speak about and clarify some of the ways in which the nature of what is visible, both in photographs as well as our everyday eyesight, is tied to what is not visible. For blind photographers the dialectic is located not in a physiological blindness but, instead, in a different experience of vision effected by a lack of physical eyesight. Blindnesses and visibilities, therefore, are not situated at opposite ends of a spectrum, but instead are intertwined with each other in the perceptive process, each influencing and making up the other.

Different visualities

Photographs taken by blind photographers prompt important questions about the ways in which sound and touch can contribute to a fuller understanding and experience of visuality and, thus, visualization. Audial visuality and tactile visuality are two additional modalities that create space for visualizing, that is, for imagining the histories and contemporary dynamics of being in the world. A visual reading of photographic images remains important to the process of visualization, but I position it as only one step—one to be followed here by by audial and tactile visualities. While Debra Hawhee demonstrates the long rhetorical history of incorporating senses and the "sensorium," I am interested in what can be gained through layered interpretations that neither negate the visual nor essentialize it.[29] For each of the photographs that follow, then, I posit a visual reading of the image; however I do not stop there. Instead, I disclose that which a broader sensory reading of the image can bring to our understanding of race as seen as well as heard and felt.

Pete Eckert is a blind American photographer. His image "Coffee" (Figure 1) shows a dimly lit stove with a coffee pot and the side of a refrigerator in one half of the photo and a ghost-like figure of light in the other. The figure is translucent, drawing doubts that the figure in the image is actually capable of interacting with the material substance of the coffee on the stove. The arms of the figure turn into wisps that seem to dissolve into the rest of the scene. The body is disjointed: not all the parts are clearly connected or represented. The torso fades to the blackness as we move up the image, before the light reemerges at the face.

The ghostly human figure in "Coffee" appears as white, in contrast to its dark surroundings. Interpreting these colors in the current context, "Coffee" both reiterates a dominant understanding of whiteness and racial identification, and provides the

Figure 1. Copyright © Pete Eckert, "Coffee." Used with permission.

opportunity to reimagine whiteness otherwise, which is to say as both seen and heard; whiteness becomes visualized despite its predominant position as an invisible norm. Whiteness and light have a history of interchangeability.[30] Although typically thought to be invisible, Thomas Nakayama and Robert Krizek note that whiteness "affects the everyday fabric of our lives but resists, sometimes violently, any extensive characterization that would allow for the mapping of its contours."[31] To be sure, the white figure in "Coffee" is fleeting and ephemeral (reinforcing the racialized status quo); significantly, however, the form has been captured on film. As visual metaphor, this image makes whiteness visible; like critical scholarship on whiteness, it deliberately makes present that which usually goes unmarked.

While a visual interpretation of the image offers viewers particular resources for understanding race, an audial reading of the image offers the opportunity to grasp how hearing or listening contributes to the process of visualization. Pete Eckert describes using his voice like a bat uses sonar. He bounces his voice off the model's form in order to "get an idea of her silhouette," to identify her position in relation to other objects in the room.[32] Eckert claims:

> Sound gives an image just like light gives an image. Sound wraps around images, and if you're in the sound shadow it'll give you a description of where and what the thing is you're looking at. My artwork is a byproduct of my perceptions.[33]

This understanding of space and representation tunes into an audial visuality: sound creates a different visual experience of space—one that relates an image to sound instead of sight. An audial visuality therefore expands the ways in which we can experience visuality beyond vision. Sonar mapping uses sound to create maps of places that are not accessible to the human eye, like the ocean floor. Likewise, echolocation enables creatures to navigate and visualize in situations where there may be an absence of light or eyesight. Using sound instead of sight in order to compose images allows for an elaboration of possible experiences of visuality—and the generative and imaginative processes of visualization—using senses other than vision. Audial images participate in existing systems of knowledge and power, but are not exclusively reliant on vision. Grasping Eckert's image as an audial experience allows us to consider the ways that we not only see race, but we hear it as well. Because of it, we can begin to imagine the process of visualizing whiteness as including that which we hear, the ways in which sound echoes, reverberates, and positions us in relation to other objects. Whatever the raced identity of the figure behind the white light, it is important to consider the ways in which, as Geoff Mann notes, critical race theory often ignores the implications of sound in the construction of both visuality and race. Mann calls for critical race theory to develop stronger engagements with sound and race, claiming "the hegemony of visuality also operates on contemporary critical race scholarship itself, which thus paradoxically elides aurality for the very same reasons it attacks 'plain sight.'"[34]

An audial visuality takes up the call to engage in rhetorical listening, which Krista Radcliffe explains as "stance of openness," in order to hear the entanglements and possibilities of a particular space.[35] Rhetorical listening, specifically in the context of audial visuality, draws vision into conversation with sound, and opens up the space to hear various histories and accounts of spaces, in order to imagine them—to visualize them—in relationship to the present and the future. In Eckert's image "Coffee," reading the image via a lens of audial visuality prompts an imagination of how the terrain of whiteness can be visualized, pressing against the invisibility of whiteness, making it visible, which in turn allows it to be visualized. Where Eckert hears the sound bouncing off the figure, allowing him to capture the whiteness on film, we should consider the ways in which we take in stories about what is "natural" or inherent and how listening to stories solidifies or challenges prevailing narratives of being and meaning. As Lorna Roth has demonstrated, whiteness has, in the history of North America, been taken as the invisible norm and ideal: flesh tones and "nude" colors have been synonymous with light colored Caucasian skin.[36]

Another way to enhance visual readings is through a sense of touch. Gerardo Nigenda was a blind Mexican photographer who utilized the help of sighted friends to place braille text on top of his photographs (Figure 2). Nigenda's photograph, "Entre lo invisible y lo tangible, llegando a la homeóstasis emocional," is one in a set of photographs in which Nigenda photographed and then superimposed braille upon his intimate encounter with a female partner. On a visual level, the photograph shows what is presumably Nigenda's hand reaching toward his partner's face. His partner's vision is obstructed by a blindfold. Her mouth is relaxed. The Spanish braille text superimposed upon the visual image is roughly translated as: reaching emotional equilibrium between the invisible and the tangible.[37] Taken together, the visual and the tactile enact and draw attention to a performative and productive contradiction: while Nigenda does not see what he photographs, sighted viewers are most likely unable to read the braille incorporated into the image.

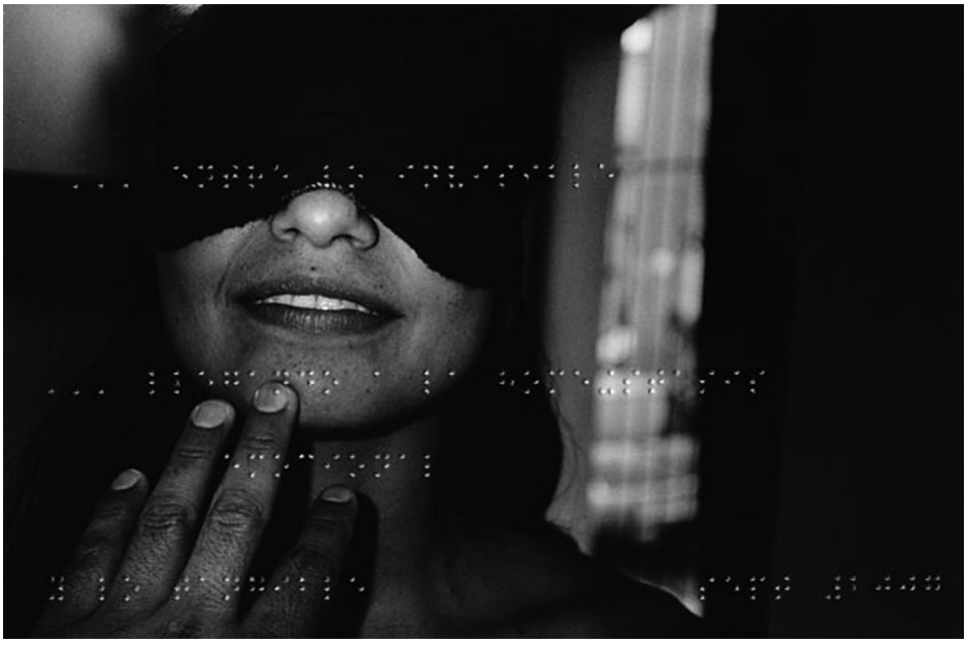

Figure 2. Copyright © Gerardo Nigenda, 2007. "Entre lo invisible y lo tangible, llegando a la homeóstasis emocional," ["Reaching emotional equilibrium between the invisible and the tangible"]. Used with permission.

As noted in the catalogue for the University of California, Riverside exhibition *Sight Unseen*, "the images unify the graphic representation of photographs with the coded writing of braille. But they perform an additional trick: they construct—even require—a bridge between the worlds of the blind and the sighted."[38]

Nigenda's image presents both a visual and a tactile experience of visuality. It draws out questions about the ways in which, as W. J. T. Mitchell claims, visual media is never purely visual.[39] Sight and touch participate in an intricate dance of sensation; both may influence and implicate the other in a variety of ways. Being able to see something can create a sense of texture, and touching something may produce a sort of visualization. Nigenda's image presents us with a challenge: to reconsider the presumed relationship between vision and reality. While many of us know that sight is not always reliable, it nonetheless is the standard measure of realness. Sightedness is a privileged way of moving through the contemporary world. Nigenda's image reaches for an equilibrium not only between the invisible and the tangible, but also between seen reality and felt reality.

Visuality can become embodied through touch. A tactile visuality requires immediacy, groundedness, presence. A tactile visuality is an engaged, embodied visuality that draws the ideals and generalities of vision into the realm of the felt and touched. In order to visualize through touch, one must be near. Martin Jay explains that "touch restores proximity of self and other, who then is understood as neighbor."[40] But in addition to embodiment and proximity, a tactile visuality offers the opportunity to interrogate the constructedness of our visual assumptions about race. Because a tactile visuality calls for immediacy and proximity, it challenges the broad generalities about race that are often made visually, at a distance, like the idea that race can be clearly seen or that it exists in a biological,

natural sense. In *The Erotic Life of Racism*, Sharon Patricia Holland explains, "It is quotidian intimacy that forces us to realize the other as someone with whom we interact and have an impact upon; our acknowledgment of this connection represents the touch and its fruition."[41] We need more than vision to visualize a way in which to be better to one another. A tactile visuality offers an intimacy of experience that enables deep human connection and recognition, moving the conversations of race beyond their often essentializing tones toward conversations about effects and affects, about the immediacy of the implications of racial constructions and their impact on our everyday lives and relationships.

What is real—and who is real—is an important aspect of visualization. As Holland notes, "How we become 'human' then is mediated by an ever-present 'touch' of the material, the object, the not-us, threatening incorporation."[42] Incorporating touch into our practices of visualization allows for the space for the foreign, the other, to come into contact, to become real, and perhaps to become recognized as human. Nigenda's image, when read both visually and tactilely, creates the potential for human connection. Not only does the photograph invite both vision and touch, but it also points out to its audience that the touch is a reach. The touch reaches toward what we can be, and who we can be with. Whether that being with is an intimate romantic encounter or a performance of what Danielle Allen terms political friendship, it calls for imagining and visualizing relationships among people.[43] Allen explains that "Political friendship (which finds its tools in the art of rhetoric) cultivates habits of imagination that generate politically transformative experiences out of ordinary interactions among strangers."[44] Nigenda's image invites us to consider the ways in which touch opens the space to visualize different kinds of relationships.

Visualizing race

What race means is visualized beyond the visual. In order to engage with what race means, we need to understand not only the way we see race, but the variety of ways in which race is inscribed on and performed by bodies. This essay has explained audial visuality as offering a stance of openness that calls for rhetorical listening, hearing the voices and stories of others. Tactile visuality provides the space to interrogate humanity and reality in the ways we reach for connection and strive for political friendships. But there is more. A photograph created by Victorine Floyd Fludd of the *Seeing With Photography Collective*, a group based in New York, featuring collaborations between blind and sighted photographers, draws the critical motifs of this article together and provides the space to explore how types of visuality interact and intersect.[45] This analysis is not a close reading of the image; instead it functions as a grounded point from which to explore where these modes of visualizing can go. This image structures the intersections of vision, sound, and touch in ways that open up the possibilities for a multi-sensorial visualization.

The photograph (Figure 3) presents both blackness and blindness as unnatural—or perhaps supernatural—powers. In Fludd's photograph, magical or extraordinary powers emanate from her black body. Bright white light flows from the eyes, and seashell-esque reflections surround the face. Instead of the figure's eyes taking in light, light bursts forth from them. Not coincidentally, the title of the image is *Children of the Damned*, an unambiguous reference to a 1964 film which follows a group of children born with

Figure 3. Copyright © Victorine Floyd Fludd/Seeing With Photography Collective, "Children of the Damned" 2002. Used with permission.

mind control powers; when they use mind control, the eyes of the children turn bright white.[46] In this image both blackness and blindness stand in to represent magical or supernatural powers.

In Fludd's photograph, we visually read race onto her body, but if we stop there we miss a great deal. Reading this image through the lens of audial visuality urges one to listen to the multiple positions represented in the image: one correlation between the photograph and the film sharing its title emerges as the blood of the children in the film is different from normal human blood. The presentation in the film of the way their blood takes over human blood has strong undertones of legal conversations in the United States about the one drop rule, in which a single drop of black or negro blood designates or constitutes an individual as black. The children in the film are segregated from the rest of the population, reminiscent of the ways in which both blind people and black people were and are segregated in more or less openly enforced ways. Audial visuality calls us to listen to

these correlations and reverberations, considering and responding to the ways that black bodies are, as the image claims, damned.

Tactile visuality challenges readers of this image to interrogate assumptions about the 'givenness' of the image. While the figure is visually mystical, one can still recognize its humanity. As was the case of Nigenda's model, Fludd's eyes are obscured, however, this time not by a blindfold but by light. Fludd's lips and chin and nose are discernible, and decidedly tactile in contrast to the rest of the image. The rest of the image threatens to wisp away, leaving nothing but ephemera. Yet, by attending to the humanity in the image, the mystical and magical—monstrous—figure regains a sense of humanity. This sort of visualizing practice opens the space for mutual recognition. A recent study by Adam Waytz, Kelly Marie Hoffman, and Sophie Trawalter supports the idea that "White Americans superhumanize Black people relative to White people."[47] While magical or monstrous qualities can be used to distance a body from humanity, to refuse to incorporate it, this image offers a space for resistance via a tactile visuality.

Conclusion

Although visuality is always already multi-sensorial, we regularly fail to attend to the sensory aspects of visuality other than vision. Our occularcentrism promotes an anemic visuality that does not or is not able to incorporate multiple senses in practices of visualization. In order to draw attention to the multi-sensorial character of visualization, I have presented a more robust critical vocabulary for discussing the visual and visualized politics of race, provided an abridged history of vision and visuality, and engaged blind photography. The multi-sensorial connections of blindness and blackness, I have suggested, open the way to theorize different sensory experiences of visuality.

The ways in which we visualize bodies have immediate and far-reaching implications. Race, I have argued over the course of this article, is a consequence not of simple sight or mere perception but, rather, is an effect of visualization. The constructedness of race is critical: as Smith explains, "the meaning of race, as visually codified" registers "one's claims to social and legal justice, economic opportunity, political rights, and even basic human rights, including one's very survival."[48] For example, in its probe of the Ferguson, Missouri police department, the Department of Justice found that

> Ferguson's approach to law enforcement both reflects and reinforces racial bias, including stereotyping. The harms of Ferguson's police and court practices are borne disproportionately by African Americans, and there is evidence that this is due in part to intentional discrimination on the basis of race.[49]

It is not merely the case that these systemic practices, in Ferguson and around the United States, cause persons daily inconveniences; they kill. That is to say, both the blindness to whiteness and the hypervisibility of blackness are matters of life and death.[50]

Race is inscribed on bodies. Disregarding race is not the solution to racism. To be sure, vision informs visuality, but it must be put in contact with other ways of knowing. Rhetorical Studies also needs to take a broader view on visuality in order to make visible more than just what can be seen with the eyes. Instead of essentializing race or visuality, I argue that we need fuller conceptions and constructions of each. We need to understand the implications of how race is imagined both as a visual skin tone but also as ways of

being in socio-cultural constructs throughout history and in the present. Continued essentialization of skin tones allows for the flattening of histories and differences among people, creating oversimplified situations to complex and changing problems.

This article considers the ways in which appreciating different visualities provides alternative ways of experiencing and being in the world, creating points at which we can imagine other ways to think about, talk about, and experience race on an individual and collective level. Not only is an individual's sensory experience of race important, whatever that racial identification may be, but equally if not more important is considering the critical implications of individual and collective habits of visualization on the subjects or objects of that visualization, like race.

Understanding the visualization of race is an important part of responding to the problems of race in the twenty-first-century United States. Protests than began in Ferguson, Missouri and emerged across the United States did not emerge from a vacuum; instead they flowed out of decades of continuing injustice after the formal end of the Civil Rights movement. The #blacklivesmatter movement, founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi—three black women—after George Zimmerman was acquitted for the murder of Trayvon Martin, has gained widespread attention as black lives are routinely devalued, at the very least on implicit levels, all around the country.[51] In order to respond, we need a visuality that does not essentialize race, but instead listens, reaches out, touches. One of the implications of an anemic visual rhetoric can be found in the role of implicit biases. For example, the Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT) determines the speed of positive and negative associations individuals have toward categories. The Race IAT specifically determines positive and negative associations with white and black names or faces. The designers of the IAT, Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, found that for American test-takers, "almost 75 percent of those who take the Race IAT […] reveal automatic White preference."[52] Their conclusion is that while explicit biases against African Americans decline, there remain significant implicit race attitudes that "contribute to discrimination against Black Americans."[53] The Race IAT demonstrates how an anemic visuality gets internalized: implicit and immediate reactions towards the visual stimuli of skin tone reveal the strength of cultural reactions to race. If we continue to visualize race in the same way, only through vision, we lose tools and opportunities to reimagine and develop responses to the power dynamics present in the meaning of race.

The histories of racial visualization that gave some groups the right to look—and others only the right to be looked at—require that we move beyond recognizing visuality as a purely visual experience.[54] As Gallagher and Zagacki note, images "can oversimplify [. . .] so that the deeper context in which the images are set becomes increasingly significant but not well articulated by the photographs themselves."[55] Recognizing the distinction between vision and visuality allows for a greater clarity and care in imagining how we visualize on an individual and collective level, as well as the implications of multi-sensory visualization on the ways we think about seeing, particularly in the context of race. An audial visuality creates the space to engage with space, while visualizing with and through sound requires that we deal with time—the historical and cultural resonances and the reverberations of the image. Tactile visuality calls for a stronger engagement with space and access in practices of visualization.

While instances of outright individual racism are publicly decried in the twenty-first-century United States, systemic and institutional racism mask underlying ideologies at play. In order to imagine productively the terrain of race in the United States, it is critical that we understand the limitations of seeing race merely optically, and the possibilities available to us to visualize race through vision, sound, and touch. Perhaps by expanding the ways in which we conceptualize visuality, re-engaging the ways in which we imagine subjects being in relationship with one another and with objects across time and space, then we can also more productively imagine ways of being with one another in the world.

A more textured and reverberating visuality allows for a more robust account to be taken of the practices of visualization that we use to make judgments and take action. In relation to race, a textured and reverberating visuality encourages us to be reflexive of our own blindnesses in regard to both vision and visuality: what is it that we are blind to in the sense that we physically cannot see it, and what do we fail to imagine? How is it that we are unable to recognize historical and cultural connections that are relevant and pressing in our present moment? In order to address the problems facing our current visualization of race, we need the rhetorical resources to imagine where we are, where we have been, and what potentially lies ahead.

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Notes

1. Shawn Michelle Smith, *At the Edge of Sight: Photography and the Unseen* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 8.
2. Nicholas Mirzoeff, "On Visuality," *Journal of Visual Culture* 5, no. 1 (2006): 56.
3. Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 2.
4. Gunther R. Kress and Theo van Leeuwen, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 163.
5. Jordynn Jack, "A Pedagogy of Sight: Microscopic Vision in Robert Hooke's *Micrographia*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 2 (2009): 198.
6. Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage, 2007), 143.
7. Victoria Gallagher and Kenneth S. Zagacki, "Visibility and Rhetoric: The Power of Visual Images in Norman Rockwell's Depictions of Civil Rights," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 91, no. 2 (2005): 183.
8. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto, 1986), 109.
9. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 109. For an account of the hail and constitutive rhetoric drawn from Louis Althusser, see Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73, no. 2 (1987): 133–50.

10. I am working here with the distinction provided by W. J. T. Mitchell for the difference between a picture and an image. W. J. T. Mitchell makes the distinction that an image is different than a picture in that "a picture refers to the entire situation in which an image has made its appearance." He elaborates further that "you can hang a picture, but you cannot hang an image." W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), xiv, 85.
11. Osagie K. Obasogie, *Blinded by Sight: Seeing Race Through the Eyes of the Blind* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 42.
12. Obasogie, *Blinded by Sight*, 62.
13. Reva B. Siegel, "Discrimination in the Eyes of the Law: How 'Color Blindness' Discourse Disrupts and Rationalizes Social Stratification," *California Law Review* 88, no. 1 (January 2000): 87.
14. Kelly E. Happe, "The Body of Race: Toward a Rhetorical Understanding of Racial Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99, no. 2 (2013): 132.
15. Cara A. Finnegan and Jiyeon Kang, "'Sighting' the Public: Iconoclasm and Public Sphere Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90, no. 4 (2004): 396.
16. Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 5, emphasis in original.
17. Daniel Simons and Christopher Chabris created an interesting test of change blindness and perception in an online video that features two teams of players: one team wearing white shirts and one team wearing black shirts. Viewers are asked to count how many times the players wearing white shirts pass a basketball back and forth, and both teams move around as they pass the basketballs. As the viewer counts, someone dressed in a gorilla suit walks through the frame of the video shot. At the end of the clip, the video asks viewers how many times the basketball was passed. After the video gives the correct answer, the video then asks, "But did you see the gorilla?!" Many people viewing the video for the first time do not see the gorilla suit. Daniel Simons explains about his studies in change blindness that

    > By using different methods (e.g., saccades, flashed blank screens, mudsplashes, movie cuts, etc.) to obscure the motion transient caused by the change, these studies show that visual details, even those for naturalistic displays, are not preserved following a disruption to the local transient. …The inability to detect changes to such images suggests that detailed visual representations do not provide the basis for integration across views, even for complex, naturalistic stimuli.

    Daniel Simons, "Selective Attention Test," *Youtube*, March 10, 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo; Daniel J. Simons, "Current Approaches to Change Blindness," *Visual Cognition* 7, no. 1–3 (2000): 6; and Alva Noe, Luiz Pessoa, and Evan Thompson, "Beyond the Grand Illusion: What Change Blindness Really Teaches Us About Vision," *Visual Cognition* 7, no. 1–3 (2000): 93.
18. James Elkins, *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 216, emphasis in original.
19. Elkins, *The Object Stares Back*, 217.
20. Michael A. Fletcher, "Whites Think Discrimination Against Whites is a Bigger Problem Than Bias Against Blacks," *Washington Post*, October 8, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/10/08/white-people-think-racial-discrimination-in-america-is-basically-over/
21. Michael I. Norton and Samuel R. Sommers, "Whites See Racism as a Zero-Sum Game That They Are Now Losing," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 6, no. 3 (2011): 216.
22. Charles A. Hill, "The Psychology of Rhetorical Images," in *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, ed. Charles A. Hill and Marguerite Helmers (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004), 29; Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, "The Choice of Data and Their Adaptation for Argumentative Purposes," in *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

23. Hill, "The Psychology of Rhetorical Images," 29.
24. Victoria J. Gallagher and Kenneth S. Zagacki, "Visibility and Rhetoric: Epiphanies and Transformations in the *Life* Photographs of the Selma Marches of 1965," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (2007): 115.
25. Smith, *At the Edge of Sight*, 6.
26. Douglas McCulloh, "Pete Eckert," *Sight Unseen: International Photography by Blind Artists* (Riverside, CA: University of California, Riverside & ARTSblock, 2009), 28, http://138.23.124.165/exhibitions/sightunseen/_pdf/SIGHTUNSEEN_Catalog.pdf
27. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, rev. ed. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 37.
28. Gallagher and Zagacki, "Visibility and Rhetoric: Epiphanies and Transformations," 116–17.
29. Debra Hawhee, "Rhetoric's Sensorium," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 101, no. 1 (2015): 2–17.
30. Edward Blum and Paul Harvey note that the accounts by Joseph Smith about the vision he claimed to have seen at the foundation of the Mormon faith changed in the 1840's from describing a "blinding light" into "pristine white." Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey, *The Color of Christ: The Son of God & the Saga of Race in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 77.
31. Thomas K. Nakayama and Robert L. Krizek, "Whiteness: A Strategic Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81, no. 3 (1995): 291. Nakayama and Krizek write in and characterize the late twentieth century United States, but I argue that many of the same problematics have carried over into the twenty-first-century United States.
32. "The World of Blind Photographers - Photo Gallery - LIFE," *TIME Inc.—LIFE*, accessed October 28, 2011, http://content.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1897093_1883578,00.html
33. Pete Eckert, "Artists Wanted, In Focus: Pete Eckert," *Vimeo*, accessed November 08, 2014, http://vimeo.com/14179548. In an email to the author, Eckert presents two challenges to see with sound: 1) "imagine a wall in another room of your home. then Close your eyes and walk to it. Put your nose two inches from the wall and stop. before opening your eyes reach out and touch it. If successful, you have just navigated by sound and memory. On top of it you have safely heard an obstruction and verified it by touch." 2) "while walking a busy street locate a telephone pole. Walk down the sidewalk with your eyes closed as a car passes. You can easily hear the telephone pole. If successful, you have just used parallel axis in sound." Eckert notes the first test utilizes reflected sound, while the second uses background sound wrapping around a physical obstacle.
34. Geoff Mann, "Why Does Country Music Sound White? Race and the Voice of Nostalgia," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 1 (2008): 76.
35. Krista Ratcliffe, *Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005), 17.
36. Lorna Roth, "Home on the Range: Kids, Visual Culture, and Cognitive Equity," *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies* 9, no. 2 (2009): 141–48.
37. The actual braille text reads " . . . entre lo invisible / . . . llegando a la homeostasis / emocional / y lo tangible / sept #2007."
38. Douglas McCulloh, "Gerardo Nigenda," in *Sight Unseen: International Photography by Blind Artists* (Riverside, CA: University of California, Riverside & ARTSblock, 2009), 58.
39. W. J. T. Mitchell, "There Are No Visual Media," *Journal of Visual Culture* 4, no. 2 (2005): 257–66.
40. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 557.
41. Sharon Patricia Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 104.
42. Holland, *The Erotic Life of Racism*, 104.
43. Danielle S. Allen, *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 140.
44. Allen, *Talking to Strangers*, 171.

45. "About: Seeing With Photography Collective," *Seeing With Photography Collective*, accessed November 15, 2014. http://www.seeingwithphotography.com/about/
46. John Briley, *Children of the Damned*, directed by Anton M. Leader (United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer, 1964).
47. Adam Waytz, Kelly Marie Hoffman, and Sophie Trawalter, "A Superhumanization Bias in Whites' Perceptions of Blacks," *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 6, no. 3 (2015): 352.
48. Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photography on the Color Line: W. E. B. Du Bois, Race, and Visual Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 8.
49. United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, *Investigation of the Ferguson Police Department* (Washington, D.C., 2015), 4, http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/opa/press-releases/attachments/2015/03/04/ferguson_police_department_report.pdf
50. While I am largely thinking here of the contemporary cultural discussion of the relationship of black male bodies to white male police officers and the plethora of related shootings, there are a variety of deeply dangerous relationships constructed for codified bodies.
51. For more information on the Black Lives Matter Movement, founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, see http://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/
52. Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald, *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People* (New York: Delacorte, 2013), 47.
53. Banaji and Greenwald, *Blindspot*, 47.
54. Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look*.
55. Gallagher and Zagacki, "Visibility and Rhetoric: Epiphanies and Transformations," 131.