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BEAUTIFICATION PRACTICES AMONG ASIAN AND ASIAN AMERICAN COLLEGE
STUDENTS

A Thesis
Presented for the Master of Arts Degree
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
The University of Mississippi

by

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August 2015

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ABSTRACT

The global beauty industry is prominent both in western and non-western nations. East Asian countries like Japan, Korea, and China are the biggest markets. Although each of these countries has local beauty standards, the global beauty industry imposes western beauty standards on individuals in those countries. This affects not only Asians in Asian countries, but also Asian Americans who are thought to be somehow foreign and, therefore, underrepresented in the U.S. media. Moreover, some Asians and Asian Americans take this for granted and unconsciously adopt western beauty standards into their routine beautification practices. Asians' and Asian Americans' beautification practices function as their habitus to conform to western beauty standards. In this research, I conduct qualitative semi-structured interviews with six Japanese and six Asian American female students in the University of Mississippi Oxford campus to understand how beauty standards in society are recognized among Asians and Asian Americans, how they adopt the western beauty standards into their daily lives, and how they form their identity as Asians. The data suggests two main findings. First, Japanese participants are segregated from white Americans by comparing them as “foreigners” or “Americans,” whereas Asian Americans differentiate themselves by their ethnic identities. Another finding is that

Japanese participants view beautification practices as an obligation for adults, but Asian American participants proceed to the practices for their leisure. They certainly feel small eyes or lower nose bridges are unattractive that are stereotypical Asian facial features media depicts. However, both Japanese and Asian American participants do not sense their connection to western beauty standards when they proceed to beautification practices.

DEDICATION

To my parents, Mitsuji Takamune and Aiko Takamune, who always have faith in me.

And to my late mother, Satomi Takamune, who was my best friend, a role model, and one of the strongest woman in the world.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The beauty industry is one of the most profitable industries in the United States (Porter 2008:83).

At over \$382 billion per year, it is also an important component of the global economy (Jones

2010:1). Although many of the successful beauty brands are either from Paris or New York,

global sales of beauty products are prominent in East Asian countries like China and Japan

(Jones 2010:1-3). However, the global beauty industry has been criticized for its role in

reproducing inequalities, including those related to race, class, and gender. Wolf (1991:70-84)

argues beauty advertisements lower women's self-confidence about their faces and bodies by

using "beautiful" models or actresses. According to Frith, Cheng and Shaw (2004:57), more

white models are used in both U.S. and Asian fashion or beauty magazines. This

underrepresentation of Asian models in media does not only make Asian women think that they

are "social outsider[s]," but also makes them compare themselves unfavorably to the white group

(Sengupta 2006:807). This indicates racial inequality between whites and Asians and

homogenization of beauty standards as western beauty industries expanded their business to East

Asia (Berry 2007:3).

The homogenization of western beauty standards recalls Bourdieu's ([1977] 2006:85)

“habitus,” a production of a system or a norm which determines practices or actions of certain groups. It is “the product of the work of inculcation” to perpetuate similar characteristics or conventions within individuals’ in-groups. In other words, individuals’ habitual practices decide their values of society, and the individuals take that for granted. Habitus, “systems of classification, ... make their specific contribution to the reproduction of the power relations” (Bourdieu [1977] 2006:164) and exist through relation and interaction with others (McKnight and Chandler 2012:83). Since the dominant group, who has a certain privilege, decides what is valuable in society, inequality between the dominant group and subordinated groups are created. In the case of beauty standards, western beauty standards interact with non-western countries when they expand the beauty industry worldwide. By encouraging using western models in beauty advertisements, western beauty standards, as a qualifying social value, perpetuate the notion of “ugliness” among people of color and reproduce inequality that people of color should be “beautiful” to be accepted in society (Berry 2007). Although there are some Asians who are considered “beautiful” in the media, most have lighter skin, bigger eyes, and ostensibly refined noses—the “right kind of Asian,” in that these features are reminiscent of white physical features (Rondilla and Spickard 2007:83).

The reason why western beauty standards are perpetuated is because of the globalization of the beauty industry. Ashcroft (2001:207-212) suggests that the terms globalization and

western hegemony are synonymous because the diffusion of globalism pressures local identities of non-western nations. The same holds for globalization of beauty standards because minority groups are usually exposed to western facial and physical features through media (Miller 2006:116), which might influence their favor of beautification practices (Berry 2007). East Asian countries are one of the most important beauty markets among non-western countries, because Japan, Korea, and China are ranked among the highest retail sales of beauty products (Jones 2010:302, 367). Despite the fact that the beauty industry stimulates the world economy, as western beauty companies succeed in East Asian countries, it also contributes to suppressing local identities of East Asian cosmetic industries by imposing western standards of beauty through media advertisements and promotion of mega brands (Jones 2010:7). Though some East Asian cosmetic companies offer diversity in beauty ideals by selling cosmetic products which fit Asians, like skin lightener (Jones 2010:314), western beauty standards in many East Asian countries encourage using western models on fashion advertisements (Frith, et al. 2004) or favoring cosmetic products that conceal mono-lid eyes, eyes without folds (Miller 2006:50). As Jones (2010:300-340) suggests, beauty standards of East Asian countries are quite complex. East Asian countries support western beauty standards because of the expansion of the western beauty industry on one hand, but they perpetuate their local identities on the other (Jones 2010:300-340).

Japan exemplifies this complexity. The country has the second largest market share in the world in retail sales of beauty products (Jones 2010:367), and its ministry of economy, trade and industry tries to introduce unique fashion or culture by expanding markets of domestic clothing/cosmetic lines, food industry, media contents, tourism and so on for Japanese economic growth (METI 2011). Despite the fact that Japan tries to preserve and introduce its local identity, it is “influenced by those physical attributes associated with the European or Caucasian body,” reflecting “an idolization of Caucasian appearance” (Black 2009:247-248). As news articles in *the Japan Times* suggest, cosmetic products such as color contact lenses, false eye lashes, and eye glue or eye tapes (to make folds on the eyes) are popular among Japanese women (Fukue 2009; Osaki 2012). Black (2009:246) argues that Japan’s acceptance of western beauty standards first started in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. What happened at that time was western countries recognized the Japanese as “honorary whites,” which elevated the Japanese position in racial hierarchy (Black 2000:245). However, the racial hierarchy ideal made the Japanese struggle, because even though they were accepted as near white, their appearances were still Asian (Black 2009:246). Then, procedures of cosmetic surgeries for the upper eye lids and nose bridges became popular in Japan to make them more “westernized” (Black 2009:246). Recently, coloring hair and using color contact lenses have been popular “to modify the appearance of the Japanese body in a way clearly influenced by those physical attributes

associated with the European or Caucasian body” (Black 2009:246-247).

The close connections between eyes/nose shapes and racial issues are not only salient among the Japanese, but also among other East Asians, because there is substantial scholarship about Asians’ cosmetic surgery procedures and skin complexions. Kaw (1993) examines Asian women’s cosmetic surgery procedures that show how they perceive their facial features compared to western facial features. Glenn (2008) investigates how much individuals’ skin complexions affect their social status, as comparing countries whose sales of skin lightener are prominent. Leong (2006) did research in Hong Kong by using two focus groups (A group of Hong Kongese and a group of British) to examine how Asians in Hong Kong think about their skin complexions compared to other Asians and non-Asians. However, there is little literature about mundane beauty practices to link individuals’ habitus like makeup. Moreover, there is little to no literature that specifically focuses on Asians’ makeup practices. Makeup has often been treated as trivial in sociological research, even though many women spend time to wear makeup everyday (Dellinger and Williams 1997:53). Using Bourdieu’s theory of the habitus, I seek to understand how western beauty standards are reproduced through the routine beauty and makeup practices of nonwestern women, specifically Asian and Asian-American women. To improve the understanding of why East Asians prefer certain facial features, I would like to argue about western cultural imperialism in terms of beauty and to outline how globalization contributes to

forming beauty standards worldwide. This research investigates whether, and to what degree, beautification practices impact the social positions of Asians and Asian Americans. This research also examines the relationship between these practices and an Asian's and Asian American's identity negotiations and self-esteem to know how much they are influenced by western cultures.

In a later chapter, I will elaborate on Bourdieu's habitus as theoretical framework for my research because it will help broaden the idea of beautification practices as routines and norms to encourage power dynamics between whites and Asians. I conducted a qualitative case study design, including semi-structured interviews and participant observations, with Japanese and Asian American female students on a college campus, aiming to inform the importance of beautification practices as social phenomena and what impact they have on individuals' daily lives. For two reasons, the results will be discussed comparing Asians who grew up in Asian countries and Asian Americans who perhaps grew up interacting with more non-Asians. The first reason is because there is an assumption that East Asians who have less interaction with non-Asians are likely to care more about their Asian physical traits (Song 2003:11). Another reason is that Japanese female students, who used to live in Japan and moved to the United States, might change their beautification practices by interacting with other racial/ethnic groups. This research asks the following questions:

1. How does Western culture influence the beautification practices of Asians and Asian Americans?
2. What impact do Asian and Asian Americans' habitus through beautification practices have on enabling and/or constructing stereotypes within their communities?

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Jones (2010) describes the history of the beauty industry, addressing how it grew until now. In the United States alone, the world retail sales of beauty products rose from \$25.5 billion in 1989 to \$59.7 billion in 2010. Meanwhile, world retail sales as a whole were \$382 billion in the same year (Jones 2010:367). In 1950, most of the world's largest beauty companies - like Avon, Revlon, or Max Factor - were from a U.S. origin (Jones 2010:369). However, the trend has been changing recently as some European companies like L'Oreal and Estee Lauder, or Japanese companies like Kose and Kao, expand their businesses to outside of their countries (Jones 2010:369). This shows the beauty industry is an important part of the global economy. According to Jones (2010:3), L'Oreal and Procter & Gamble (P&G) share one-fifth of total world sales of beauty products. Yet the global beauty industry is not limited to western brands; Asian brands out of China, South Korea, and Japan are also successful in the beauty industry. Cosmetic products like BB (blemish balm or beauty balm) cream, which promises moisturizer, primer and acne control for skin, for example, were first introduced in South Korea in 1985 (Rigano 2013), and now non-Asian cosmetic companies like L'Oreal, Maybelline, Estée Lauder, Clinique and Mac have introduced the product to western beauty markets (Latimer 2012). Thirty years ago in

China, cosmetic products were recognized as “bourgeois decadence” because almost no cosmetic products were sold in the Chinese market (Jones 2010:3). However, now the country holds the world’s fourth largest beauty market (Jones 2010:3). On average, Japanese consumers spend more than \$230 per year, per person, on cosmetic products, compared to American consumers who spend, on average, just under \$175 a year per person (Jones 2010:3).

Although some studies reinforce concern about homogenization of beauty standards in the world (Berry 2007), Jones (2010:3) points out that the global beauty industry is quite complex, because many consumers prefer more local products than global; and therefore, the global beauty industry is in a binary between globalization and local identity. In other words, individuals perpetuate their local beauty standards on one hand, while they unconsciously favor certain physical features that are caused by western beauty standards on the other. In East Asian countries, beauty standards are especially complex and unique for their preferences of skin lightning cream, because it is East Asian countries whose market of the products are the highest in the world (Jones 2010:3). Ashikari (2005) conducted interviews with Japanese women about their skin complexions. Her study suggests that Japanese women are proud of their skin complexions, stating whites’ skins are inferior to those of Asian skins (Ashikari 2005:82). At the same time, Kaw (1993:79) argues Asian American women admire bigger eyes and higher nose bridges, which are white physical features, because small eyes or lower nose bridges indicate

negative images like dullness or passivity. Yu, Park, and Sung (2015:699) conclude that “white models represent ideal beauty in China” in their study about cosmetic advertisement in women’s magazines in Korea and China.

East Asian Beauty Industries: Skin Lightener

Why and how are local cosmetic products preferable in Asian countries? Glenn (2008:281) reviews literature and statistics of individuals’ consumptions of skin lightener by skin lightening practices in various non-western communities both from historical and contemporary global industry points of view, arguing “the preference for and privileging of lighter skin and discrimination against those with darker skin, remains a persisting frontier of intergroup and intragroup relations in the twenty-first century.” East Asian countries, Japan, China, and Korea, are very important consumers for the global skin care industry (Jones 2010:302). Sixty-six percent of cosmetic products are for skin lightener in Japan, and China and Korea are the fastest growing markets for skin lightener (20 percent rate per year for China and ten percent for Korea) (Glenn 2008:292). As Glenn points out, lighter skin complexion is admired by people of color even today. She argues this is because of “the Western-dominated global system as it simultaneously promulgates a ‘white is right’ ideology while also promoting the desire for and consumption of Western culture and products” (Glenn 2008:282). This notion is more likely to

be salient among women, since society puts more emphasis on judging them based on their appearances (Glenn 2008:282). Skin complexion is an important component in thinking about their beautification practices. Berry (2007) and Glenn's (2008) studies show that women of colors' skin complexions indicate social class (Berry 2007:66); fairer skin functions as a "symbolic capital" which is connected to an individual's (especially women's) attractiveness (Glenn 2008:282). East Asian countries put heavy emphasis on their skin compared to the U.S. or European countries. Forty percent of the world skin care market is in the Asian region while it is half the size of the makeup market in the U.S. (Jones 2010:3). Berry (2007:66) explains that skin complexion signifies women's social class from a historical aspect.

In the United States, lighter skin used to indicate needlessness of outside labor, and therefore it is a marker of higher social status after the Civil War (Rondilla and Spickard 2007:82). However, it is not necessarily true for East Asians that they want to obtain lighter skins like those of whites. Rather, East Asians tend to compare themselves to other Asian populations whose skin complexions are darker rather than compare themselves to other racial groups (Leong 2006:177). In fact, Leong (2006:172) argues that the Hongkongese focus group in his study seems to look down on Philipinas and Indonesian women as "coarse" and "not elegant enough" because of their skin complexion. Glenn (2008:282) shows skin complexion as women's symbolic capital, which influences their success in life because society puts heavy emphasis on

women's appearance. In India, young women consume skin lightener because lighter skinned women are largely advantageous when they look for spouses (Berry 2007:66). This "lighter is better" notion in India began in the Colonial era when the British ruled the country. At that time, Indians viewed the British as representative of the highest culture and possessing the best physical features, which made Indians think of lighter-skinned groups as intelligent and more attractive and darker-skinned groups as less intelligent and less beautiful (Glenn 2008:289). Some of them recognize their skin as more "flawless" and "superior" than any other racial/ethnic group (Ashikari 2005; Leong 2006). In Ashikari's (2005:82) study, many Japanese women of her sample expressed that although they were seeking lighter skin tones, what they desire has nothing to do with white women's skin tones because they thought the skin complexions of whites were "rough ... aged quickly; and it had too many spots."

Local Identity and Western Cultural Imperialism

Considering the sales of skin care products being prominent in Asian countries, Jones's (2010) argument that individuals try to promote their local identities seems true. Yet, his point contains ambiguity defining what local identity means. He does say local products are preferred, but he needs to be more specific about local beauty standards. In other words, although Jones develops the fact well that cosmetic products themselves are more or less localized, he does not analyze in

detail if people prefer local beauty standards to global beauty standards. Even though some Asians recognize their skin is more flawless than any other racial/ethnic groups, like Leong (2006) and Ashikari (2003) point out, there are still more western models used in beauty magazines in East Asian countries (Jones 2010:313). Many scholars who study the Asian beauty industry focus mainly on skin care products. Their studies are important to know how much Asians put emphasis on their skin complexion. Thus, admiring lighter skin tones could be seen as a marker to separate Asians' beauty standards from those of western standards. On the other hand, it is also true that it is not only white Americans who value certain beauty standards like "paler skins, rounder eyes, slim figures, and white teeth" (Jones 2010:312). Jones argues these beauty standards are valued regardless of any racial/ethnic group (Jones 2010:312) and, therefore, perhaps the global beauty industry has played the important role to make western beauty standards also global. However, some point out, it is impossible to understand globalization without taking into account global power relations of western imperialism (Ashcroft 2001:207-208), which became the trigger for individuals to think "anything Western was ... 'modern' and, therefore, superior" (Wagatsuma 1967:416).

How does western imperialism contribute to globalization and end up connected to beauty standards? Ashcroft (2001:208,212) suggests that although there are many disciplines of globalism, all of them are related to European imperialism, because "globalism and imperialism

are grounded in a similar discursive orientation towards the world, a similar neutralization of the historical reality of power relations.” He also defines “local identity” as the following:

When we speak of the local we speak of a community which operates transversely to, or below the level of, those state apparatuses which organize representation in the interests of national identification. It might be one identified with a special location, but it might also be identified with an ethnic, gendered, or cultural ‘location’ (Ashcroft 2001:215).

It is true that the global beauty industry is quite complex, as Jones explains, because “we find the presence of the global within the local to an extent that compels us to be very clear about our concept of the local” (Ashcroft 2001:215). Still, Jones (2010:360) also argues that

The timing of the emergence of the beauty industry and its first wave of globalization, coinciding with the high point of Western imperialism and economic dominance following the Industrial Revolution, made it all but inevitable that being white was seen as possessing superior beauty, alongside superior everything else.

In addition to this, western beauty standards have been perpetuated all over the world, because historically, people of color’s facial features, such as eyes, nose and skin tones, have been depicted by whites as “ugly” features. By the time of the Industrial Revolution, Western

imperialism perpetuated depicting white features as beautiful and superior (Jones 2010:360).

Ashcroft (2001:210) uses the word “cultural imperialism” by reviewing the original definition of imperialism that “the establishment of an empire by a nation which exerts a centripetal and hierarchical power over a number of colonial territories.” Cultural imperialism is the “discourse of modernity” - a mode of social organization that shows superiority over subordinated groups - and appropriation of non-western culture which western countries envision (Ashcroft 2001:210).

In American society, Asian women were especially viewed as dull and passive because of their small eyes (Gilman 1999:99; Kaw 1993:74). All of the eleven Asian American women Kaw (1993:79) interviewed expressed their eyes without folds were slanted, closed and look more sleepy and “they associate the features considered to characteristics of their race with negative traits.” In other words, beauty is socially constructed, and the standards of beauty are always determined by the dominant group.

Collins (1990:89) points out that western standards of beauty have already settled as a social norm. “Deviating from the group ‘norm’ is not rewarded as ‘beauty,’” although the notion of beauty itself is “functional,” and it does not indicate a certain group.

According to Feagin (2010:113), racism toward Asian Americans goes back to mid-nineteenth century when Chinese immigrated to the United States as a new labor force. His argument is that Asians Americans are often depicted by their “distinctive language and images”

by whites. Even in the contemporary U.S., this form of racism toward Asian Americans continues by transforming its existence as stereotypes through which they are viewed as “un-American and culturally inferior or problematical” (Feagin 2010:114). In fact, it is true the image that “‘American’ as ‘white’” is created through mass media not only in the United States, but also all over the world (Suyemoto 2003:113). Yet, there are certain limitations about Feagin’s theory.

First of all, he does not explain the white racial frame from people of color’s viewpoints. He mainly focuses on how African Americans have been treated whites through history since slavery era. Second, Feagin does not talk about the context of the white racial frame outside of the United States. He only talks about people of color within U.S. in a macro perspective. Feagin also theorizes little about capitalism, one of the most important components of white dominance, and he puts more emphasis on historical aspect of racial inequality.

The inequality occurs from, as Ashcroft says the cultural capital of the dominant group. Bourdieu (1984:291) introduced the term as “a dominated principal of domination” (291). Cultural imperialism is strongly tied to capitalism, which “is the economic discourse of modernity, the natural concomitant of European imperialism” (Ashcroft 2001:211). In contemporary society, main stream media, like advertising, or the Internet, contribute to be “hegemonic, in shaping the logic, and future, of capitalism” (Allison 2009:91). Mass media is

the new type of imperialism that induces subordinate groups to employ the dominant group's cultural capital by over representing white values.

East Asian Women and Western Beauty Standards: Media Exposure

As Suyemoto (2003) argues, the racial notion of “American” as “white” is salient worldwide. In Asian countries, the overrepresentation of whites in media is remarkable. Some studies argue models in advertisement or fashion magazines are treated according to their stereotypical images. Frith et al. (2004:58) describes how Asian models are used in advertisements for facial products, whereas western models are used for body products. By examining advertisements of U.S., Singapore, and Taiwanese fashion magazines, researchers reveal that in Asian countries, white models are used as “sex objects” compared to Asian models (Frith et al. 2004:58).

Interestingly, western models are overrepresented not only in U.S advertisements, but also in Asian countries (Frith et al. 2004:57, 59). Ninety-nine percent of models are white in U.S. advertisements, 73.3% in Singaporean advertisements, and 50.4% in Taiwanese advertisements. Yu et al.'s (2015:695) study shows 32.7 % of Chinese magazines feature white models, compared to 26.5% that feature Chinese models. Using models from different racial backgrounds according to either body products or beauty products perhaps supports the argument that there is more or less a difference between western and local beauty standards. However,

overrepresentation of western models in Asian countries may justify the fact that more people are open to globalization and people favor western features. Sengupta's (2006) study also shows underrepresentation of East Asian women in fashion or beauty magazines in the U.S. and Canada. Although women's magazines are supposed to shape the concept of ideal women to the readers, "the image that visible minority girls are left to compare themselves ... to the dominant ideal" (Sengupta 2006:801). The concern she raises is that East Asian women are especially underrepresented compared to black or white women from either beauty or clothing magazines (Sengupta 2006:804). Sengupta (2006:805) states

The possible implicit suggestion sent by excluding Asian women or relegating them to relatively unimportant roles is that these women are not interested in fashion and beauty products nor do they have the financial means to purchase the products advertised ... East Asian and South Asian women may be stereotyped as socially different, or possibly as unfeminine, as young women look to teen magazines to supply them with definitions of the ideal woman and her role in society.

Kaw's (1993:75) research, which was conducted in the San Francisco Bay Area, shows that Asian American women also tend to care more about their eyes and nose to cast away stereotypical facial features which carry negative connotations of characteristics, such as

“passivity, dullness, and lack of sociability.” This does not necessarily mean Asian American women want to look white, because they are proud of their racial/ethnic background. At the same time, the beauty standards they admire such as larger eyes and higher nose bridges, correspond with western standards of beauty (Kaw 1993:79). Kaw (1993:81,86) points out many Asian Americans (and some white Americans) feel Asian facial features are “inadequate” compared to those of whites. Recognition of western beauty standards are even more unique and complex in a country like Japan.

Japan

Japan is a leader in the global economy, and is also influenced by western culture. According to Jones (2010:367), world retail sales of beauty products in Japan reached 43.7 billion dollars in 2010, and Japanese beauty product sales were the second highest next to US. Yet in the past, Japan had to westernize their technology, fashion, and culture to survive colonialism (Black 2009:243). Even after the colonialization periods, “anything Western was considered ‘modern’ and therefore, superior” in Japan (Wagatsuma 1967:416). Westernization of the beauty standards started from more “aspiration than coercion,” and, therefore, Japanese beauty industries imitated French and US cosmetic companies by naming the products and brands in either French or English until the mid-twentieth century (Jones 2010:360). The Japanese government banned men

from whitening their faces and women changed their beauty ideals “from having narrow eyes, thin eyebrow and long faces to having rounder eyes and faces with thick eyebrows” (Jones 2010: 60-61). Black (2009:243) explains why Japanese accepted western culture:

When colonialism was made possible by inequalities of technology and resources, it was justified using hierarchies of race. Irrespective of its material achievements, Japan would seemingly never be able to deal with the western power as an equal because its people were Asian, part of the Oriental mass whose inferiority supposedly invited the guiding hand of white rule.

Even though the Japanese economy grew dramatically and the country became one of the richest alongside of the west during the 1950s and 1960s, the Japanese beauty industry still imitated French brand names and admired “Western-style round eyes” (Black 2009:361). Westernization of beauty standards in Japan in the mid twentieth century was legitimized based on the goal of keeping up with western economy.

On the other hand, contemporary Japan tries to introduce “Cool Japan” to cultivate a “creative industry” and promote it to overseas markets (METI 2011). The strategy “Cool Japan” includes expanding “apparel and fashion, *monodzukuri* (making goods) and regional products, food, content, tourism, and home” (METI 2011). In fact, some pop-stars, such as Gwen Stefani, Katy Perry, and Avril Lavigne, are inspired by Japan and appropriated some of the culture into

their works, such as their distinctive fashion and makeup highly stand out. This shows that “Cool Japan culture” is rather disarticulated and objectified by the dominant group. In Allison’s (2009:96) past study about Japanese toys all over the world, one child respondent explained he liked Japan because the country produced toys for American children. Even though Cool Japan strategy is to “paid both to the capital generated by the youth market and to capitalizing on that market to extend the attraction Japanese youth goods have for global consumers” (Allison 2009: 90), Ashcroft (2001:209) argues that western countries try to transform the post-colonial world as globalization by “appropriation and adaptation.” Despite the efforts that the Japanese government takes to spread Japanese unique culture, Japanese women are still “predominantly motivated by the acceptance of a western ideal of attractiveness” (Black 2009:246). The reason why Japanese women idolize whites even today is not only because of Japanese historical aspects, but also because encouraging white models in advertisement for cosmetic products, wedding chapel, or cars “seeks to project a sense of the glamour and independence associated with the western woman” (Black 2009:248).

3. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

From my review of the literature, the global beauty industry is prominent both in western and non-western nations. East Asian countries like Japan, Korea, and China are the biggest markets.

My argument is that although each of the countries have local beauty standards, the global beauty industry imposes western beauty standards on individuals in those countries by overrepresentations of western models in media and spreading mega brands of western origin.

This affects not only Asians in Asian countries, but also Asian Americans who are thought to be somehow foreign and, therefore, underrepresented in the U.S. media. Danico and Ng (2004:149) argue that for 2nd generation or 3rd generation Asian Americans, the influence of American media is significantly different from the influence they have at home, so that they “are confronted with negotiating between two cultures.” According to Sengupta’s (2006:803) study, which compared representations of black, white, and East Asian women in U.S. and Canadian teen magazines, the percentage of Asian models were “considerably lower than actual representation in the population.” If the underrepresentation of Asians kept being perpetuated, they might believe “it is socially permissible, if not socially expected” for Asians to accept their misrepresentation or negative stereotypes on media (Sengupta 2006:800). Danico and Ng (2004:151) state the following:

The children [of Asian immigrants] encounter a different set of obstacles bridging the gap between what they experience at home and what they encounter at school and the mainstream media... [T]hey find themselves comparing their own families to what they see on television... Popular culture informs youths that friends are supposed to be White, thin, and living in glamour... When they do see those who look like them [on television], they most often are foreigners with distinctive accents, With very few exceptions, Asian Americans on television and on the large screen are dominated by the images of Asians, not Asian Americans.

In fact, Kim, Lee, Park, Rodriguez, and Schwartz's study (2013) about non-white college students' intercultural communication or assimilation shows Asian young adults are likely to experience great distress in the process of acculturation into western culture. Although the "model minority" stereotype leads to the general assumption that Asian Americans have fewer mental health problems (Lund, Chan, and Liang 2014:494), they feel "intense pressure ... in trying to conform to white ways" (Feagin 2010:246). Moreover, some Asians and Asian Americans take this racial inequality for granted and unconsciously adopt western beauty standards into their routine beautification practices.

In this chapter, I review Bourdieu's concept of "habitus" to trace how inequalities

between the dominant group and subordinate groups are perpetuated. To enrich the understanding of why I am applying this concept to my research, I especially address how whites practice their habitus to widen the racial inequality toward non-whites. Further, I will argue how western beauty standards are legitimized among Asian and Asian American communities through the concept of habitus and cultural capital.

Individuals unconsciously categorize others in terms of sex, race, and age (Ridgeway and Katz 2013:298). Race is one of the categorizations which “prime stereotypes in the perceiver’s mind, making those cultural beliefs cognitively available to implicitly shape the perceiver’s judgement in response to the other” and therefore,

[t]hese biased expectations tend to have self-fulfilling effects on behavior in the setting and to create inequalities in evaluations of performance, influence, and attributions of ability. In this way, among others, implicitly salient ... stereotypes shape interpersonal hierarchies of influences, status, and perceived leadership potential in ways that reproduce and maintain ... race as [a] system of inequality (Ridgeway and Katz 2013:299-230).

By introducing habitus, Bourdieu ([1977] 2006) problematizes this structural classification, reproducing practical actions that lead to certain inequalities. He defines habitus in such a way:

The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment ... produce

habitus, system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively “regulated” and “regular” without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them (Bourdieu [1977] 2006:72).

There are three important points I would like to point out about the concept. First, habitus is an individuals’ actions “without being the product of a genuine strategic intention” (Bourdieu [1977] 2006:73). It puts emphasis on “universally shared cognitive unconscious” to form “the structure of society” (Lizardo 2004:382). Since individuals unconsciously or habitually practice certain actions, it is rare to overcome their inequalities around them. Another point that has to be focused on is that habitus is derived from collective or personal history (Bourdieu [1977] 2006:82; Lawler 2004:111). It makes easy to sustain individuals’ actions. Habitus is not created from individuals’ subjectivity or one time experience. Rather, it is accumulated through environment around them. Individuals adopt their habitus by practicing certain actions routinely and their habitus eventually legitimize social structure that reproduce inequalities. Lastly, habitus exists through interactions with other groups (Lawler 2004:111). In other words, habitus does not

exist without relation between the groups outside of individuals' communities. Based on these elements of habitus, inequalities between a dominant group and the subordinate groups are reproduced.

Bonilla-Silva (2006:104), who focuses especially on racial inequalities, argues that racial inequalities are actually reproduced by the dominant group by introducing "white habitus," which is a "racialized, uninterrupted socialization process that *conditions* and *creates* white' racial taste, perceptions, feelings, and emotions and their views on racial matters." According to this concept, whites are the ones who perpetuate racial inequalities toward non-whites by viewing them negatively (Bonilla-Silva, Goar, and Embrick 2006:233), and in consequence, racially subordinate groups accept this racial hierarchy. Bonilla-Silva et al. (2006:233) argue the following:

Habitus does not point to individual character or morality, but to the deep cultural conditioning that reproduces and legitimates social formations. Although individuals possess unique ideas and experiences, they tend to act predictably because they reside in the same social niche with others who are affected by similar rituals, belief systems, and interests. While the habitus does not determine action, it orients action. Thus, people observe and participate in social closure but tend not to see it as problematic as it resonates with their habitus. The habitus

helps normalize and legitimate social closure.

I apply this to western beauty standards, a white social value, which are legitimized by the globalization of the beauty industry (Jones 2010:363), becoming a global “norm.”

Legitimization of western beauty standards are “restrictive by privileging Western ... constructions of female beauty” and “the globalization of blonde and blue-eyed Barbie dolls provided evidence of an all-too visible preoccupation with young, nubile female bodies (Jones 2010:364). For Asians and Asian Americans who grew up in a society where western beauty standards are appreciated through media, following those standards became their habitus, and they unconsciously practiced it as their routines. Although Asians and Asian Americans have their own local beauty standards, the collective history that western beauty standards perpetuate to value certain facial features are the characteristics of whites.

Bonilla-Silva (2006:123-124) indicates that the white habitus constructs racial segregation between whites and non-whites, by arguing how much whiteness is considered to be “normal.” He states that “the universe of whiteness navigated on an everyday basis by most whites fosters a high degree of homogeneity of racial view and even of the manner in which whites express these views” (Bonilla-Silva 2006:125). As Ashcroft (2001:210) argues, European superiority has been perpetuated toward non-European countries since the sixteen century. This notion of superiority through history inculcates whites to view themselves positively. White

privilege becomes their habitus – being white is normal - and it ends up reproducing inequality toward non-whites. Bonilla-Silva et al. (2006:239) conducted a survey and in-depth interviews with white college students and residents in Detroit area about interracial friendship and marriage among whites and blacks. Their study shows whites' friendship with blacks are not only temporary and superficial, but whites also normalize this phenomenon and do not recognize this as a racial issue. Bonilla-Silva et al. (2006:248) argue “whites do not experience troubling doubts or second thoughts as to their lack of interaction with blacks,” since their racial segregation is justified by their white habitus. Whites are following color-blind approach that they do not mean to be racist, but their attitudes toward other racial groups are legitimized by white habitus, a formation of society.

This white habitus influences Asian and Asian Americans as well as other racial groups. A scholar like Cho (2012:216) argues that valuing defined eyes and high nose bridges has nothing to do with white facial features, because they are the features that both Eastern and Western countries value in common. Yet, as Gilman (1999:16) argues, any facial features that did not match those of whites used to be depicted as “ugly” and individuals had to “correct the ‘ugliness’ of nonwhite races.” Asian women especially were viewed as dull and passive in western society because of their small eyes (Gilman 1999:99; Kaw 1993:74). In order to cancel this “ugliness” of Asian features, they have to “smooth out ... racial ‘differences’” by making

themselves look less Asian to fit western standards of beauty (Berry 2007:115). In contemporary society, white habitus justify western beauty standards to be normal as a “global beauty standards” through media. Consequently Asians and Asian Americans try to alter or conceal their facial features, not because they want to be whites, but because they think western beauty standards are “normal.”

However, even though Bonilla-Silva points out the classification and inequality between whites and non-whites, he puts too much emphasis on cognitive-interpretative component of habitus and ignores habitual-embodiment component. Habitus does not exist without reproduction of individuals’ practices. Practice is “immanent” and therefore it “is not determined by a rational choice” (Bigo 2011:228). Individuals’ practices are determined by everyday routine that is influenced by the environment they are in. I focus on Asian and Asian American students’ practices, as well as other components of habitus. Their practices are important to analyze how inequalities are perpetuated, because their actions are habitual and they do not realize the actions contribute to reproduce certain inequalities.

4. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The beauty industry today has ballooned into a “multi-billion-dollar” business because of the contribution made by Western and Asian cosmetic companies that take in and exchange their ideas of cosmetic products (Jones 2010:350). However, due to the globalization of the beauty industry, beauty standards have become more complex. Some say, on a micro level, individuals’ beautification practices are more likely to favor physical features of whites, such as bigger eyes and higher nose bridges (Black 2009:246-247). Since individuals’ beautification practices are not quite simple, I employed a multi-method, qualitative case-study design to investigate how Asian young adults form their communities or negotiate their identities through beautification practices and how the western beauty standards influence their daily lives. This research focuses on women’s beautification practices using cosmetic products, such as makeup application, dyeing hair, skin care and so on.

A multi-method qualitative case-study was used in this research. Qualitative research does not seek conclusions from “means of quantifications” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:10-1). Rather, it focuses on “persons’ lives, lived experiences, behaviors, emotions, and feeling” in addition to “social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations” (Strauss

and Corbin 1998:11). I applied grounded theory into my research, because it tends to “offer insight, enhance understanding, and provide a meaningful guide to action” by data I drew from participants (Strauss and Corbin 1998:12). I conducted comparative semi-structured interviews and observations with Asian American female students and Japanese female students. In order to explore participants’ “intricate details about phenomena such as feelings, thought processes, and emotions that are difficult to extract or learn about through more conversational research methods” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:11), I applied qualitative interviews rather than other types of research methods. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, considering the importance of direct contact to elaborate participants’ opinions about beauty in general and how they think about their beautification practices. Interviews lasted from one to one and a half hours long. By conducting semi-structured interviews, I was able to pull out participants’ opinions, which enabled them to think more critically about their beautification practices. With participants’ permission, I audio-recorded the interviews as well as taking notes to confirm accurate interpretation of the interviewee’s responses. In the interviews, I asked probing questions to expand the conversations, and, I had requested participants bring cosmetic products they use and had them explain how they use them. This observation of participants’ cosmetic products helped me analyze to what degree beautification practices were fitting in the participants’ daily lives. It was also important to compare Asian American participants and Japanese participants in terms of

their perspectives toward beautification practices.

Sample Population

The research sample consisted of Asian American female students and Japanese female students at the University of Mississippi Oxford campus. Students in this research included both degree-seeking and non-degree seeking students, from undergraduate to doctoral levels. I conducted a total of twelve interviews (six Asian American female students and six Japanese female students, respectively). For Japanese participants, two of them were degree-seeking graduate students and four of them were non-degree seeking exchange students. For Asian American students, five of them were degree-seeking undergraduate students, and one of them was a degree-seeking graduate student. Two of them identified their ethnic identities as Vietnamese Americans, one of them as Chinese American, one as Korean and white, one as Vietnamese and white, and one identified herself as Korean and Thai. I applied non-probability snowball sampling to this research. Snowball sampling, which “uses a process of chain referral” (Singleton and Straits 2010:178), is efficient to know how Asian American and Japanese women form their communities and how they socialize/separate themselves with their out-groups and in-groups. I recruited the participants by either asking information of nominees or asking participants to hand my information to the nominees to make contact. I offered the participants a choice of either

speaking English or Japanese when they were interviewed. I conducted the interviews with six Asian Americans in English, five Japanese in Japanese, and one Japanese participant in a mixture of Japanese and English.

For American sample populations, Asian American female students were selected because Asian Americans are often viewed as “perpetual foreigners” in the United States, since many Asian Americans experience their parents’ native languages, their ethnic foods, and their ethnic rituals at home, while they are expected to assimilate into western culture in the U.S. (Danico and Ng 2004:37-41, 154). Mass media, in both the US and overseas, often spreads the constructed racial image of “American” as “white” (Suyemoto 2003:113). There is literature which focuses on Asian American college students’ identity negotiation or acculturation processes, such as Kim and Omizo’s (2006:245) study about “behavioral acculturation to U.S. cultural norm” or Kim et al.’s (2012) racial discrimination of Asian American college students in the U.S. However, their research leans toward cognitive behaviors. Rather, I focus on Asian American students’ subconscious sense of their identity negotiation in U.S. society.

For the Asian foreign-born sample population, Japanese students were selected for various reasons. First of all, Japanese idiosyncratic fashion has recently been focused on internationally, while at the same time western ideology is perpetuated by consumption and internalization of western culture (Black 2009). In this research, I explore how Japanese students

view their beautification practices and compare them to those of whites to understand power dynamics between the West and Asia. Moreover, makeup perhaps plays a role of a rite of passage for Japanese women because, according to Ashikari's (2003:72-75) study, applying makeup is an "etiquette" or "norm" for most Japanese women, and when they become age twenty, they are expected to apply makeup. Thus, it is interesting to investigate how college students, who are independent to some degree, but are not quite considered adult either, form their identity as Japanese in the university outside of Japan, where interracial communication is expected to be more frequent.

Data Analysis

In this research, I divided the process of data analysis into several phases. First, all the interview responses and notes were transcribed. In the transcriptional process, I translated interview responses and notes conducted in Japanese into English. Second, this research proceeded to open coding of Asian American samples and Japanese samples, separately. Open coding is "the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data" (Strauss and Corbin 1998:101). It was useful to find themes and frequencies between interviews to divide them into certain labels. Some of the labels I assigned were "reason for makeup," "changes in practices," and "meaning of makeup." Third, I conducted focused

coding by categorizing initial codes to identify and highlight specific patterns. Next, I compared the codes of Asian Americans and Japanese to analyze differences and similarities between the two. During the coding, I took analytical memos to elaborate on findings of the data. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998:110), definition of memos in grounded theory is “the researcher’s record of analysis, thoughts, interpretations, questions, and directions for further data collection.” Both coding and writing analytical memos are important to help discuss the research questions and lead to a conclusion.

Asian American Participants						
<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Student Status</u>	<u>Started Makeup</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Time for Makeup</u>
Tiffany	21	Vietnamese/white	Junior	7 th grade	Everyday	20 min
Jane	23	Chinese	Senior	Junior in high school	Not that much	10 min
Jamie	18	Vietnamese	Freshman	Senior in high school	Everyday	20 min
Mandy	22	Vietnamese	Senior	8 th grade	3 times a week	5 to 15 min
Stacie	26	Korean/white	Graduate	Around 13 to 15	Rarely	-
Jordan	22	Korean/Thai	Senior	High school	Everyday	20 to 30 min
Japanese Participants						
Alice	27	Japanese	Graduate	At the age 22	Everyday	Less than 15 min
Lilly	26	Japanese	Graduate	Freshman in college	Everyday	10 min
Rachel	20	Japanese	Sophomore	Freshman in college	Everyday	15 min
Macy	20	Japanese	Sophomore	Freshman in college	When sees Japanese	10 min
Monica	20	Japanese	Sophomore	Freshman in college	3 times a week	Less than 10 min
Sara	20	Japanese	Junior	Freshman in college	When goes out	10 to 15 min

Note: Time when the participants started wearing *full* makeup is listed on the table.

Site Selection

The University of Mississippi was chosen to conduct qualitative interviews of the samples.

According to Doyle (2003:3), Mississippi is “the racial heart and soul of the nation” because the state has both a higher black population and the most powerful institutional control by whites.

The University of Mississippi specifically has gone through James Meredith’s enrollment and the riot brought by his admission in 1962 (Gallagher 2012:xiii). Some news articles suggest because of these racial/ethnic incidents, the awareness of racial/ethnic problems is much higher compared to other academic institutions (Wagster 2014). Despite the fact that the percentage of Asian students enrolled in the University of Mississippi keeps growing compared to the last few years¹ (UM Institutional Research & Assessment 2009-2014) and the number of international students coming from Asian countries have been increasing since 2010, (UM Diversity Plan 2013:11), the percentage of Asians living in Mississippi has been as low as 0.9 percent since 2010(ACS 1 Year Estimate from 2010-2013). Thus, it was effective to see how and whether Asian Americans who are in a predominantly white space conduct their beautification practices and whether Japanese who use to be in a predominantly Asian space change their practices.

Research Ethics

For this research, ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before I started the interviews. I prepared an information sheet about the research to inform

¹ 3.8 percent in fall 2014 to 2015, 3.6 percent in fall 2013 to 2014, and 3.5 percent in fall 2012 to 2013.

participants they are free to participate or not to participate. Participants were informed of the rights they have in the process, particularly the right to review material, the right to withdraw from the process, and any risks they might be taking. All participants' personal information was confidential and anonymous. I also prepared signed release forms for the participants for permission to use their interview response quotes. In accordance with the policy of the University of Mississippi about snowball recruiting (UM Policy Directly), I asked the participants whether they were able to refer potential participants for the research. I also obtained permission for the nominating participants to open their identity to nominees. I indicated the participants have the right to accept or decline to nominate potential participants.

Limitations

This research has certain limitations. First of all, there might be a misinterpretation of what participants intend to say because of a language barrier, since I am not a native speaker of English. However, I asked participants how they meant or defined certain words in probing questions to minimize the risk of misinterpretation. I also compared different interviews constantly to describe the findings adequately. Second, it is challenging to generalize the sample as Asians or Asian Americans because the sample size of this research is limited and it only focuses on college students at the University of Mississippi. Third, it is unavoidable to generalize

about the global beauty industry and its impact on non-western populations from a small sample of Asian and Asian American students at the University of Mississippi. However, I hope this study produces a descriptive analysis of how Asian groups approach western hegemonic beauty standards and how their beautification practices shape their identities.

5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Berry (2007:11) defines beautification practices as the procedures social actors use to alter their physical appearance, including diet, exercise, taking supplements, and so on. According to Berry (2007:3), Western women alter their appearances primarily due to cultural norms surrounding physical attractiveness, or what we might call “conventional beauty.” Attractiveness, then, is a matter of what is socially acceptable, or socially desirable, since beauty is social constructed.

My research examines beautification practices of Asian and Asian American women who are in a predominantly white context by analyzing their interpretations of their routine practices. In doing so, I compare the differences and similarities between Asians and Asian Americans, assessing whether and to what degree western media influences their beautification practices, how they negotiate their identity, and how they deal with stereotypes toward Asians.

My interviews with participants revealed two main findings regarding differences between Asian American participants and Japanese participants. First, Asian American participants do not necessarily compare themselves to white Americans, whereas Japanese participants constantly compare themselves to white Americans, using words such as “foreigners,” “foreign people,” or simply “Americans” to indicate white Americans. This

suggests two themes. First of all, the Japanese participants do not fully assimilate themselves into the U.S. and thus they segregate themselves from white Americans on campus. Another theme is that the Japanese participants internalize, as Suyemoto (2003:113) argues, “the American =white equation” through media. The second finding I have noticed is that Japanese participants view beautification practices differently from Asian American participants. Japanese participants proceed to beautification practices not only for themselves, but also under the expectation of society for women to look good. Contrary to Japanese participants, Asian American participants put more emphasis on leisure when they proceed to beautification practices. From observation of participants’ cosmetic products, four of the six Japanese participants possess products that are not sold at drug stores and are considered to be high-end, such as Dior lipstick, Marc Jacobs mascara, Clinique primer, lunasol (cosmetic line from Kanebō, a Japanese brand) eyeshadow, and so on. Compared to Japanese participants, none of the Asian American participants possess high-end products. Instead, they have the products of drug store brands like Maybelline, or Revlon. This result suggests that Asian cosmetic companies are not prominent among Asian American participants, and they do not want to invest money into makeup practices.

In this chapter, I review participants’ beautification practices focusing on makeup and compare how the practices are recognized among Japanese and Asian Americans to discuss why

each group sees beautification practices as an obligation or leisure activity. Later in this chapter, I talk about how makeup practices impact Asians' and Asian Americans' daily lives and how they view their identity by comparing themselves to whites through beautification practices in terms of meaning of beauty.

Beauty in Practice: Makeup Application

Berry (2007:62) explains that cosmetic products “only aid *in the appearances of*” certain physical features and therefore, they are “superficial devices to alter our appearances” (Berry 2007:62, 64-6). Makeup does not seem to change individuals mentally and physically. Yet, Dellinger and Williams (1997:153) argue the positive aspects of makeup, through which women who apply makeup seek “empowerment and pleasure.” The data suggests there are negative, neutral and positive effects that makeup applications have on women. I labeled abiding social norms as negative, going through rite of passages as neutral, and enhancing their features, and gaining self-confidence as positive effects.

Interviews revealed that, for Japanese women, makeup was understood as a responsibility or obligation rather than to have fun in Japan since a lot of participants say that they feel they *have to* wear makeup, instead of saying that they *want to* wear makeup. Although two of the six Asian American participants also say that sometimes they feel they have to wear makeup, they

explain they have to wear makeup for themselves to feel more confident. In contrast to Asian American participants, Japanese participants care more about the social expectation to wear makeup, like Sara, a 20-year-old's friends asking her if she is not embarrassed to be in public when she shows up without makeup. Ashikari (2003:72) states showing up with makeup in public is a social norm for middle-class women in Japan. Both Japanese men and women "take it for granted that a woman will wear make-up in public places" (Ashikari 2003:72). In fact, four of the six Japanese participants say that they have had negative comments from their Japanese friends when they were not wearing makeup. Macy, a 20-year-old, says that she wears makeup whenever she sees other Japanese students in the class she is taking, since she started wearing makeup when she entered college. Rachel, a 20-year-old, says she feels like she has to wear makeup when she sees her Japanese friends wearing it.

Part of the reason why makeup application has been a social norm in Japan is because Japanese women are taught to wear makeup as a rite of passage. Song (2003:10) argues that cosmetic surgery among Asian American women is considered as a rite of passage. She defines a rite of passage as "a pathway into adulthood" and describes that "cosmetic surgery has evolved to a cultural norm" (2013:10). I argue the same with Japanese women's makeup applications. All of the six participants say they first experienced any kind of beautification practices, such as applying manicures or haircare, from elementary school to middle school. However, five of the

six Japanese participants say they started wearing full makeup when they were enrolled in college, unlike other beautification practices, which they started in their early teens. Four of them say their mothers took them to the cosmetic counter at the department store to buy full cosmetic products when they entered college. On the other hand, Monica, a 20 year-old, explains how she reluctantly started wearing makeup.

I guess it's because of my mom. She told me that I might want to wear makeup at that time. Like I told you my high school didn't have school rules, so everyone could wear makeup. But I didn't want my skin to breakout – I have sensitive skin – and I didn't want to wear makeup. But when you were a college student, you know [laughs]. I don't know. Maybe college is no more mandatory education, so people try to be more mature. I don't know.

According to the participants' responses, they are exposed to makeup as a rite of passage after finishing high school. College in Japan is considered to be a space for adults to reproduce the social norm of wearing makeup. Monica's response indicates that she recognizes that wearing makeup at college is considered to be "normal," even though she does not want to wear makeup.

In contrast, Asian American participants explain that makeup enhances their physical features and makes them feel good. Although all of the six Asian American participants started wearing makeup earlier than Japanese participants, Asian American participants tend to wear

makeup for special occasions, or when they want to “feel pretty.” They do not seem to be pressured by “social norms” that women have to wear makeup like Japanese participants.

Mandy, 22 years old, says she likes to “play with makeup” when she is bored.

There’s no real trend. If I feel like wearing it, I’m gonna wear it. If I don’t, I’m not. Sometimes I play with makeup with no reasons. I don’t have to go anywhere, but just play with it. Experimenting just for fun. I’m not very consistent with makeup.

Jane, a 23 year-old, says she wants to wear makeup rather than she has to do it. Her response indicates campus is not a space to wear makeup for American students.

I think I kind of want to, I don’t really have to. I guess it’s more chill [sic] in Mississippi and not like a lot of people care anyways... A lot of people don’t care about putting on makeup to go to class, because some people wear just some t-shirts and shorts... I guess it [wearing makeup] would be more important when you get a job. We’re now a student and it’s not as important. Once you’re working in society, people are more like aware, whereas in college, it’s not as important, I guess.

Five of the six Asian American participants’ responses suggest that makeup practices are not tethered to their daily routines: like Mandy, who claims that she *loves* wearing makeup, but

recognizes makeup practices as something she can add on, not necessarily something she needs every day. Japanese participants, on the other hand, recognize makeup practices as more of a “manner” (Lilly) and routine. When asked questions about everyday steps when they apply makeup, Japanese participants explain them quite in detail, while Asian American participants are ambiguous about their everyday routines. Alice, a Japanese student, for example, applies makeup and eats breakfast at the same time:

Alice: I get up. I nuke soymilk for 2 minutes. While I’m doing that, I wash my face and wear contact lenses. I apply toner and moisturizer after that. I take out my soy milk from microwave. While I’m taking the heat from the milk, I wear my base makeup.

Me: What are base makeups?

Alice: There’s not a lot, but you know, you sometimes have bags under your eyes.

Oh, actually, before the base makeup, I do massages.

Me: On your face?

Alice: Yeah, my face often gets puffy. When it’s really bad, I do massages and some stretching.

Me: On your body?

Alice: Yeah. After that, I do my makeup.

When I have terrible bags under my eyes, I wear concealer. After that [she takes out her makeup products], I apply this BB cream. Then, I apply powder. I finish doing my makeup at this point, once. After this, I do some light exercise. Then, I go back to my face again. When I look really pale, I apply powder foundation and make my face look like matt finish. After that, I do my eyebrows and do my eye makeup. When I don't have much time, I just finish here and go to school, but when I have much time, I apply blushes or I do something more in detail. Like contouring my face. It happens sometimes.

In contrast to Alice, a participant like Stacie, a 26 year-old Asian American, does not have routines:

I don't really have routines at all. Like if I know I'm going to be seen, I try make my hair look okay... You know, if I wear makeup, it's maybe once, maybe a handful times of the month. Mainly for me, it's all about hygiene.

Japanese participants also explain their cosmetic products in more detail than Asian American participants when I observe their cosmetic products. Two of the Japanese participants, including Sara, have electronic cosmetic products that none of the Asian American participants possess.

Me: Do you use them [Panasonic hot eyelash curler and Panasonic shaver] a lot?

Sara: I do every single day [laughs].

Me: Do you like it [the eyelash curler] better, compared to regular eyelash curler?

Sara: It does curl your lashes ... And this [Panasonic shaver] doesn't hurt your body.

Me: So you shave your face and your body?

Sara: Yeah.

Me: Like you said, you like Japanese products better because they fit you better?

Sara: Yeah. I'm okay with those [American] cosmetic products, but basics [basic skin care products] are better in Japan. I like Japanese mascara better too. For basics, I use Japanese ones. The products that I use over the basics, I don't mind using Americans', or products made in anywhere.

However, most Japanese participants say they either began to wear less makeup or stopped wearing makeup since they came to the United States. Macy and other Japanese participants say that no one on campus wears makeup compared to college students in Japan. Lilly, a 26-year-old, compares friends in the U.S. and Japanese friends who told her to "wear makeup right."

Me: What do you think they mean by wearing makeup "right"?

Lilly: Since I suck at it [wearing makeup], they tell me I should learn more about how to wear makeup. Here, it's opposite. Friends here think I'm good at wearing makeup, because no one wears it. They say I would look better without makeup... I may wear too much makeup for people here. No one wears a lot of makeup, you know? No one talks about makeup, to begin with, even though I show up without putting them on. My friends here never said something like "Oh my gosh! You don't wear makeup today." Even though I run into people without makeup on and I tell them not to look at my face, they say I don't look different. I think it's different from Japan.

The reason why Japanese participants have changed their makeup practices since they came to the U.S. is they tend to fit in the space they are in. All of the six Japanese participants mention women have to wear makeup carefully in order to fit time, place, and occasion. Macy says she would "stand out" if she wore the same makeup she used to do when she was in Japan. Alice, a 27 year-old, who is trying to get a research grant, says she intentionally wears less makeup when she is doing her research., because she wants to look "professional" and people around her might think she has "plenty of spare time" to wear makeup rather than put her effort in her research. For Japanese participants, makeup is not a leisure practice because the practice is adopted in their daily routines like brushing teeth or taking a shower.

In contrast, all of the twelve participants have in common that they say they can be more confident about how they look by wearing makeup. Tiffany, a 21-year-old Asian American woman, says makeup is like a “security blanket” for her face, because she can look more appealing and cover acne that “would disgust” other people. Sara, a Japanese woman, says she wears makeup for her motivation. She explains when she does not wear makeup, it reminds her of being sick and staying bed. Jane, an Asian American woman, says she covers her blemishes on her face and dark circles under her eyes not to look tired, even though she does not wear much makeup. Dellinger and Williams (1997:159) argue a “healthy” appearance created by makeup boosts women’s self-confidence. My research also suggests women’s healthy image is tied to makeup: especially flawless skin and wide open eyes.

To sum up, wearing makeup helps women to have more self-confidence. However, data suggests Japanese participants and Asian American participants view makeup application differently. Asian American participants recognize that makeup is like jewelry or ornament (Stacie). All of the six Asian American participants say they like wearing makeup just because they feel they can enhance their facial features or that it is simply it is fun. They do not think makeup is necessary in society. On the other hand, Japanese participants feel makeup is more of a manner, because it is a norm for middle-class Japanese women. Their makeup practices have become their habitus: it has been normalized by the collective history through rites of passage

and shared belief that adults wear makeup. Japanese participants wear makeup almost every day to follow the Japanese social norm, which reproduces and legitimizes women's routine makeup practices.

Makeup for Capital

Other than gaining self-confidence, makeup practices appear to have little impact on Japanese and Asian American participants' daily lives. Yet, two of the twelve participants explain wearing makeup enable them to benefit or profit when they interact with others. Alice, who started wearing makeup at age 22, says she realizes people at restaurants or retail stores are nicer to her when she wears makeup.

I guess I look like I have some money. When I go there without makeup, maybe they think I don't look appropriate being there. I don't know what they're exactly thinking, but what I do know is they treat me nicely... They just leave me alone when I don't wear makeup... Even at restaurants, people working there try to have conversation with me when they take orders... At clothing stores, they don't do anything like ignoring me when I wear makeup.

Alice's response suggests her makeup itself is objectified as a signifier of capital. People she meets at retail stores or restaurants judge her by her makeup, not by her attitude toward them.

Mandy, who wears makeup for fun, explains why her Vietnamese family puts too much emphasis on beauty.

My family definitely put too much put pressure on beauty. Honestly, I think it's because they're all rich or whatever. They have nothing to do than to look good... My mom [who owns nail salon] told me whenever we dress up and look nice at work, people were more friendly [sic] towards us. They also give us more tips... I kind of got irritated whenever my mom said that, because beauty shouldn't matter that much. You should matter more like how you treat your customers and how well you do for them based on how much tip you get. That's what I think... My mom was like "No, trust me. If you dress up and look good, people are more attracted to give you more [tips] and nicer to you." It's kind of true. It's sad that it's true.

Mandy also says she know there are some Vietnamese coming to the U.S. illegally trying to wear a lot of makeup. That is because when they make themselves look better by wearing makeup, Americans recognize them as high class and do not suspect that they are undocumented. Alice and Mandy's makeup actually symbolizes their capital to gain profit. Yet, Mandy's response about Vietnamese people who immigrate to the U.S. is different from what Japanese participants are usually concerned about in the American context. According to Suyemoto (2003:123), many

Asian Americans believe that they can integrate themselves into the U.S. when they try to “become culturally ‘American’” by the way they speak, dress, and behave. For Asian immigrants in the United States, makeup is believed to be one of the important tools to fit in and interact with their out-groups.

Wearing makeup influences individuals’ capital especially when they interact with others. This result is similar to Glenn’s (2008) argument about symbolic capital of women’s attractiveness, yet it is race-based. Mandy’s response especially indicates the inequality between whites and non-whites. Danico and Ng (2004:149) argue that the generation gaps between Asian American children and their parents are problematic because the parents have been influenced in Asian countries, while their children have been raised in the U.S. cultural norm. Thus, perhaps their value systems are different from those of their Asian American children. Mandy says makeup is like accessories and, therefore, the way she views makeup is different from how her mother does. However, she internalizes the fact that the clients at nail salon judge her and her family by their makeup, even though she does not like it.

White Facial Features and “Asian Beauty”

On the other hand, there are some responses that suggest Japanese participants distinguish themselves from white Americans. Macy says she “got used to” seeing whites since she came to

the U.S., saying “When I was in Japan, I liked Americans or foreigners’ facial features, because these were something I didn’t have. But when I came here and see only westerners, I started to think Japanese are actually cute.” On the other hand, Rachel’s response about following Instagram bi-racial Japanese celebrities suggests the influence of Japanese media that prefers white physical features.

Me: All of the celebrities you mentioned now were bi-racial.

Rachel: Really?

Me: Have you realized that [you follows bi-racial models] before?

Rachel: Not until now. But people like them are popular right now. They have many followers, too.

Me: Why do you think that is?

Rachel: I guess they have something Asians don’t have. Like Maggie (a Japanese bi-racial model), she’s not like Japanese.

Me: You mean she doesn’t look like Japanese?

Rachel: Yes. There are many Japanese who like Taylor Swift, for example. I think they adore things from overseas. I’m not personally like that, but the celebrities I mentioned were fashionable and I’m like “Well, I can follow them.”

She also explains that how her Japanese friends admire whites.

Rachel: When I go to Tokyo, I've seen more tourists [from outside of Japan] than before. But still, my friends see them and say "Oh, he/she's coming from a foreign country." If the tourists were Chinese or Asians, they probably wouldn't say anything. But if they were whites, people would be like "Wow, he/she's cool!" I don't personally like that, though [laughs]. I was like "Okay, [Japanese] people like whites." If you look at Twitter, for example, many people put pictures of white models on their profile, you know? It's like *the* beauty. I don't like that. I don't like it when people do that. Yet, there're many Japanese who are like that [admire white models].

Macy and Rachel's responses indicate that they recognize white facial features are different from theirs. Macy uses the words "foreigners" and "Americans" to describe white Americans. Instead of expressing white racial features are different, Macy and Rachel say the features are "something Asians don't have." Not only does the Japanese media that they mention normalizes and reinforce positive views toward white racial features, but the Japanese participants also think their facial features are inadequate.

In fact, two of the six Japanese participants explain an extreme makeup style called "halfer makeup," that looks like half white and half Asian. It has been popular in Japanese media or fashion magazines (Macy). Along with Rachel's response about many Japanese who admire

white models, halfer makeup is branding bi-racial white and Asian individuals as if their facial features are better than other racial/ethnic groups. This makeup style is similar to “cosmetic surgery makeup,” another makeup style participants mentioned, with false eyelashes, color contact lenses, or eye glue to enlarge eyes and sometimes nose shadow to make the nose bridge look higher. Lilly explains about a well-known Japanese blogger who wears cosmetic surgery makeup:

She’s wearing color contacts, false eyelashes, and eye glue every single day. She really is ugly when she doesn’t wear makeup. Her eyes look completely different. They’re like half of the size [compared to the eyes with makeup]. It’s really intense, you know? I don’t think I want to change dramatically like she does. I think her [makeup] skill is amazing, though.

Lilly’s response suggests that she feels small eyes are “ugly” compared to big eyes.

Among Asian American participants, five of the six say they focus on their eyes the most when they wear makeup, because “it’s the part of the face that grabs people’s attention” (Jordan). On the other hand two of them say they wear eye makeup, because they feel their eyes are small. Even though they do not connect their eyes with Asian facial features, they recognize small eyes as less attractive than big eyes.

In fact, three of the six Japanese participants are aware of racial slurs and stereotypes of

Asians' eyes. Macy explains that Asians with small eyes are the stereotypical image that western countries demand.

When you are in Japan, there are not many people who look like foxes, you know? [Who have small eyes like foxes.] That's not my image of Japanese, but images of Asians from the world are like that. Smaller eyes than Europeans. I used to hate that stereotypical image. I was like "Whoa, Japanese do have big eyes." Have you seen some Asian slurs like squinting your eyes? I was really pissed off by that... I've seen people like Miley Cyrus, doing squinting eyes thing. I felt I was made fun of. I've also done some research about the racial slurs and realized people do those moves, because they're joking about Asians' eyes.

Sara says she was made fun of for her mono-lid eyes when she lived in the U.S. as a child. Rachel on the other hand, says many people who have mono-lid eyes around her compliment her eyes with natural folds.

I have a friend who has mono-lid eyes. She always tells me "[Sigh] I'm jealous." When we see each other, she looks me into my eyes. She says "Why do your eyes so refined?" I'm like "I don't know." ... I don't mean to be offensive, but I'm glad that I have double-lids. Well, if I had mono-lid eyes, I would definitely want them to be double-lids.

Rachel feels uncomfortable when her friend comments on her eyes. However, her response that she would want to change her eyes to be double-lids suggests she recognizes double-lids as better than mono-lids.

When asked a question about cosmetic surgery, both Japanese and American participants say they know people around them who have done cosmetic surgery. Even though I did not specify certain kinds of cosmetic surgery, all of them mention blepharoplasty (eye surgery) and rhinoplasty (nose surgery), and eight of the twelve participants mention only those two surgeries instead of other types of cosmetic surgeries, such as botox injection or breast augmentation. Their responses indicate that Japanese and Asian Americans put emphasis on their eyes and their noses more than other facial and physical features.

In fact, the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons' (ISAPS) international survey (2011) on aesthetic/cosmetic procedures shows Asia was ranked the highest proceeding cosmetic surgery, and three East Asian countries - China, Japan, and South Korea – were placed in the top ten countries for total cosmetic procedures. Interestingly, some of the most popular cosmetic surgeries in those countries are blepharoplasty and rhinoplasty, whereas breast augmentation and lipoplasty (fat removal) are popular in the US.²

Although four of the six Japanese participants say either they have or they used to wear

² See Appendix 2

extreme cosmetic products like false eyelashes, color contact lenses, or eye glue, none of them say that they keep wearing them since they came to the U.S.. Two of the six participants say that they started to like “Asian beauty,” which is more natural and uses less makeup. However, some Japanese participants define “Asian beauty” as individuals who have stereotypical Asian features with smaller eyes and lower nose bridges, while Asian American participants define it as innocent and natural looking. Macy explains Asians’ eyes are “exotic”:

Me: How do you define “exotic”?

Macy: I don’t know. In my opinion, it’s not the image of general Japanese, but it’s the image of Europeans demand what Japanese should look like. Like someone who has black hair, slightly fair skin tone, but eyes are like sharper.

In addition, three of the six participants say their friends in Japan favor certain white facial features, bi-racial celebrities, or idolize whites. Macy says she used to like white celebrities more than Japanese celebrities because she did not see many whites when she was in Japan and that is why she says she was not “used to” them. This indicates the more Asians and Asian Americans are distant from a predominantly white context, the more powerfully media influences them. The population of Asians is much higher than those of whites in Japan and most of the time, Japanese get information about whites from mainstream media. Macy says she used to read fashion magazines that featured western models and their makeup styles. She found it

more attractive than those of Japanese makeup styles.

To sum up, both Japanese and Asian American participants recognize big eyes are more attractive than small eyes. On the other hand, the Japanese participants view “Asian beauty” from stereotypical facial features such as small eyes, while Asian American participants explain “Asian beauty” as overall images like sweet or cute looking. However, none of the Japanese participants explain “Asian beauty” images as Japanese images. Like Macy says, “Japanese have big eyes”; Sara also explains Japanese images differently from those of stereotypical Asians, such as “fluffy” looking with loose wavy hair with bangs and wearing a lot of makeup. These Japanese image suggests that Japanese participants differentiate themselves from other Asians and Asian Americans. Moreover, interview responses suggest Japanese participants devalue small eyes and Asian facial features as somehow lacking, compared to white facial features. This contradiction of “Asian beauty” comes from an appropriation of stereotypical Asian facial features by the mainstream media, depicting them based on Asians’ racial identity. Stacie, who grew up in a white household, says her female relatives put on her makeup that looked like geisha with white paint and red lipstick when she was little. She explains her family was not exposed to Asian culture and thought geisha makeup was how Asians were supposed to look. Bonilla-Silva et al. (2006:232) argue that a viewing certain group “as a unified social category” causes reproduction of racial prejudice when individuals interact with each other based on their

“collective experience” or attitude. Mainstream media causes negative images of Asians on the one hand, and depicts Asian facial features as exotic objects on the other. Media images of Asian facial features convince both Asians and non-Asians that Asians look foreign. Consequently Asian individuals differentiate themselves from whites. Macy adopts stereotypical Asian features media provides, but denies them as the facial features she really demands.

Meaning of Beauty on Campus

According to Berry (2007:3), although there are “universal features of beauty” such as “symmetry of facial features and a healthy appearance” regardless of race/ethnicity, attractive appearances of women are leaning toward western beauty standards because of media exposure. When asked the question about the meaning of beauty in general, all participants (both Japanese and Asian American) explain inner beauty, such as having a good personality, being confident, or trying hard for goals. Moreover, when asked the question of how beauty is defined at the University of Mississippi campus, none of the Asian American participants mention white facial features or white Americans in specific. Participants like Tiffany or Jane even seem a bit uncomfortable about specifying a beautiful person by saying “it’s really hard for me to define a beautiful person. I could think one person who is totally different from the other person who I also think is beautiful” (Tiffany) or “uh, I’m not sure. Maybe, like, um, girls who look toned and

fit” (Jane). However, four of the six Japanese participants say they feel beauty is defined as “typical American” facial features like “high nose bridge or big eyes” (Monica) or those of “whites in general” (Rachel) on campus. Their responses indicate that Japanese participants feel Asian facial features are different from western beauty standards and are left out from majority of the student body on campus. In other words, Japanese participants feel they look different and they are distant from mainstream beauty standards on campus. Rachel defines the meaning of beauty as “to attract everyone,” implying that Asians are not considered beautiful on campus because she believes the main student body is not interested in them. Her answer suggests racial segregation between whites and non-whites on campus:

Me: What does it mean to be beautiful to you?

Rachel: Beautiful? [Pose] Hmmm, to attract everyone?

Me: What do you mean?

Rachel: Like everyone respects you. Even though you see yourself as beautiful, if people around you don’t see that way, it doesn’t mean you’re beautiful. When a decent amount of people agree that the person is beautiful, she really is beautiful.

It’s like to be appreciated by someone...Well, I feel like here, in the States, Mississippi is conservative. I feel like whites are considered to be more beautiful.

Or I feel Asians are not part of romantic interests for whites. That’s why I don’t

try hard to look good [laughs].

Me: Why do you think whites are not romantically interested in Asians?

Rachel: Asians look different from whites. For us, whites are like god. Asians admire them. For them, we are in the lower rank. Like we are viewed as inferior.

It may not be too extreme like that, but they don't have to date a racial group who seems alien to them [laughs].

Lilly says she often loses her self-confidence because she cannot “compete” against white girls who “have boobs and curvy bodies.” Lilly feels whites have somewhat more attractive and desirable features than Asians do. The Japanese participants not only recognize whites are the majority and “normal” on campus, but participants like Rachel or Lilly even think whites have certain features that are better than those of people of color.

On the other hand, Asian American participants describe a person who is “fit and slightly tan” (Jordan) as considered to be beautiful on campus. According to Jane, Asian Americans on campus lean more toward on western standards of beauty that value a “healthy looking image.” Jamie says some of the Asian Americans follow western trends when they wear makeup or when they dress. This indicates Asian American participants feel they are more influenced by western standards.

In contrast, Jane also mentions that “an Asian FOB”³ (an Asian person who just arrived to the U.S.) is thought to be attractive, because she is “exotic and mysterious.” Jane defines the word “exotic” as “something that’s a mystery. They’re [Americans] being introduced to something they’ve never seen before.” According to Constable (2003:13), stereotypes of Asian women have long been depicted through Hollywood films in two different ways: “sweet and innocent, sexual romantic ‘oriental doll[s]’” or “dragon ladies, prostitutes, and devious aggressors.” Either way, U.S. popular culture popularizes and reproduces the portrayal of Asian women as “alien and exotic” (Mazumdar 1998:48).

In fact, three of the six Asian American participants answer that they have seen Japanese makeup styles through YouTube videos, and the styles are very different and distinctive from those of American makeup styles. They define Japanese makeup styles as innocent, cute, and sweet looking with extremely big eyes and small noses. Tiffany says Japanese makeup styles seem to look weird to most people in the U.S., yet they are the styles which “most Asian girls look up to, or gain inspiration from.”

The different perspectives of beauty between Japanese and Asian Americans indicate these two groups do not share the exact same makeup styles and beauty standards. Three of the six Asian Americans seem uncomfortable talking about other racial/ethnic groups in terms of

³ Fresh Off the Boat

their appearances because it is taboos. Instead, they also think some Asians are thought to be attractive. On the other hand, Japanese participants constantly talk about white Americans, but they do not recognize being tan and fit as the qualities of a beautiful person on campus. This result suggests Japanese participants do not completely assimilate into American culture.

Habitus and Practices

None of the participants specifically say they try to make their eyes big or heighten their nose bridges according to western beauty standards. Participants like Mandy and Jordan say they are satisfied with their facial features. Moreover, participants like Tiffany, Jamie, and Stacie do not specify any racial or ethnic group when asked questions, “How do you describe a person who is beautiful?” because “everyone has their own beauty” (Tiffany) or “there’s a lot of beautiful person [sic] in the world” (Jamie). However, the western beauty standards Berry (2007) argues and “Asian beauty standards” that the world demands are different. Although both Japanese and Asian American participants mention “Asian beauty” at some points in the interviews, only two of them say they started to like “Asian beauty.” Furthermore no one says they proceed to makeup practices according to the “Asian beauty standards.” Even though Macy says now she likes “authentic Asian” looks, she never says those looks are beautiful or attractive:

Like Ai Tominaga,⁴ or any other [Asian] models worldwide look really Asian, you know? I used to think bigger eyes, like dolly face were cuter than them. But from the world's perspective, people want Asians to look like foxes⁵. So I realize maybe authentic Asian looks are better.

Participants do not feel that they are conforming to western beauty standards as their daily routines. Yet, Bourdieu ([1977] 2006:82) argues habitus as the following:

[Habitus] produces individual and collective practices... The system of dispositions- a past which survives in the present and tends to perpetuate itself into the future by making itself present in practices structured according to its principles, an internal law relaying the continuous exercise of the law of external necessities ... - is the principle of the continuity and regularity which objectivism discerns in the social world without being able to give them a rational basis.

Although Cho (2012:215) argues there is no difference between western beauty standards and East Asian beauty standards - because they share similar traits - it is the western beauty standards that neutralize Asian beauty standards. Even though none of the participants explain white facial features in specific, there are five Asian American participants who say they focus on their eyes the most when they wear makeup, and two of them actually wear eye makeup because they feel

⁴ A Japanese model who performs both inside and outside of Japan.

⁵ In Japan, "eyes look like foxes" indicate slit eyes.

their eyes are small. The makeup practices that make their eyes more attractive link to western beauty standards, although they do not necessarily connect their eyes with Asian facial features. Rachel also says she is “not biased about a certain racial group” when she thinks about a beautiful person. However, Rachel also explains her nose is “crushed” and would want to change it to have higher nose bridge if she could. In this way, Rachel expresses her unconscious preference for white facial features. Bourdieu’s ([1977] 2006) habitus is suitable for explaining that Japanese and Asian American participants’ behaviors, perpetuate dispositions toward beauty standards that they do not recognize or adopt. They make internal laws of beauty present in their practices, regulating them without any rational basis.

Asian Americans seem to be concerned more about fitting in as a minority group on campus. Four of the six participants agree that tan and fit women are considered to be beautiful. This beauty ideal is different from Asian beauty standards that Jane explains as “pale and innocent.” In addition, Stacie explains being beautiful on campus means to be able to fit in.

Four of the six Asian American participants learn how to wear makeup from YouTube videos. However, they do not claim that they watch non-Asian videos on a regular basis. They say non-Asian youtubers’ facial features or makeup styles do not “fit” their physical features. None of the Asian American participants say they view western beauty standards negatively or positively, but at the same time, they feel their own physical features are different from those of

non-Asians. This result suggests that Asian American participants try to integrate themselves into the dominant group on campus by valuing the same standards of beauty even though the majority of the students' facial features on campus do not "fit" those of Asians'. Their responses indicate that Asian American participants try to adopt western beauty standards by fitting in to the mainstream student body on campus.

In conclusion, Bourdieu ([1977] 2006:80) states "habitus is the production of a commonsense world endowed with the objectivity secured by consensus on the meaning of practices and the world." None of the Japanese and Asian American participants say they like white facial features better. Yet, Japanese and Asian Americans' belief that big eyes are more attractive than small eyes has become a commonsense, and therefore, they care about their eyes and sometimes their noses. They unconsciously value certain features of whites and accept stereotypical images of Asian facial features that mainstream media depicts, just because white facial features are considered to be normal and "global beauty standards." Even though Japanese participants changed their makeup styles since they came to the U.S., they list white women as a definition of beautiful people on campus. This indicates Japanese participants take it for granted that they are not applicable to the beauty standards on campus. Asian American participants do not compare themselves to whites as Japanese participants do. However, they also recognize big eyes as attractive traits. Moreover, they support being fit and tan, which is "very popular and

much admired among European women” (Ashikari 2005:85). They routinely proceed to beautification practices by viewing western standards of beauty as normal. It shows the habitus - the idea that white facial features are more attractive - they have fostered before they came to the United States.

6. CONCLUSION

The global beauty industry has rapidly been expanding. Beauty markets in East Asian countries are growing, and some of their cosmetic companies are successful worldwide. Yet, beauty standards are homogenized as those of the West and Asian individuals are either underrepresented or depicted somehow negatively through media. On the other hand, white individuals are overrepresented compared to other racial/ethnic groups. This affects individuals to unconsciously recognize whiteness, as normal. I reviewed the literature of the global beauty industry, identity formation of Asians, and East Asians' and Asian Americans' beautification practices in micro-level, and then conducted qualitative interviews and participant observations to understand how they conform to the beauty ideals through everyday interaction with whites. I applied Bourdieu's habitus as my theoretical framework to describe how Asians and Asian Americans on a US university campus normalize and practice their routines by following western beauty standards.

I argue how Japanese and Asian American participants view their beautification practices differently. For Japanese participants, makeup is like an "obligation" (Rachel) or "manners" (Lilly) to show up in public. Although five of the six Japanese participants say everyone

including themselves, wears makeup in Japan, three of them give negative comments about makeup applications like “Honestly, I don’t want to put anything on my face, because I have breakouts [but I have to]” (Rachel). Japanese participants do not necessarily enjoy wearing makeup, but Japanese society expects individuals to do so. Their makeup practices have changed since they came to the U.S. and they unconsciously accept the images of “authentic Asians” that mainstream media depicts. Five of the six Japanese participants also recognize that white women are defined as beautiful. Thus, habitus is suitable for Japanese participants’ makeup practices and the perspectives of beauty: they are normalizing white facial features and perpetuating inequality between Asians and whites in terms of their appearances.

Five of the six Asian American participants, on the other hand, explain that they do not necessarily have to wear makeup unless they want to. Four of the six participants feel that they experience more casual styles of makeup in the South. For example Jane says “People here don’t really care [about wearing makeup]” and Tiffany says “[People in Mississippi] emphasize on natural beauty compared to urban cities where everybody wears makeup and have some kind of dramatic style.” Only two Asian American participants respond that they are wearing makeup to make their eyes bigger. They do not mention their eyes are compatible with Asian facial features. However, Tiffany thinks “Asians in general, we share a lot –it doesn’t matter what ethnicity, or nationality- we share common traits like black hair, sometimes smaller eyes, the yellow pigment

of the skin” and therefore, some of her Asian friends show their individualities by dyeing their hair blonde, wearing color contact lenses and false lashes. She explains those beauty practices are the way of self-expression and not conformity to the western beauty standards. Yet, her response indicates that she recognizes Asian as one group and justifies white facial features as a way of self-expression. Moreover, even though Stacie feels to be beautiful on campus means to fit in, she says she will “never look like one of those sorority people.” These responses from Tiffany and Stacie suggest there is an aesthetical gap between Asian Americans and whites on campus. Just like Japanese participants, Asian American participants also experience, yet perpetuate, inequalities. As Bourdieu ([1977] 2006:78) argues “the habitus ... produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle” Thus, Asian American and Japanese participants contribute to the production of inequality between beauty standards.

In summary, beautification practices among Asian and Asian American students on the University of Mississippi campus are complex because they are not simply emulating white facial features. They practice their makeup to fit in to the mainstream student body on campus. Jones’ (2010) argument that Asians follow local identities as well as global identities is true. Yet, they unconsciously legitimize “authentic” Asian features described by media. Berry (2007), on the other hand, argues individuals’ beauty standards are homogenized toward western beauty

standards. However, she only states how the inequalities between whites and non-whites are perpetuated and does not clarify how Asians and Asian Americans internalize the inequalities. It is important to know that the Japanese and Asian American participants take it for granted that beauty standards on campus do not fit their facial features. I elaborate two main findings in the results and analysis chapter: the acceptance of the equation white=American among Japanese participants and different perspectives toward makeup between Japanese participants and Asian American participants. Japanese participants keep mentioning white Americans in the interviews unless I ask specific questions about other racial/ethnic groups. Japanese participants internalize the view of Americans as foreign and white. Japanese media portrays western individuals as foreign and treats their facial features as commodities in comparison to those of other racial/ethnic groups. Thus, Japanese participants separate themselves from white Americans, but they devalue Asian facial features that do not match white facial features.

My second finding is that Japanese participants and Asian American participants view makeup practice differently. Asian American participants try to enhance their facial features, while Japanese participants try not to deviate from the society by wearing makeup. Furthermore, the Asian American participants conform to the natural and healthy look that is valued by the majority of the student body on campus. They recognize that Japanese makeup styles are very different and distinctive.

As with any research, this thesis has certain limitations. This research only focuses on Asian and Asian American female college students' beautification practices. I put heavy emphasis on racial inequality between Asians and whites and do not spotlight other minority groups or gender inequality. My main interest is the cognitive component of Asian and Asian American individuals' practices and how it aids in the understanding of how racial inequalities are reproduced and legitimized through every day interaction. There is a limitation of my sample size and site selection that cannot serve to generalize Asians' and Asian Americans' beautification practices as a whole. However, little to no literature compares Asians and Asian Americans and their daily makeup practices that have been neglected as sociological studies. I hope this study approach dispels the idea that beautification practices are frivolous as a sociological study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Questions

What is your gender?

How old are you?

What is your student status?

What is your ethnic identity?

What race do you most identify with?

First Experiences

1. When did you first start wearing makeup, doing your nails, coloring your hair?

- Could you tell me what was going on in your life at that time?

2. How did you learn about wearing makeup?

- Have your beauty routines changed since then? If so, how have they changed? Can you give me an example?

Greatest Influences

3. Was there anyone who influenced you the most when you were first starting to wear makeup?

Either a person in your life (parent, sister, friend) or celebrity in the media or others? Any current influences? Tell me about them.

Everyday Routines and Practices

4. Can you walk me through your daily beauty routines?

5. How often do you apply makeup?

- Are there any specific time and occasions when you apply makeup?
- Do you change your makeup practices according to time, places, and occasions?

6. When you apply makeup, are there any parts of your face you focus on the most? If so, how and why do you spotlighting the specific parts?

7. How do you feel when you apply makeup? How do you feel when you don't apply makeup?
 - Do you feel different when you do/don't apply makeup?

8. Can you tell me about your relationship with your hair?

9. Do you talk with your friends and family or co-workers about beauty practices? Do they ever say anything about your appearances or beauty routines? If so, what? Can you give me an example?

10. How important would you say your beauty routines are for you? How do you see them fitting in your life?

11. In general, why would you say you wear makeup?

General Opinions about Beauty

12. What does it mean to be beautiful to you? How do you describe a person who is beautiful?

13. What do you think about makeup in general? Do you think it is necessary? Why?

14. What do you think about dyeing hair?

15. How do you feel about cosmetic surgery? Have you or anyone you have known ever had surgery?

16. How do you think beauty is defined at the University of Mississippi campus? What does it mean to be beautiful here? Can you think of any specific example of a beautiful person at the University of Mississippi?

17. In thinking about members of other racial and ethnic groups on campus, are your makeup style similar to them or different? How?

- Have you noticed a difference between Asian American women and Japanese women in regard to appearance? Are their makeup styles similar or different?

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 2: COUNTRIES PERFORMING MOST POPULAR SURGICAL PROCEDURES
(ISAPS 2011:6)

Breast Augmentation

Rank	Country	Number of Procedures	Percentage of Total
1	U.S.	233,066	23.6%
2	Brazil	211,108	12.4%
3	Mexico	83,240	6.0%
4	Italy	72,892	5.1%
5	China	62,010	4.7%

Lipoplasty

Rank	Country	Number of Procedures	Percentage of Total
1	U.S.	233,066	17.6%
2	Brazil	211,108	16.6%
3	China	83,240	6.6%
4	Japan	72,892	5.7%
5	Mexico	62,010	4.9%

Blepharoplasty

Rank	Country	Number of Procedures	Percentage of Total
1	U.S.	110,016	15.6%
2	Brazil	90,281	12.8%

3	China	45,820	6.5%
4	Italy	41,790	5.9%
5	Japan	40,996	5.8%

Rhinoplasty

Rank	Country	Number of Procedures	Percentage of Total
1	China	51,680	10.8%
2	Japan	46,599	9.7%
3	Brazil	43,809	9.2%
4	U.S.	40,103	8.4%
5	South Korea	31,863	6.7%

VITA

Itsuka Takamune was born in Osaka, Japan. After completing her schoolwork at Minami High School in Osaka in 2008, Itsuka entered Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto, Japan. She received a Bachelor of Arts with a major in English from Ritsumeikan University in March 2008. In August 2012, she entered the Graduate School of The University of Mississippi at Oxford.