appropriate

Cultural Appropriation of American Cultures within Popular Culture

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2015
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Opening

Current trends throughout different time periods can be a measurement and reflection of what was happening socially at the time. The choice to focus on the appropriation of different parts of what is considered subcultures or minority cultures within the current contemporary popular culture of today is to emphasize the connection to a person’s background and how it reflects their way of viewing the aesthetic. My own personal cultural background and personal experience greatly affects the way I view and digest popular culture. I use my own point of view as an example of how that background affects my interpretation of the current trends. This is a statement of self, a personal philosophical statement about cultural appropriation of American cultures within contemporary popular culture.

My personal background of coming from the southern United States and being confronted with the stereotype of the region being ignorant and racist because of its history has taught me to be more aware of these topics. Aside from being from the south but being from the United States in general and having the history we do with race I have come to realize, by living abroad, it can make us more concerned with the topic and of offending others. This is when I began to notice not just the appropriation within the U.S. but how it is exported and digested elsewhere.

The reasoning behind the writing format of articles, short notes and the physical formatting of a magazine is to emphasize the context that this subject lives in. Popular culture is produced and consumed on a fast pace way to make it is easily digestible through such physical and online publications formal and informal. This leaves open the possibility of misinterpretation, it can be sloppy and that is what I am trying to achieve. By having short, opinion based responses to these events this is meant to represent the various ways something could be interrupted based on cultural background by giving my own specific one.

Detail of athletic wear material used to make a European inspired silhouette of a woman’s dress.
I have made clothing as part of this project by using various textiles with European American origin such as a replication of a colonial Williamsburg floral and seersucker which is traditionally made into suits in the south. While using these textiles I have sewn the pieces by using pre-made patterns that claim to be of west African clothing as well as traditional Native American which are sold in most craft and fabric stores. With the finished clothing I have documented them by photographing them with the purposes of integrating them into the magazine format to make more of a connection back to popular culture. The clothing that is photographed throughout the text is of the clothing I have made myself to continue this theme of misinterpretation by mixing and matching different silhouettes of clothing from one culture with a textile from an opposing culture. Each culture that the silhouette and textile come from have an historical relationship and connection that is not necessarily meant to be obvious, it is meant to be representative of the subtlety of the issue of cultural appropriation within contemporary popular culture.

These topics that I am addressing within this writing are politically incorrect at times but the act of myself personally, a white, middle class Southern American woman, addressing them is also considered to be politically incorrect at times. A majority of pop culture is thoughtlessly made and thoughtlessly consumed all with the idea that it is harmless and without concern on a larger scale beyond consuming and entertainment. This approach to the presentation is not meant to justify the thoughtlessness but to bring forward the possible causes of it.

This topic is not something I would necessarily consider to choose to focus on or write about if in my own country because of the context. But because of the context of being abroad and in some way not being as tied up to the historical background that I am assigned automatically by my geographic identity I am giving myself somewhat of a license. By not being tied to the political correctness that is white American guilt I am free to explore these topics objectively without fear of being told that I am not allowed to because I have no ownership over them. That's what I'm telling myself at least.
But I'm from the South...

Girl 1: Well y'all ain't gonna see me doin' none-a that!

Girl 2: Umm... that isn't very funny. Actually it's offensive.

Girl 1: What are you talking about?

Girl 2: That accent is somewhat racist.

Girl 1: ... I'm from Texas. This is how I just talk sometimes.

Girl 2: Oh... Umm... Sorry

I had just moved to New York City from Houston to attend a private art college full of west and east coasters and a smaller number of southerners. Growing up in a red state was something of an oddity to these liberal raised kids as I found their upbringing to be as well but being outnumbered as I was put me in a seat I had never necessarily been before. Being stereotyped.
Common statements and questions from non-southern Americans:

"Thanks for Bush!"

"Do you ride horses to school?"

"Oh you must be really Christian."

"Isn't everyone really racist?"

"New York must be such a shock for you."

"Doesn't everyone wear cowboy hats and boots?"

"Why do not you have an accent?"

"Isn't everyone really homophobic?"

"Oh your parents must be republican."

"Oh I hear Austin's really cool at least."
The Accent

Seersucker used to make the silhouette of a basketball jersey in the form of a woman's dress.

When an actor attempts to mimic an accent it is not just the representation of the character, it is a form of adaptation. They are taking something of another culture other than their own and bringing it into a new context then becoming a symbol of that specific culture and how it is viewed by the outside. The accent and the culture it is attached to is then forced to be viewed as the “other.” This accent, whatever it may be, is a representation of not just this one character but the region and culture that is derived from thusly adaptation is a form of appropriation in some sense. It is in itself a representation of that actor’s background and how that background views this culture they are trying to represent. They are attempting to portray an entire culture and/or region so that the outsiders (the audience) can easily tell what is being portrayed. This means the actors representation of the accent is in reality a reflection of how the outside world views this singular culture and its people rather than being a true representation of it. It is an interpretation of this culture, a satire if you will at times. This is where the representation of an accent can hold so much weight. If not done carefully or thoughtfully it can become a caricature.
While the persons of this accent become offended by how they are being portrayed and it can continue on to become some sort of “education” to people not familiar or knowledgeable with the accent and what is attached to it continuing the cycle of the existing stereotype that is being shown.

More specifically how this becomes dangerous is when there is a stigma around a specific accent which is attached to the history of the region, its people and their culture. For example the general southern American accent which is typically thought to be two different versions; one is something that is considered to be a “deep south”, slower paced with drawn out vowels, and associated with plantations (i.e. rich and white) and the other is working class, run together and bit more quick paced. This is associated with ex-confederate states and regions of the United States which have the stereotype of being uneducated (because of their history of their economy being more agriculturally based), racist (their stance in the American Civil War for keeping slavery of Africans) religious and more modern day politically conservative which is attached to all the previously mentioned stereotypes. Stereotypes can be grown from small truths of an individual but when a large generalization is made this is where it begins. This “general southern American” accent for example is actually in reality more a combination of a Georgian (the slower accent) and Appalachian (the quicker accent) which are two specifically separate regions geographically. It is believed that the southern accent within the U.S. is receding opposed to its other regional counterparts throughout the country. One would say this has to do with globalization and the internet which could be true if the other accents were receding as well or another is that the migration of northern Americans moving to the bigger cities within the south neutralizing the accent or lastly the increase in higher education. But another possible factor is the attempt to intentionally neutralize the southern accent because of the negative stereotypes it is associated with it culturally.

While these negative stereotypes are not something that will hinder the person but in someway portray them as being more of a “people’s person” and more relatable or less intimidating which goes along with the idea of the accent representing the idea of being uneducated. Such examples are Bill Clinton with an Arkansas accent as well as Matthew McConaughey who both work within a public realm where most are encouraged to have a more refined, non-regional diction in fear of being a caricature. This brings up the question of not just mimicking an accent but completely shifting one’s way of speaking to a way not associated with any sort of negative stereotypes. It could be argued that the attempt comes from wanting to be understood more clearly by everyone who are not familiar with the dialect but it is hard to do so when one is looked down upon in some sense and the other is referred to as the norm.

To connect back to the
theme of adaptation, Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood (2002) directed by Callie Khouri is adapted from Rebecca Wells’ books Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood and Little Altars Everywhere. The books and film are set in southern Louisiana and focuses on a group of women and their families mainly a mother and her now adult daughter. It goes back and forth between the two various stages in life which spans between the 1920’s to present day all within the same region except for New York where the daughter lives present day and appears to still have held onto her native dialect. Sandra Bullock plays the daughter while Ellen Burstyn and Ashley Judd play the mother, while Judd is the only one of these three who grew up in the south but still not from Louisiana which tends to have its own dialect apart from the general south. This dialect is written into the book and appropriately so by the author who is a native to this region but once the book is adapted into this movie and played out by actors not of the region this is when it becomes a full adaptation of not just the text or accent but the culture that is so heavily a part of the story. While this is not necessarily an example of where the accent could be misconstrued to be a negative representation, it is an example of where it can be difficult to decide what is an adaptation or appropriation when originally it is was not considered either because of its existence within in the original context. While on one hand if the author is speaking she is the original, a native of this region and is of the culture and once she has written a dialect or inferred an accent it is still not necessarily considered to be an adaptation of the culture because it is written by some one of the culture. But since she is not a linguist and does not write in phonetics how authentic can the language being used really be. Writing in a dialect by a person who uses that dialect can be difficult to be deciphered by outsiders because it is a representation of that culture by an insider rather than an outsider. If the author had a broad audience in mind the representation of their dialect could possibly be watered or “dumbed” down (i.e. fit the outsider’s perception of the stereotype) to be understood more easily but on another hand the author could possibly have never thought in depth of their own dialect and hadn’t heard enough other dialects to be fully aware of the difference between them. It also could just be not as exaggerated as the audience expects the dialect to be and not even notice it at all.

Now outside of the realm of intentional interpretation for the purposes of acting and other forms of representation there is a linguistic term that is interesting to bring up when it comes to the issue of appropriating an accent into one’s daily use or other uses and that is accommodation. This is when a person unintentionally begins to mimic the accent or way of speaking from their surrounding that is foreign to their own. While this can be common and perhaps unintentional it still can be abused as an excuse for mimicking others accents or ways of speaking. An example of this is within rap music when a person is considered outside the traditional community of the genre, typically white or from a higher economic background, begins to emulate past artists dialect in attempts to sound authentic to the genre. This dialect is associated with not just the genre but the people who originated the
genre itself which is black Americans from a lower economic background as well as the region that the individual is from affects the variations between them. These attempt to mirror past artists’ pronunciation of a singular word can come off as offensive if the artist does not share the same background as them, specifically race, because it can be interpreted as a caricature meant to mock as well as bring up the history of music being taken from black artists and being used by white artists with no recognition of the original author. More specifically a recent incident of this is with the white, Australian rapper Iggy Azalea who has been accused of appropriating an American accent as well as a southern dialect within her music. While she has been living in the United States for roughly eight years since she was 16 years old and a good part of it in the southern U.S. it could be argued this is a case of accommodation. But the issue with this argument may be that it is difficult to look past her roots from a country that is not known for its racial equality as well as the fact that apart from her rapping she has been able to keep her Australian accent well intact. On another hand southern rap was recently having a surge in popularity with other young rappers resulting in the southern dialect being used more by non-southern rappers such as Drake (Canada) and A$AP Rocky (New York). It does seem to be one of these cases where it is in question how to determine what is “okay” or more of less what is least offensive to the majority. While white, male rappers are not accused of appropriating as Azalea has and in fact have been said to make the genre their own (while gender is a part of this discussion it is not necessarily the focus of this text, this is why it is not discussed further) starts to make this out to be more about the person themselves rather than the accent all together because both represent an entire complicated history without having to say anything.

To speak about accents or dialects being adapted it needs to be emphasized that adaptation in its most basic form is taking something from its original medium and putting it into a new medium. In this case it also could be related to taking something out of its original context and being put into a new context which is how the connection can be made to appropriation as well. The use of something of one culture being used or represented within another will
never be a full truth. There will always be some sort of misinterpretation even when it is portrayed accurately because the audience is responsible for making their own interpretation. This is working with in the constant “to and fro” between the outsider and insider, the idea of the “other” as a whole. The subject on view within the work (text, film, music, etc.) is being viewed by an audience, a majority. This automatically makes what is on view the “other” despite if it is meant to represent something or someone that is considered to be so in reality. The audience will never always be made up of insiders viewing a fellow insider, an individual being viewed by a mass majority despite similarities between the two will always be viewed as an outsider because they are an individual being put on display to be dissected.
To Kill a Mockingbird

Dates when read:
* 2004 8th grade
* 2005 9th grade
* 2007 11th grade

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee was a part of my required curriculum three different times throughout my Texas public school education. When once bringing up the book in conversation with friends who had grown up in northeastern U.S. they did not know what I was referring to because they had not read it.

New York had 715 reported hate crimes in the past year.
Texas had 52 reported hate crimes in the past year.
First Time I Saw My Butt

Girl 1: Hey girl! You gotta “ghetto pass”! *turns Girl 2 around, pats her butt*
Girl 2: A what?
Girl 1: Ya’ know a “wooty”! A white girl booty.
Girl 2: Oh... Ya’ mean my fat butt.
Girl 1: Yeah! It’s a good thing, be proud of it. Lemme show ya how to use it.

It was 2005, my first year in high school fresh out of my one year in Christian private school. I attended just about every homecoming dance (that is the formal school dance in the fall semester typically after the last American football home game of the season) there was to be had in my town that year, four in total. First the small Christian private school one that I had previously attended. Second the other, older school in my town. Third, my own school which was newly open. Lastly my friend’s school, which was considered the poorer school, not a difficult label to be earned by my town’s financial standards being above average. This is where I first noticed my “booty” thanks to some of my friend’s friends and where I learned to what is now known as twerking but it was just simply known as ass shaking. This somewhat spiritual awakening was much needed for my teenage, body conscious self. Big butts are good, not everyone can be Dolly Parton.
The Booty

The idea of cultural appropriation is usually attached to something that is physically made of a culture that has been reinterpreted into another such as textiles, a dance practice, a garment, etc. But the values or standards of beauty that are held by a culture can be a part of this as well especially when the ideas they hold effect something of the aesthetic. A culture’s view on a person’s beauty more specifically a woman’s beauty varies throughout cultures to the point of which body part of the woman’s body they believe to be the most beautiful and to which standards they have for it. Throughout modern day culture within the past couple of decades certain women’s body parts and body types have gone in and out of fashion within American popular culture (which tends to be America’s biggest international export). For a long time in pop culture the emphasis was on having the ideal Barbie figure of that long legged, small waisted, larger than average breasts. But this standard, who is it really made by and/or made for? How attainable is it for the majority? Usually none at all because the majority is not the the ones making it, it is typically the ones who happen to be in charge. This reflects on who is in power and who has control of the society.

The recent trend that has yet to be truly convicted of this crime of appropriation (because who really wants to be held responsible for more white guilt) has been what is being deemed as the butt trend. The glorification of a big ole butt. But wait this is not
new, not by a long shot right? This specific enlarged body part has been celebrated throughout cultures for centuries because of the reason that it was common within their own society, specifically in most parts of Africa and persons of African descent. So why is everyone treating this trend like this is some new concept? To be frank, it is because the ones selling it as a trend are white people and they can sell it this way to other white people because it is not something that has been traditionally a part of white culture. But this aspect of African culture and their own physical heritage was something that use to be treated as something abnormal as well as other physical attributes common to them that weren't common to Europeans. Saartjie Baartman is a commonly used example of this colonialist gawking of the African woman's physique. She was born in colonial South Africa in the late 18th century and spent her life throughout Europe being put on display in a freak show manner because what was perceived by them as such an abnormal body type predominantly because of her large buttocks. She refused throughout her lifetime to be inspected by doctors or scientists for non medical purposes but once she had passed her body was dissected and later put on display with a natural history museum as an example of the "savage body."

Now with this trend it could be said that now these body types are being celebrated rather than being ridiculed for being out of the societal norm (white societal norm). But this is hard to say when the original seems to not be what is being desired to be achieved, it only appears to be the inspiration. While this could also be said to be a complement, "imitation is the highest form of flattery" and all that mess, but to attempt to mimic something and pass it off as the owner of it without recognition of the origin tends to look like stealing, especially when the one taking tends to have a history of that. Oh the colonialism of it all.

It is true that to have a naturally occurring, larger than average posterior is not exclusive to one group of people or another because as it can be true for one individual of one heritage it can also be not true for another of the same background and so on for other groups. As well as the preference of the opposite sex to the big butt or not can be ever changing between each individual. So it is not necessarily even about the butt itself but about the societal concepts and ideas of it that are being exchanged between the cultures that have celebrated it and the ones that have not until now because it has been re-branded and repackaged to be sold as a new idea for them. But once again it isn't a pure exchange of sorts since there is not recognition of the origin as well as the glorification of the "self made butt" rather than the natural. Personally what falls under the category of "self made" is something that had to be achieved by whatever means beyond the help of puberty such as plastic surgery, exercise with endless squats, padded underwear, and so on. It is not meant to ridicule these types of butts or devalue them but it is important to differentiate the two to understand this is not about the butt itself but about the standards of having a large rump, its origin and how it is being promoted in a new context.

This new context, white American popular culture, does not have the best history with the topic of taking from other cultures and calling it something new. Beginning with the first
label, white, which really just means anyone of European descent which makes it difficult to separate the extensive colonial history from it. Then the second, American, which has the similar issue of having not such a friendly history of literally taking the people from their original land that they are now taking this specific aspect of their culture that they may have had before hand or have also developed after the fact. Lastly, popular, which is not meant to necessarily represent the majorities interest but what is meant to be consumed by the majority. These labels are ones that are always attached to what is now known as mass appeal because in the end that is who is making it and who they are trying to sell to.

This is not anything new or groundbreaking it is just meant to be used to emphasize the irony of the whole situation. Something that was once seen as something to be gawked at is now something to be achieved. But because it is something not originally of our (white America or other whites) own it is something that is difficult to achieve. If you can not afford plastic surgery or a gym membership you will not be able to achieve it (which is another conversation possibility of the connection between the trend and wealth). What once inspired the trend is now obsolete, it has now turned into something that is unrealistic and unattainable. The original is not the trend but the original is stolen.

European silhouette with athletic wear material.
Big Ass and Thigh Gap

2012 The beginnings of the “butt trend”

* “It that real?!”
* “Do you stuff your butt?!”
* “How many squats do you do?”
* “Implants?”
* “I bet it’s fake.”
* “Fucking white girls always just trying to be black with fake big butts.”

Now that is a part of popular culture it has been tainted. It has been added to the never ending list of beauty standards. My favorite part about this body part being a trend is it came along about the same time the “thigh gap” became a thing. This is when a woman’s upper middle thigh, not necessarily rail thin skinny thighs, do not touch and leave a gap which light can come through. How’s about that for some fun contradictions.
The Twerk

It is defined in the Oxford dictionary as a dance to popular music in a sexually provocative manner involving thrusting hip movements and a low, squatting stance but it has had many other names before this most recent label. Such as ass shakin’, pussy poppin’, ass clapping, bounce, sissy bounce, droppin’ it, etc. The origin of the dance has said to have roots in a Western African traditional dance as well as dance halls from the Caribbean. But the bounce hip hop scene of New Orleans, Louisiana beginning in the 1980’s is where the contemporary practice has the most obvious roots. While this is typically viewed as a dance intended for women (pussy poppin’) alone this is not necessarily true. Origin of these roots goes along with a sub-genre called sissy bounce referring to rappers who are gay thusly partaking in the dance as well but aside from this it is traditionally a dance performed by women. Before the trend had a come to be this was not something that was well known outside of the hip hop/rap community and the southern United States.

The dance and word itself being introduce to the masses and recent popularity can partially be credited to the performer Miley Cyrus and more specifically to her performance with Robin Thicke during the MTV Video Music Awards in 2013. During the performance she had background dancers of various body shapes and mostly black performing the butt shaking dance, stuck her face in one of the larger women’s butt and slapped it, and then finally she bent over and gyrated her hips and
butt up against Robin Thicke’s groin while he performed his popular song at the time “Blurred Lines” that was controversial because of its “date rape vibes.” This performance was criticized for several different reasons such as for it being perhaps too sexual, demeaning to women, demeaning to black women, and inappropriate for her age or her audience who were of a younger age typically at the time. When later asked to comment on the reaction she continued to speak about how she had learned to twerk when visiting New Orleans, while she recognizes the origin it still is objective if that is what she was actually doing. The main issue with this event that is relevant to the theme of appropriation is the mixture of her being southern and white, her taking a dominant role in how she treated the dancers, and the choice of dancers being black and of a larger, curvier body type than her own. While the type of women she chose as her dancers are the stereotype for this dance it is only the stereotype and not the true holistic representation of that culture. This is easily an example of a person traveling to a new place, seeing something that interests them from that place’s culture and ignorantly dawning it for themselves.

This dance craze very much so goes hand in hand with the booty trend in that the dance is meant to show off the posterior and one must have a bit extra in the behind to properly bounce it around. As with the booty trend the issue of something that was meant to enhance a difference and celebrate it but by becoming popular has turned around and devalued the original in result. From a different perspective this isn’t something that is necessarily viewed as a positive action of display even before the craze it has become. Some have viewed it as a way of objectifying women by the way they put the women in the background of music videos or musical performances to become faceless, ass bouncing figures merely there for decoration or as props. This can become even more dangerous when these women are predominantly black because black women historically have been put on display in such a way by other cultures to be sexualized because it had been believed that they were “savages” and “savages” were prone to being overly sexual because of their “primal” nature thusly it was deemed okay to view them or treat them in such a way. But in a different light it could be seen from the perspective that because in these contemporary scenarios they are choosing to display themselves in such a way it’s taking back ownership of their own sexuality in reaction to this history and because it is set in the context of their own culture. Unfortunately it could be twisted back to the idea that this may also be a result of how they were treated historically and have been programmed that this is their main value but this is an issue with all women as well. Sadly this debate could keep swaying to either way but in the end it is something that it is meant to show off what “ya momma gave ya” and it’s simpler to keep it at that.

Another issue that has come up is about how before the trend it was simply a type of dancing that happened and was considered by outsiders as low brow but now that it has become mainstream it has been translated into an “art.” Something that one can not just do but must learn the “right way” of practicing it. It is as
if now that the white culture has joined in they have deemed it as something that is of higher value now that they are participating and until then it had only been seen as something inappropriately sexual. While many still view it as overly sexual and inappropriate the fact that there is classes for something that once was something you just picked up at a club or taught by a friend adds higher value. It is something of worth that is to be paid for.
Girl 1: Woah! Is that real?!
Girl 2: Did you stuff your butt?!
Girl 3: No...

Girl 1: Well good job sure looks like! *slaps Girl 3's butt*

So this is 2012, beginnings of what is now the big butt trend, I had been living in New York for three years and in this time (being surrounded by actual fashion models) had concluded that skinny was best but that I was never going to fit that so began to dress to play down my body type. Then came the trend and much to my surprise it had reached the American fashion capital. It was my time... but was it really? It started off as compliments to my face (which let me tell you with this asset tends to never be the case) then drifted off to being side ways comments behind my back referring to the legitimacy of my curves which was something I had never faced. The most negative I ever heard growing up was "Those are some birthin' hips!" or "You look like you're well fed." What had become a trend for women who do not naturally have such a figure slowly became a witch hunt for women you did or appeared to have the desired figure and of whose was God given or squat or harvest fat induced.
Various terms of original inhabitants of North America:

- Indians
- American Indians
- Native Americans
- Natives
- Indigenous
- Aboriginal

My family is from Oklahoma, my paternal great-great grandparents were a part of the land run which is when the United States opened up lands that had been assigned as Indian reservations now to be taken and bought by homesteaders within the late 1800’s. The majority of my extended family lives there, my parents met there and I was born there. Now my family is entirely of European descent so they do not have a connection originally to this land but neither do most of the tribes that were forced to move there.

Indian giver: an expression referring to a person who gives a gift and later takes it back.

*I have only ever heard Canadians use these terms to refer to Natives of North America. I do not know their history with them but I am sure it may be similar to the United States. A family friend who is Cherokee actually laughed when I told her about these terms. Attempting to be entirely politically correct in the end can sometimes just come off as white guilt.
The Headdress

Made up of bald eagles feathers, each representing an achievement that earned them the feather made into a headpiece referred to as a headdress or war bonnet historically worn during battles but now only worn during ceremonies meant to show the status and respect that the individual has within their community. It was never referred to as something just for decoration but as a symbol, even more so now that during the oppression of Native Americans within the United States it was at some point forbidden for them to wear them at all in attempts to assimilate them to the European and European descended settlers. To wear, along with the original meaning, the garment it is also representative of their survival. So why is it that it seems recently that it is being treated as a fashion accessory that anyone can wear and not as the historically loaded symbol that it is?

It is possible that depending on the place that a person has grown up in they were not surrounded by the history or culture thusly are not as innately sensitive to the topic. Or in some cases they just may not have been educated and in result are ignorant to the topic. But for some reason there has been a surge in the lack of education youths are receiving in the subject of Native Americans in the United States or one can only assume because of the use of the garment throughout contemporary youth culture. As of recently there has been cases of young people attending music festivals wearing headdress recreation for fashion purposes to coincide with the trend of southwestern inspired fashions because of the cliche association that is made between the region and the cowboys and Indians, Old West aesthetic. While it is not illegal to wear replications of clothing from the Native Americans it is very frowned upon for the previously stated reasons. It is curious where the gap in their education occurred because the guilt from how the natives were treated is up there with slavery as being the bread and butter of "white guilt" for Americans. In all honesty though for them to really take notice, be aware of what they are doing and understand what it means it would not just take being knowledgeable of the subject but to actually have the capacity to sympathize about the historical background and for the people it affects which may be the other issue that needs to be addressed, sensitivity.

An example of how even if a person is
surrounded by the culture and is taught the history but still lacks the sensitivity is Christina Fallin, who was born and raised in Oklahoma which is an area with many Native American reservations and a large history with them for that reason, band member of Pink Pony and is the daughter of the state's governor. In 2014 she had uploaded an image of herself wearing a Native American headdress with the caption "Appropriate Culturation" onto the internet which upset the native community. In response to the criticism to it she made a statement which included, "Please forgive us if we innocently adorn ourselves with your beautiful things." A month later a the Norman Music Festival where her band was planned to perform there were people picketing their performance and in response she continued to mimic or more or less parody a traditional native dance. In this instance it seems to be an act of rebellion perhaps towards her mother and an attempts to gather attention for herself and band but with no recognition for other's. This could easily be summed up in saying that she is immature and will learn eventually and the hard way but how is she grew up in such a place surrounded by it and gathered such a disregard and what appears to be intentional disrespect.
**Incidents**

November 2012
Karlie Kloss wears Native American headdress during Victoria’s Secret fashion show.

March 2014
Christina Fallin, daughter of Oklahoma governor Mary Fallin and band member of Pink Pony, posts picture wearing Native American headdress.

June 2014
Elle UK features Pharrell Williams wearing a Native American headdress on the cover.

July 2014
Bass Coast music festival in Canada bans attendees from wearing headdresses.
Final Comments

This has been brief few examples that I have personally experienced in some way that I have interpreted as being a part of cultural appropriation. They are my opinions based on experience and background, right and wrong as they may be. Because they are opinions does not justify them to exist and to possibly offend, they are meant as an example of how the concept of being politically correct is flawed and complicated. A person’s cultural background influences how they view the aesthetic. This cultural background will influence how they view other cultures and more specifically when that culture historically has dominated surrounding cultures. It may not be as open and out as it use to be but it still exist and in a very subtle way because it has been ingrained into the existing contemporary culture which popular culture is a part of.
References


