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# **Opulent Servitude:** Shoplifting in a Culture of Material Excess and Systemic Racism

By: Evangeline Holtz Schramek & Carolyn L. Kane

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Abstract

Why did the latter part of the nineteenth century witness a sudden growth of white, middle class female shoplifters? Psychology tells us that shoplifting is a mental deficiency manifested in women as "kleptomania" (Abelson 4). Given the subsequent international growth of shoplifting, we argue instead that shoplifting is in many ways condoned in contemporary culture: used as a form of social and political control in a late capitalist society. This article first turns to female consumers as shoplifters in the late nineteenth century, alongside the growth of mass production, large-scale department stores, and visually spectacular forms of display. In line with feminist critiques of Marx's Capital, we uphold the conditions prescribed to women under capitalism and extend this argument to newer forms of systemic racism in the consumer sphere, which ensure that women of colour and of lower economic standing face even greater obstacles to success.

Using a broad historical view, we analyze the act of shoplifting in two forms of cultural media, both set in Paris. The first is Émile Zola's novel *The Ladies' Paradise* (1883), based on Paris's first department store, Le Bon Marché. Due to Zola's commitment to verisimilitude, we argue, his work offers the strongest corroboration of the ways in which new forms of visual display and a new class of psychologically-entitled females worked together to generate astounding accounts of theft. Our analysis then turns to a work of cinema produced nearly a century and a half later, Céline Sciamma's 2014 *Girlhood*. Sciamma portrays a group of young French African girls who navigate their paths into adulthood from the vantage of Bagnolet, a lower income immigrant suburb over four kilometers from Paris's city centre. The girls experience racial profiling and demonstrate varying forms of resistance, one of them shoplifting. While shoplifting then appears to be an enduring weapon of the weak and strategy of resistance by the dispossessed, leading to, not surprisingly, tacitly permissibility for white middle class women and harsher consequences for women of colour, we conclude that the activity is leveraged to perpetuate pre-existent forms of gendered social control and cultural stereotyping.

KEYWORDS:
shoplifting
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> **"In the last place must be counted the woman in an interesting condition, whose robberies were of a special order. ...At the house of one of them, the superintendent of police had found two hundred and forty-eight pairs of pink gloves stolen from every shop in Paris."**
>
> **– Zola, *The Ladies' Paradise***

## Introduction

The setting is December 1898, at the Sixth Avenue Siegel-Cooper department store in New York City, Christmas season; or, retail's phase of annual sale spikes. Two middle class white women who, according to *The Times*, were of "unblemished reputation" and both "dutiful wi[ves] and mother[s]" (Abelson 3) stole items including umbrellas and perfume. They were caught, and yet, they were not charged. Why not? Why would white women of means shoplift if they don't need to? Alternatively, for people of colour who are often falsely accused of theft, is shoplifting a reasonable response to being racially profiled? How much of this is underscored by a pervasive environment of commodity fetishism, and why does culture at large treat a white woman's response to this environment (in the form of shoplifting) as infantile and quirky and a Black woman's as criminal and degenerate?

This article unpacks these questions by analyzing shoplifting in two cultural texts, both set in Paris. The first is Émile Zola's novel *The Ladies' Paradise* (1883), based on Paris's first department store, Le Bon Marché. Due to his commitment to verisimilitude and meticulous field notes, Zola's text offers the strongest corroboration of the ways in which new forms of visual display and a new class of psychologically-entitled females worked together to generate astounding accounts of theft. Our analysis then turns to a work of realist cinema produced nearly a century and a half later, Céline Sciamma's 2014 *Girlhood*. Sciamma portrays a group of young French African girls who navigate paths to adulthood from the vantage of Bagnolet, a lower income immigrant suburb over four kilometers from Paris's city centre. We look specifically at a scene set in the Forum-des-Halles underground shopping mall wherein the girls experience racial profiling and demonstrate varying forms of resistance, one of them shoplifting. Not surprisingly, we find that shoplifting by white women of means is tacitly permitted: its perpetrators are often let off easy, without either criminal persecution or degrading profiling. The genealogy of this special treatment is evident in *The Ladies' Paradise* and persists in the cultural and social sphere to this day. For example, scholar and journalist Rachel Schtier's chapter "The Rise and Fall of the Shoplifting Celebrity" in her monograph *The Steal: A Cultural History of Shoplifting* outlines high profile shoplifting cases by white female film stars of extensive means such as Hedy Lamarr and Winona Ryder. Though both were caught red-handed, Lamarr was acquitted (Schtier 138) and Ryder, despite being charged under felony charges of grand theft and vandalism, got away with minimum penalties: community service and drug counseling (Schtier 151). Her trial garnered her positive attention, including appearances on *Saturday Night Live* and increasing demand from high fashion designers and photographers to be the face of their new campaigns. In contrast, the young women in Sciamma's *Girlhood* are presumed to be shoplifters before they even lift items. Their lower socio-economic status and the colour of their skin mark them as targets for profiling.

### A Brief History of Shoplifting

Shoplifting was not new when instances of it spiked in late nineteenth century European and North American cities. Schtier traces the advent of shoplifting to Robert Greene's 1591 printing of *The Second Part of Cony Catching*, a pamphlet that described the acts of shop thieves and coined the term "lifting" (Schtier 16). Various other instances are noted thereafter. Unique to the spike in shoplifting in the nineteenth century, according to scholar Elaine S. Abelson, is both the location from which goods were taken, the department store, and the profile of the new shoplifters: the middle class, white women (4). In this way, the rise of the female shoplifter is directly correlated with the rise of commodity capitalism.

Previous scholarship on shoplifting from the nineteenth century to the present has focused on psychological factors, including its clinical analog: kleptomania. Prior to its first classification in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) in the mid-twentieth century, these acts of shoplifting in department stores by middle class women were pathologized by doctors through the term "kleptomania," which then denoted a reflex or reaction to an environmental change as opposed to an innate affliction. The diagnosis of kleptomania, and its legacy of classifications in various versions of the DSM (Abelson 4; Persellin 23), was first included in the DSM-I 1962 as a supplementary term

versus a formal diagnosis. It was reintroduced as an impulse-control disorder in the DSM-III in 1980 and continues to hold water in this manual as a legitimate psychiatric disorder (Grant and Odlaug 11). In 1995, Ketura Persellin noted that in the DSM-III, shoplifting by women of means appeared in conjunction with chronic depression, anorexia nervosa, and bulimia, and operated as a sign of "mental vulnerability" (23). Additional scholarship on the topic corroborates these affective and psychological effects, including analysis of films such as *A Question of Silence* (1982) and *Muriel's Wedding* (1994), and works of literature such as Kathryn Harrison's *Thicker than Water* (1991), Hima Wolitzer's *Tunnel of Love* (1994), Susan Taylor Chehak's *Smithereens* (1995), and Joyce Carol Oates' *Foxfire: Confessions of a Girl Gang* (1996). Analysis of shoplifters in this corpus focalize the pathology of shoplifting and its links to antisocial behavior (Egan and Taylor 882).

**Contrary to traditional accounts of shoplifting as a psychological effect of female victimhood, we argue that shoplifting is socially supported, if not prescribed, through the developments of consumer capital.**

As long as women are known to steal, they are by definition always already in deficit. Our analysis draws from Silvia Federici's foundational feminist critique of Marx's Capital where she argues that Marx's analysis of primitive accumulation **[1]** was based on the viewpoint of the waged industrial proletariat; thus, "by contrast we do not find in his work any mention of the profound transformations that capitalism introduced in the reproduction of labor-power and the social position of women" (63). It is vital to

contextualize an article about theft by women with the feminist and Marxist critique that the history of capitalism, from the point of view of women, requires the theft of women's bodies for the reproduction of the waged proletariat. Labour in the forms of childbirth, child-rearing, and domesticity have been, and often remain, exploited by the mechanizations of capital in that they are not equally valued, waged, or compensated, and, instead viewed as an expected engine of labour-power and production. We uphold Federici's claim that "capitalism, as a social-economic system, is necessarily committed to racism and sexism" (17). This final point is integral to our analysis of these two case studies, due to the disparity in treatment for the crime of shoplifting we find between the two groups of women.

We begin in the mecca of commodity culture: the urban department store in late nineteenth-century Paris. We then build on the work of Abelson and Persellin to corroborate connections between the female shoplifter and consumerism. Next, we extend this link to new technologies of visual display that together co-produce this sudden leap in instances of shoplifting at the end of the century. Our argument draws from Émile Zola's novel The Ladies' Paradise (Au Bonheur des Dames) (1883), based on Paris's first *grand magasin*, Le Bon Marché (founded in 1838; remodeled in 1852). The last part of the article then returns to Paris, a century and a half later, to consider how the treatment and conception of shoplifting changes when we turn to emergent groups of minority consumers in the same densely populated urban areas. Here the article takes a turn towards critical race and sociological theories in order to clarify the vital distinctions between the effects of the built environment of the department store upon its female consumers, and how the treatment of these consumers shifts depending on their ethnicity. Though often perceived as an act of petty crime for some, we conclude that the act of shoplifting is deeply encoded by gendered, classist, and racialized scripts. In sum, our analysis braids connections between the production of women's desire in consumer culture, their newly "liberated" role as consumers, and the way in which new visual display technologies of electric light and large-scale glass played an intrinsic but unacknowledged role in the production of the female shoplifter.

### Fin de Siècle Paris

In the latter half of the nineteenth century the effects of the industrial revolution had seeped into new forms of mass production, automation, and distribution. The production of objects had rapidly accelerated, which in turn led to an abundance of goods now available to a wider range of consumers at cheaper prices. As Walter Benjamin described it in his posthumously published Arcades Project (1982), Paris in the late nineteenth century was exploding with new forms of fashion, photography, architecture, shopping malls ("arcades"), new iron, glass, and steel construction materials, and a plethora of shiny new consumer items.

Public culture formed around shopping, pursued by everyone from aristocracy gone awry to the emergence of a new middle class of female consumers, male strollers ("*flaneurs*"), prostitutes, and gamblers waiting for their next high. **[2]** For the late nineteenth-century American sociologist Thorstein Veblen, the emergence of mass-produced goods and luxuries gave way to a culture of "conspicuous consumption" (1899), where the ethos of "keeping up with the Joneses" first sowed its seeds. Veblen's 1899 Marxist critique argued that wealthier members of society asserted their status by displaying their luxurious possessions. Display and social acknowledgement were integral to his equation. Historian Stephen Eskilson concurs, stating that in order for conspicuous consumption to be effective, such "extravagant purchases" had to be "witnessed as an owned and purchased possession" (5). In short, in a culture of excess, social belonging was contingent on one's capacity to *exhibit* (and therein feign) financial worth.

The Parisian *grand magasin* is a logical extension of the industrial capitalist boom in Europe at the time. Historian Michael B. Miller argues that the Bon Marché (Paris's first *grand magasin*) functioned as a pioneering international development, paving the way for "the creation of a national middle-class culture" (183).

**The Bon Marché taught its customers, especially women, that to purchase certain goods was to access a new modern way of life.**

Émile Zola's cotemporaneous and well-known 1883 novel *The Ladies' Paradise* is especially praised for its depictions of these major fin de siècle revolutions in Paris, focusing on the new Parisian department store, entitled "*The Ladies' Paradise.*"

Zola's meticulous field notes, written from within the walls of the Bon Marché, form the basis for *The Ladies' Paradise*, which allows us to here blend fiction and historical context in weaving our critical analysis. Social theorist Rudi Laermans writes:

**Émile Zola ... found the *grand magasin* such an important social phenomenon that he devoted one complete volume of his magnum opus *Les Rougon-Macquart* to the "cathedral of modern commerce." In 1883, after some months of fieldwork, he published his novel *Au Bonheur des Dames*, in which he gives a faithful report of the fascinating world of the early Parisian department store. (Laermans 81)**

Before turning to the instances of shoplifting in *The Ladies' Paradise*, it is first necessary to draw out key correlations between the novel and actual historical developments of the Bon Marché.

The store was founded in 1838 and revamped almost completely by Aristide Boucicaut in 1852. Though London, Paris, and New York all vie for the title of having the first department store (O'Hagan 528), Boucicaut led the way, lauded for both his luxurious store and ingenious marketing plans. He instituted the concepts of fixed pricing and

guaranteed exchanges and refunds on purchased goods. While fixed pricing is expected in stores today, at the time it was a bold and pioneering gesture. It not only eliminated the social exchanges of bartering over price, but in so doing, saved time and energy by freeing up store clerks to attend to other activities, such as check out, restocking, or improving the display and organization of items. In turn, all customers could feel safe in knowing they were not getting a better or worse deal than their fellow shoppers.

Boucicaut wanted luxury to be available to all his customers, despite their financial status: in his store, he enacted the concept of "la democratisation du luxe" or the "democratization of luxury" — a phrase coined by journalist Georges d'Avenel (qtd. in Laermans 81) — which implied that "all the trappings of fashionable modernity were, in principle, free for anyone to acquire without distinction of class" (Bowlby 41). Boucicaut greatly increased his store's profits through his purchasing of items in bulk so that he could then sell them to his customers at reduced prices, while also offering them a wider variety of goods, highly advertised sales and promotions, and his friendly and attentive service via his shop clerks; as well, he organized the store's design and layout through his coined concept of "organized disorder" which made it so customers had to walk around for hours through a maze of different departments in order to find a singular item (Bowlby 45). Under his reign, the Bon Marché blossomed: when he took over the store in 1852, "it boasted four departments, twelve employees, and a turnover of 450,000 francs a year. Its turnover rose to 5 million in 1860, 7 million in 1863, 21 million in 1869, 77 million in 1877, more than 80 million in 1882, 123 million in 1888, and over 200 million in 1906" (Nelson ix).

The science of marketing and setting prices may not seem at first to be directly correlated with store theft and shoplifting, but in fact, it was the evisceration of the older, face-to-face bartering techniques, we argue, that led to this more distanced form of customers browsing around stores by themselves, without regularly engaging with shop owners or sales people. As we will also argue, however, being able to shop – or "lift" – without these interactions, due to Boucicaut's consumer strategies, is still a class-based luxury and gendering of a social type afforded to some customers and not others.

### *The Ladies' Paradise*

Zola's *The Ladies' Paradise* is widely considered one of the seminal works of French literary and cultural production. Zola's narrative focuses on the demure protagonist Denise Baudu, a young woman recently orphaned due to the death of both of her parents. Denise comes to Paris from the country town of Valognes with her two younger brothers, seeking assistance and potential employment from her uncle, a draper, so that she may support her siblings. The plot concerns Denise's attempts at

locating and securing employment in Paris's cutting-edge garment industry and developing an understanding of the radically changing cultural landscape around her. This transformation is most clearly marked in her observations of financial and personal losses experienced by smaller specialty shops, like her uncle's, in the wake of the unparalleled success of Paris's first major department store, *The Ladies' Paradise*. This store is headed by owner and manager Octave Mouret, a presumably fictional analog for Aristide Boucicaut noted above. **[3]** Denise's own relationship with The Ladies' Paradise, as a window-shopper, an employee, and, ultimately, as a character embroiled in inter-store politics and romantic entanglements, provides an intimate portrayal of the psychological effects and excesses of consumer culture.

Denise arrives in Paris destitute with dependents in tow and attempts to reach her uncle's shop as swiftly as possible, but she is immediately captivated by The Ladies' Paradise on her journey from the train station. Her seduction begins when she is struck by the warm light, colour, and energy emanating from the store's windows that seem to be "vibrating from the activity within" (Zola 20). Already, the visual sensorium begins to work its magic on the newcomer: Denise's experience is prescient of the complexity of new forms of visual desire and longing created to transfix women and recent newcomers to the city.

At this time of the fin de siècle, Paris also witnessed rapid urbanization. The growth of urban spaces for strolling, walking, and observing is largely attributed to Georges-Eugène Haussmann, known as Baron Haussmann, the urban planner behind a vast public works program commissioned by Emperor Napoléon III. The "Haussmannization of Paris"

refers to Baron Haussmann's opening up of Parisian boulevards in order to both police the area and prevent civil disobedience (such as building barricades, which is much harder on an exposed boulevard) and encourage commercialization of the urban landscape.

**The development of Paris's boulevards inadvertently led to foot traffic and, after the introduction of plate glass and adequate lighting, its handmaiden — "window shopping."**

Just as Mouret is a fictional proxy for Boucicaut in *The Ladies' Paradise*, the historical figure of Haussmann is represented by the character of Baron Hartmann. In the novel, Hartmann is developing a public works project: a broad thoroughfare connecting new avenues and retail opportunities in the city. Mouret desires that the expansion of his store be part of this new thoroughfare because it will allow more people to be exposed to his grand displays. Hartmann is enamoured by Mouret's passion for entrepreneurship, and his vision to remodel *The Ladies' Paradise* as a "machine for devouring women" (Zola 85) is soon accepted into the city development plan. **[4]**

During this time, Parisian culture saw the emergence of the *flâneuse*, the female equivalent to the *flâneur* embodied in the earlier writings and life led by writer Charles Baudelaire. However, unlike the male *flâneur* who was always accepted in public life and on street, the *flâneuse*, as Anne Friedberg points out, emerged in public life during a time of changing social roles

for women (16-20). It had newly become acceptable for middle class women to wander on public streets; not only the "femme publique" (prostitutes), but now too this new class of "Femme Honoré," or women who could go out and perform errands like fulfilling shopping lists. As these women openly took on their new roles in public life, they did so, as we illustrate in more detail below, with emotional exuberance and a strategic valour hedging on the brink of entitlement. The *flâneuse* is in this way an inversion of the *flâneur* and his monolithic gaze, for she is mobile and active as Friedberg notes, embodying one of the core paradoxes of her culture: at once liberated to stroll the streets and enjoy public life but condemned to do so only according to the scripts of one who shops (34-35). Rudi Laermans corroborates these claims, stating that while the advent of large department stores created new possibilities for female communion and activity in the public sphere, "at the very same time [these spaces] reproduced certain strategies of women as 'good shoppers' and 'good housekeepers'" (95).

### The New Art of Visual Display

As noted, upon Denise's arrival into the city she is immediately transfixed by the windows of *The Ladies' Paradise*. She is not alone. Equally mesmerized were the crowds of women who gath-

ered outside the display windows in an act that encapsulates Guy Debord's famous concept of "the spectacle" (Debord 10). Zola describes how the windows divulged "a debauch of colour, a street pleasure which burst forth there, a wealth of goods publicly displayed, where everybody could go and feast their eyes" (95). In focusing on the visual world of commodities, according to Debord, social relations become so mediated by images, and workers and consumers become so alienated from the products of their labour and consumption, respectively, that relations between commodities come to override relations between human beings. The display window and its onlookers thus offer a microcosm of the spectacle.

Display strategies were in themselves nothing new. For centuries, merchants had sought ways to make their wares look more appealing to potential buyers. And by 1727, Daniel Defoe notes, merchants would spend more on furnishing their shop than on the combined value of the goods inside (Isenstadt 8). Also in the eighteenth century, English potter and entrepreneur Josiah Wedgwood worked against the backdrop of the early consumer revolution to formulate many modern marketing methods that remain popular today, albeit void of modern devices for display such as electric lighting and large-scale glass (Isenstadt 9).

The use of large-scale window glass to display a store's goods did not become common practice until the mid-nineteenth century. Prior to this, glass was expensive and subject to high regulation and taxes. With industrialization and mass production in the early nineteenth century, however, the cost lowered and it henceforth became possible for an owner to place large sheets of glass inside their stores and especially in their shop fronts. **[5]** Suddenly, "uninterrupted mass[es] of glass" hung from "the ceiling to the ground" (Knight qtd. in Adburgham 96; Schivelbusch 146), creating a stunning spectacle that caught the eyes of those passing by on the street who could now see well into the interior of the store. The glass acted like a frame on a painting, or even a stage, Schivelbusch argues, a view onto the new world: "theatre and the passers-by [were its] audience" (148). Today such construction techniques are de facto in retail space but at the time, the cultural pastime of window-shopping was born; and as we are well aware, it would bloom, next through innovations in electric lighting.

Gas lighting for urban retail space first emerged in the Parisian arcades, an interior shopping mall "covered by a glass roof, faced on both sides with shops and usually passing through the interior of a city block" (Isenstadt 13). Paris contains some of

the world's first and most extravagant arcades, constructed after new production practices made glass and steel viable building materials in the late eighteenth century and into the first half of the nineteenth century (Isenstadt 13). But gas lighting had severe limitations. It required being burned upright, had to be supported away from walls and ceilings, have access to a continuous supply of fresh air for combustion, and needed to be easily accessible in order to be lighted and extinguished with each use. It also created excessive heat as well as smoke, and caused an acute risk of fire and toxicity; and in the end — relative to electricity — burned dimly (Schivelbusch 1-49, 155-188; Petty 87).

Though the electric light bulb was commercialized in 1839, the introduction of applied electric light systems did not take root until the 1880s through the 1920s with the help of new forms of applied lighting (in local traffic systems, work spaces, factories) and in non-visible arenas (elevators, machinery, household appliances). Electricity was the hallmark of the future. Unlike gas, electricity could drive a multiplicity of small motors, produce high temperatures without consuming oxygen, link a series of machines, and regulate systems of production, making modern manufacturing impossible without it (Nye 13-14).

As early as 1885, some fire insurance companies offered to lower the cost of their coverage if clients switched from gas to electricity (Nye 32).

The effects of electricity were so profound that it is not surprising that it was soon affiliated with mysticism and the divine. Electricity was believed to restore exhausted psychic and physiological energies. As Anson Rabinbach puts it, if "fatigue was the disorder of energy, electricity held out the promise of restitution" (46; Schivelbusch 71). Numerous psychiatric accounts cite instances of applying electricity to cure hysteria, mental disorders, depression, anxiety, etc. While we cannot explore this literature further here, **[6]** we must ask: why and how did this euphoria around electricity and electronic media emerge? Was it the intense astonishment of the newness of a new media? A "great many people," Abelson writes, were undergoing their "first encounter with electric lights, elevators, and escalators, expanses of plate glass, and even full-length mirrors" (66). And, as noted, many of these appeared for the first time in the large department stores like Macy's, and of course, the Parisian Bon Marché.

**In short, new electric lighting systems, from streetlights to store interiors and large-scale advertising signs, introduced a radical and often disorientating shift in the consumer experience.**

In this new urban environment we find yet another rationale for understanding how consumer culture was both baffling and enticing, equipped with new powers of commodity fetishism **[7]** and producing an irresistible, phantasmagoric pull.

### Bourgeois Thieving

Now that the spectacular environment of the fin de siècle city, department store, and its magnificent offerings have been addressed, we turn to the peculiar instances of shoplifting found within Zola's fictional text, The Ladies' Paradise. Let us first consider the particularly colourful case noted in the epigraph, in which The Ladies' Paradise's owner and manager Octave Mouret catalogues the various typologies of thieves in his store, including: the professional thieves who, according to Zola's Mouret, "do the least harm of all, for the police knew every one of them," the kleptomaniacs who "stole from a perverse desire … proving the temptation provided by the big shops," and, finally, the women in an "interesting condition, whose robberies were of a special order" (Zola 277). In an instance accorded with this final typology, Mouret explains: "the superintendent of police had found two hundred and forty-eight pairs of pink gloves stolen from every shop in Paris" (Zola 277). In Zola's taxonomy of thievery, professional thieves and kleptomaniacs are *de rigueur*: they are creatures drawn by the environment of the department store whose only difference lies in the fact that kleptomaniacs, unlike thieves, don't *need* to steal but do so out of an affliction. The third case, however, demonstrates what happens when the affliction advances to a disease, when the fever of consumption is pushed past its rational limit — both for the victim and the perpetrator.

Mouret is "nervously delighted" (Zola 277) at recounting these tales while his second-in-command, de Vallagnosc, poses a critique: "Why do you display such a quality of goods? It serves you right if you are robbed. You ought not to tempt the poor, defenseless women so" (Zola 287). That Mouret's luxury empire both entices and condones theft seemingly defies capitalist logic, and yet Mouret appears quizzically proud of these criminal acts; furthermore, he doesn't press charges. He is not alone in the latter. Alongside Mouret and his team's implicit endorsement of shoplifting (by virtue of failing to punish it), we also find the law to be equally permissive: "The authorities preferred to hush up some matters as far as possible" (Zola 366-367). But why did all of this permissiveness occur inside the store when it was clearly one's own profits

that were being lost? Mouret does enjoy recounting the social status of those who come into his store: "very respectable people," he proudly states in the text, as "Last week we had the sister of a chemist, and the wife of a councillor" (Zola 277). So possibly his insistence on settling "these matters" as inconspicuously as possible stems from his own desire to maintain a face of impunity whilst he attempts to climb the ladder from bourgeoisie to old world aristocracy.

Thefts were occurring in The Ladies' Paradise with growing frequency: "The store "scarcely [saw] a week passed without … theft" (Zola 366-367). And yet, just as quickly as these cases of shoplifting were discovered, they were buried in the language of denial and concealment. One of the bourgeois ladies who frequents The Ladies' Paradise, Madame De Boves, is described early in the text as "short of money, always tortured by some immoderate wish [and who] nourished a feeling of rancour against the goods she could not carry away" (Zola 88). Her capitalist desires almost get the better of her when, many chapters later, she is shopping with her husband and daughter and is "thinking of slipping a piece of [lace] under her mantle" (Zola 286). However, she shudders and drops the lace upon hearing Mouret's second in command Monsieur De Vallognosc: "Ah! We've caught you, madame" (Zola 286). Being "caught" for intended shoplifting results in no recrimination for Madame De Boves: she is allowed to stroll away, unscathed.

We have found Mouret's fictional handling of this new breed of shoplifters to be consistent with historical record **(Figure 1)**. The December 11, 1904 edition of The *New York Times Sunday Magazine* ran an interview with an accomplished store detective, Daniel Kash, who explained that the "great majority of [shoplifters] are women" and the "worst lot of

people we have to deal with are the well to do or even wealthy customers who don't need to steal, but just do it because it is easy" ("Harvest Time"). But from here the detective's interventions with these women were performed "so quietly and with so little fuss in the store itself that the next neighbors of the shoplifter who is caught in the act never know anything about it" ("Harvest Time"). Drawing on archival research in newspapers and trade journals, Abelson argues that the stakes of a store's reputation was the real issue. If instances of shoplifting received coverage in the press, it could act as a deterrent, advertently keeping "the good customers away," not to mention tarnishing one's reputation (Abelson 65). Downplaying acts of shoplifting was then done for the benefit of a store's reputation, as they did not want to ostracize their customers or give the impression that their place of business was a site of delinquency.

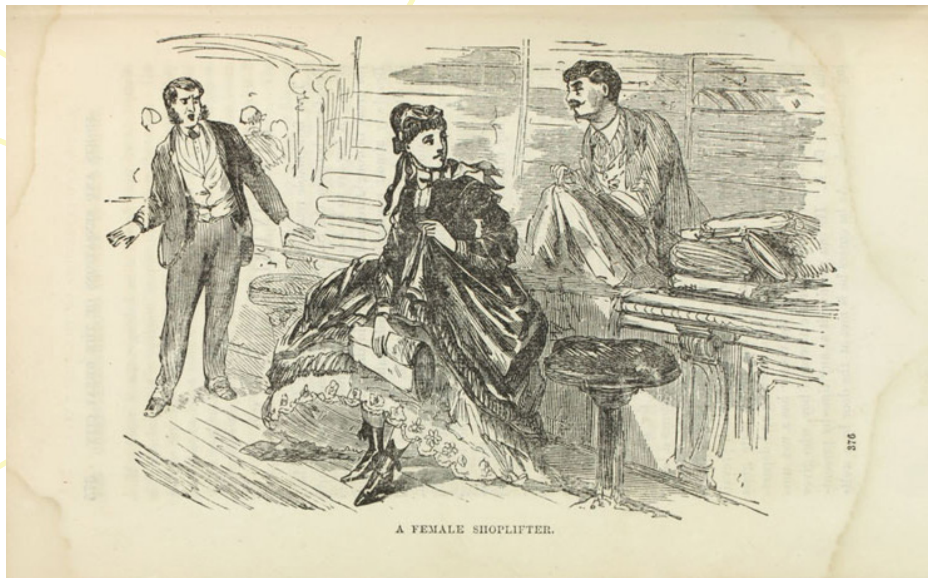


FIGURE 1

Despite the clerks' outward portrayals of shock and disdain towards this bourgeoisie woman's theft, she will likely leave the store unpunished. James D. McCabe Jr., "A Female Shoplifter," *Lights and Shadows of New York Life*, Philadelphia National Publishing Company, 1872.

And indeed, when we witness Denise's first encounter with The Ladies' Paradise, we see it wrought with anxiety, a form of "mental vulnerability," and the physical sensations of danger mixed with a confusing seduction.

The confusion stems from the spectacle of the store's display, as we have argued via Debord (Debord 10), as well as the alienation between workers and the products of their labour due to Marx's concept of commodity fetishism. Fashion scholar Elizabeth Wilson also argues for the intimate experience of the fetishization of fashion, "the quality of mystery attached to clothing, a mystery that neither academic nor journalistic discourse on dress usually acknowledges." For Wilson, "fetishism [in fashion] is a form of false consciousness: inanimate objects are endowed with a power they cannot objectively have" (Wilson). This power, we argue, can lead to criminal acts.

According to Abelson, the origins of the term "kleptomania" emerged as "women of the middle class took merchandise from the dry-goods bazaars, and doctors explained their actions not in terms of what the women were doing — shoplifting — but in the language of physical and mental illness" (7). In other words, the middle class female shoplifter was interpreted in her time as hysterical, pathologically ill with the disease of kleptomania, and pre-disposed to the "fever" of consumerism and its corollary, shoplifting, due to her biological weakness in the face of an abundance of goods and the excitement aroused by the new shopping bazaars. In short, it was not her fault; she was born that way.

## Shoplifting and Systemic Racism

Jumping ahead a century and half, we return to Paris to find a group of young African-French women profiled for shoplifting. How and why we find such dramatically different results for the same gender, in the same city, and in the same retail environment is the focus of this section.

### *Girlhood*

The scene we explore is a shoplifting sequence in French filmmaker Céline Sciamma's 2014 film Girlhood (Bande de filles), **[8]** the third in her trilogy which focalizes childhood and adolescence. Girlhood follows the protagonist Marieme, a sixteen-year-old girl

who lives in an apartment building in a "*banlieue*" in Bagnolet — a commune in the suburbs of Paris. The city of Paris was itself built in a circular fashion so the wealthiest inhabitants could live close to the center while workers and immigrants were pushed to the suburban outskirts. Today, 80% of the inhabitants of Paris live outside the city center. The *banlieues* are primarily inhabited by impoverished immigrant communities with limited social mobility. **[9]** Marieme, her three siblings, and mother inhabit a small apartment in a housing complex and the film shows

FIGURE 2

Lady, Fily, and Adiatou first befriend Marieme. Céline Sciamma, *Girlhood* (Bande de filles), 2014, film stills.

few employment options for this family beyond menial work, such as her mother's position as a hotel cleaner, or crime including drug trafficking, prostitution, and coercion or theft. Marieme is denied the opportunity to go to high school due to poor grades. She is encouraged to undertake a vocational training course by a school counselor, but is resistant and instead drawn to three girls from the neighbourhood: Lady, Fily, and Adiatou who quickly become her quick-witted and emotionally engaged partners in crime **(Figure 2).**

As Lady, Fily, and Adiatou take Marieme under their wing, the mood lightens. The girls depart on a shopping trip to the Forum-des-Halles, an underground shopping mall in Paris about 2.5 kilometers from the original Bon Marché. The nineteenth-century Bon Marché sought to offer an experience of luxury to France's burgeoning middle class, not only through the goods on offer, but also via the store's décor and advances in technology, architecture, and customer service, as we have argued. The contemporary Forum-des-Halles is a descendent of the Bon Marché in terms of its offering of a wide array of goods, its deployment of many of Boucicaut's marketing strategies, as well as its concentration of consumer culture within a demarcated space. Further, while the Bon Marché may appear to have offered items of higher value than the contemporary shopping mall experience of the Forum-des-Halles, Rudi Laermans points out that " the displayed luxury was most of the time merely semblance, for the great success of the early department stores was partly due to the relatively low price of their merchandise. Most commodities were not costly, handmade goods but cheap, mass-produced items" (Laermans 93). What does differentiate the Forum-des-Halles from the nineteenth-century Bon Marché is that the former contains multiple stores controlled by diverse interests; therefore, there is more range in terms of the goods available, as well as greater variance in terms of the targeted consumer-base. For instance, in addition to boasting boutiques that carry upscale French designs, the Forum-des-Halles also possesses brick and mortar outposts of multinational mass-market chains.

For the girls, consumption begins in the mall's hallways — outside the stores' interiors — just as it did for Denise in *The Ladies' Paradise* through the decorative window displays. Lady (her self-appointed nickname) offers her commentary on the garments and accessories of other shoppers prior to the foursome entering the store. This précis and the shopping (and shoplifting) that follow present Marieme's education into the sartorial guidelines of the clique. In the store, Lady encourages Fily's dressing, stating "It's perfect for you" whilst holding up a flowered top and offering to buy it for her. From this playful scene, the camera jumps to Marieme's perusal of racks of ready-to-wear fashion with their scores of replicas, and her interaction with a shop clerk who asks if she can be of assistance. When Marieme replies, "*Non, merci,*" the shop clerk — a white and blonde young woman — follows her too closely, not offering her the space to enjoy her shopping experience. Fed up, Lady interrogates the clerk, asking why she is following Marieme, whether she does so with all customers, and hurling frustrations while she, Fily, and Adiatou surround the employee: "Do you think we're here to lift this crap? Think we've no money? That we're losers? What d'you know, shop slave?" The scene cuts to the girls walking outside the store in the mall thoroughfare once again. The severity of the interaction lasts but a beat before Lady bursts out laughing with her posse quick to follow suit.

### Shopping and Racial Profiling

Comparing scenes of bourgeois "lifting" and the underwhelming responses from store officials in Zola's naturalist writing and this scene from Sciamma's film presents the opportunity to engage with some of the complex features of consumption. Sociologist Elizabeth Chin aptly states: "Because consumption is at its root a social process, it is enmeshed with the full range of social action from positive, altruistic expressions to destructive, violent outbursts" (178). For *Girlhood*'s girls, the act of shopping functions, on one hand, as a superlative opportunity for play **[10]** where they can try on new identities and imagine alternative future possibilities. When Lady encourages Fily to try on a flowered blouse, the girls share in an imaginative realm: who would Fily be if she wore such a blouse? How would Lady's life be different if she could actually purchase the blouse, and not just idealize being able to do so? Lady's affection for her friends, including protégé Marieme, is thus enacted through this shopping trip: an altruistic ritual of friend-making, as well as space of carefree play in spite of the disparate socio-economic conditions of the girls' home lives back in Bagnolet.

In this scene from Sciamma's Girlhood, the girls are not caught shoplifting and yet they are treated as if they are criminals, while, in Zola's text, bourgeois white women are apprehended with stolen goods, only to be treated gingerly by the store staff. Marieme is seen wandering aimlessly around the store, flipping through racks of items with wide eyes and a sense of nervousness. Shopping with peers and in such commercial settings is clearly new for her, as evidenced by the oversized hooded sweatshirt she wears in comparison with the stylish looks of her new friends. Like Denise Badu, Marieme is accosted by the new retail environment: the fluorescent lighting, the rows of bright colours, as well as the "organized disorder" of the shop's layout. Ironically, this feature of modern shopping, popularized in Boucicaut's *grand magasin*, offers fuel for the shop clerk's fire in trailing Marieme, in that the shop clerk may well perceive Marieme's indecision and cautious navigation of the maze of the store as evidence of her attempt to conceal clandestine theft. Marieme's introduction to shopping as creative play is intensified by the effects of the built environment, ones which originated with the early department stores and remain standard features of modern

shopping malls: Abelson writes, "Glass and light intensified the spectacle in the dry-good bazaars and supported the carefully crafted illusion that anything was possible" (90). Marieme's introduction to shopping as creative play is intensified by the effects of the built environment, ones that originated with the early department stores and remain standard features of modern shopping malls.

The fictional depiction of racial profiling that Marieme undergoes in this film has started to receive the negative attention and repercussions it deserves in the broader social sphere. For example, a landmark 2005 ruling in New York State found Macy's Department Stores guilty of racial profiling and procured a settlement of $600,000 for the plaintiffs (Elliott). However, acts of prejudice persist at alarming rates. In an article for The Washington Post, journalist Radley Balko engages with the act of "stop and frisk" searches where police officers pull over and search cars at random. He interviews the authors of a study of twenty million traffic stops in the U.S. called *Suspect Citizens* and finds that "Blacks are almost twice as likely to be pulled over as whites — even though whites drive more on average … just by getting in a car, a Black driver has about twice the odds of being pulled over, and about four times the odds of being searched" (Balko). Another alarming statistic resulting from this study found that though Black women present just six percent of the female population of San Francisco, they account for 45.5 percent of female arrests (Balko). In light of such systemic racism, Lady's outburst against the shop clerk calls out those whose per-

secute her, naming names and visibly stunning the bewildered clerk, whose uncritical enactment of racial stereotypes towards the Black customers underscores her status as an embodiment of widespread, unexamined attitudes prevalent in society.

In a scene following on the heels of this moment in the store the girls are seen in a hotel room, where they take sips of alcohol, enjoy a bath, and smoke weed. They model ready-to-wear dresses with their security tags still attached, leading us to infer that the girls likely stole the dresses from the shop in Forum-des-Halles. They then begin to dance in their stolen dresses to the soundtrack of Rihanna's "Diamonds." **[11]** Sciamma and cinematographer Crystel Fournier create a mise en scène that melts into a thick and luxurious fantasy space **(Figure 3)**. The lighting shifts into a monochrome blue **[12]** and the speed of the girls' dancing is seen close up and slowed down, making each gesture that much more elegant.

FIGURE 3

Sciamma and cinematographer Crystel Fournier create a mise en scène that melts into a thick and luxurious fantasy space of monochrome blue. Céline Sciamma, *Girlhood* (Bande de filles), 2014, film stills.

## As they dance they are free: ecstatic and released from the world of poverty, abuse, systemic racism, and social and political marginalization that otherwise colours their lives.

Near the end their voices rise just above the sound track, played almost in its entirety in this intensely celebratory scene.

Marieme's induction into the group is cemented with this celebration, wherein the girls proudly flaunt their stolen garments for each other so that their theft becomes another indispensable feature of their revelry. The film deliberately displays the girls boasting of their stolen wares, following just a few scenes from Lady's altercation with the shop clerk in which she is defiant in the face of the latter's profiling and goes out of her way to display her group's innocence. But the girls are not innocent of the crime of which they are suspected. The reconciliation of these two scenes proves fundamental to our overarching argument and relies upon a deepened analysis of theft and consumption through the lens of critical race scholarship.

Sociologist Victor M. Rios has recently studied how and why young males of colour shoplift items like soda or chips from bodegas. In one case, very much akin to the one from *Girlhood* discussed here, Rios tracks a group of boys who enter a store in blatant disobedience of a conspicuously posted sign that demands customers maintain a two-person limit while inside the shop. The shopkeeper surveys and threatens the boys, and despite no misconduct threatens to call the police. Mike, one of the boys, then grabs a 25-cent bag of chips and says "I was gonna pay for it, but now I ain't paying for shit" (Rios 52). It is clear how prescribed racial stereotypes can be appropriated and self-re-enacted through such scenes of anger and frustration. Further, Rios argues that when these youths engage in shoplifting, they do so as a way of reclaiming their dignity in the face of social systems that prevent their success and criminalize them for their race and class. **[13]** As he puts it, the boys "embrace criminality as a means of contesting a system that [already] sees them as criminals" (Rios 50). Breaking rules becomes a way of gaining respect, and, in the case of *Girlhood*, a way of forming social bonds and adolescent memories.

Until recently, research into the racial profiling of youth of colour has focused on young men, like those in Rios' study. However, researcher Jamila Blake and her co-authors have turned this lens to young women, with striking results: "Responses revealed, in particular, that participants perceived Black girls as needing less protection and nurturing than white girls, and that Black girls were perceived to know more about adult topics and are more knowledgeable about sex than their white peers" (Green). The effects of such prejudices, according to the study's authors, create the impression in minds of authorities that the young Black girls are more culpable for their actions and are therefore deserving of harsher punishments. For example, the research concluded that Black girls — as opposed to white girls — are two-and-a-half times more likely to be punished for disobedience and three times more likely to be cited for being disruptive (Green). Read through the illuminating findings of Rios and Blake and her co-researchers, then, Sciamma's girls enact two forms of resistance within the shop: first, Lady tells off the shop clerk, attempting to educate her about her racism; the girls then steal items of clothing from the shop as an affront to the toxic treatment they receive, and to the unfair stereotypes they are saddled with due to the colour of their skin.

### Theft of Experience

In her outburst, Lady flips the script by calling the clerk a "slave," in that she is working for an hourly wage and can thus be perceived as a victim of exploitation under capitalism; while the girls, whose race is a marker of historic conditions of slavery, wander the mall freely and "do what [they] want," in the maxim of one of Lady's key lessons for

Marieme. Read through the lens of capital, the shop clerk can be understood as a "slave" since the surplus value produced by the goods taken to market (the store's clothes) is absorbed by the store's (or chain's) owners, while the clerk subsists off hourly wages and is hostage to the store's opening and closing hours. The clerk presents just one victim in this exploitative chain of the fashion industry, one that has received widespread media attention for its atrocious treatment of workers in the developing world, due to horrific working conditions made strikingly visible through the 2013 fire at the Bangladeshi Rana Plaza garment factory that killed 1,134 people (Safi and Rushe), not to mention the industry's ravaging effects on the climate. **[14]**

While the film does not signify outright the store in which the girls are profiled, based on the store's aesthetic with its white walls, fluorescent lighting, and racks of ready-to-wear designer knock-offs, in addition to our knowledge that the Forum-des-Halles contains multinational chain retailers, we posit that the store scene location in Girlhood is based upon H&M, a Swedish-founded international conglomerate with $30 billion dollars (CAD) in net global sales for the 2018 fiscal year ("Annual Report 2018"). For the girls in Girlhood who shop in an H&M, shoplifting undoubtedly feels like a victimless crime for it is directed against a system that perpetuates racism through conditioning workers, such as the shop clerk, to profile Black shoppers under the false logic of decreasing acts of theft and crime. **[15]** The CEOs of H&M are the faceless capitalists, made wealthy off their exploitative strategies; the fabrics and creators of the clothes are continents away and their raw materials and labour have been abstracted to the point of alienation. **[16]** The stolen clothes therefore represent the commodity fetish writ large, resplendent with that intangible feeling elucidated by Elizabeth Wilson (Wilson) and inscribed with

the potent power to create the girls anew, without imbuing any of the origins of their production into the girls' wearing of them or to the imaginative futurities they represent.

This scene also recalls additional histories of exploitation. In one of his seminal articles, Robin D. G. Kelley writes of Black working-class people in the American South during the Jim Crow era and their acts of resistance, what Kelley calls "creative strategies" (89). One such strategy was theft at the workplace, including both temporal theft, wherein the workers slacked off from their duties, and material theft, in which the enslaved kitchen workers stole and ate food scraps in an act known as "pan-toting" (Kelley 89). Kelley explains that "any attempt to understand the relationship between theft and working-class opposition must begin by interrogating the dominant view of 'theft' as deviant, criminal behavior. From the vantage point of the workers … theft at the workplace is a strategy to recover unpaid wages or to compensate for low wages and mistreatment" (90). For the girls, taking from the store enables them to gain restitution for their mistreatment. This mistreatment, however, goes beyond race in that the girls are doubly disenfranchised under capitalism — a capitalism represented in this analysis by the modern-day shopping mall experience. Not only are they subject to its legacies of systemic racism, but they are also burdened by "a particular form of exploitation" (Federici 13) under capitalism, which Silvia Federici isolates through their expropriated bodies: "the body has been for women in capitalist society what the factory has been for male waged workers: the primary ground of their exploitation and resistance, as the female body has been appropriated by the state and men and forced to function as a means for the reproduction and accumulation of labor" (16). As Kelley rightfully suggests, it is necessary to deconstruct the concept of theft under capitalism when such acts are performed by certain bodies. For Kelley, these bodies are racialized; whereas, in our analysis of Girlhood's shoplifting scene, they are gendered as well. Shoplifting is a punishable offense, and we do not claim to argue otherwise; however, the girls' theft in Girlhood must be reconsidered due to the fact that their experience of shopping-as-pleasure is stolen from them.

## Conclusion

Like the new class of bourgeois women in Zola's nineteenth century Paris, the girls in Sciamma's twenty-first c entury P aris a re seemingly drawn in by the structural effects of the consumer environment including the lighting, glass, and display, as well as the persisting inventions of the grand magasin. However, their unsavory treatment in comparison to the class of "Femme Honoré" women who stroll The Ladies' Paradise is unwarranted on all counts. In her groundbreaking ethnographic study of Black youth consumer culture, *Purchasing Power*, Elizabeth Chin found, again and again, that young Black shoppers experienced "dehumaniza-tion" (104) in stores due to store employees presuming they had less money than they did, or because the employees policed their shopping experiences in much the same way Marieme is profiled in the film. Her study finds that — contrary to stereotypical assessments — young people of colour are not driven by conspicuous consumption (Chin 60-61) and the possession of such items by any means necessary, including theft. In fact, her subjects demonstrated great care with their consumption habits: attempting to make their money go as far as possible through the purchasing of practical items of good value. In corroboration with Rios' study, Chin finds that when young Black shoppers do act out in stores, whether through loud or disruptive behavior or theft, these acts represent "attempts at rejecting the power of others over their own lives" (114) due to the store employees' treatment of them as poor, less deserving of service, or intent on committing criminal acts due to their race.

While lower income Black shoppers are read through the prism of criminality and dehumanization in Sciamma's *Girlhood*, the nineteenth century, middle class, white, and female shoplifter was diagnosed with a disease correlated with her biological weakness in the face of rampant consumerism.

## This class and race-based distinction at the heart of our study is emblematic of greater social and cultural occurrences that persist today.

Taken together, the comparison between the two cases shows that the so-called modern female's apparent freedom to consume and inhabit urban space is a freedom only fully afforded to a certain race and class of women, but at the same time, still marks her as a gendered type that is perpetually wanting. Shoplifting and its lack of punishment for middle class women is thus a half-freedom, whereas women of colour are both gendered and a priori marked as criminals.

In both cases, we can also find a similar treatment of shoplifting not as "bad," but rather, socially successful insofar as they are all "women" accurately instantiating cliché expectations for the female gender as always already second, other, and less than. Also in both, shoplifting is a viable mode of survival in one's cultural landscape. As Persellin writes, "In a way, then, the shoplifter is the bad customer par excellence — an unruly, disobedient member of consumer society whose fault lies in how she acquires objects" (24). In other words, the female shoplifter is not "bad" at all. She is in fact very, very good and skilled at zealously adhering to the pervasive "dictates of consumerism" (Persellin 24). For the bourgeois women, the combined forces of visual display, commodity excess, the rise of the middle class and leisure time, and aggressive marketing strategies ensure the raw desire for what one does not have and cannot ever be. In short: the essence of patriarchal capitalism. To acquire by any means necessary, whether through exploitation, theft, or blind ambition, but to do so after being "Othered" and/or disenfranchised is a weapon for regaining the temporary veneer of dignity in a system that has already eradicated it.

# Notes

1. Defined by Federici as "the historical process upon which the development of capitalist relations was premised" (12).

2. French writers at the time, and for over a century after, commented on and critiqued the new paradigm (Pierre Bourdieu, Jean Baudrillard), and an entire field of consumer studies has since emerged. While we cannot provide a review of the entire field here, we refer readers to the work of Anne Friedberg, Window Shopping (1993), Sharon Zukin, Point of Purchase (2004), Rachel Bowlby, *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing, and Zola* (2010), and Rudi Laermans, "Learning to Consume: Early Department Stores and the Shaping of Modern Consumer Culture (1860-1914)," (1993); as for excellent work on consumption in Latin American spaces, see work from Arlene Dávila.

3. There is some controversy on this point: Michael B. Miller sees some parallels between the romance and grandeur of Zola's fictional character of Octave Mouret with the historical figure of Aristide Boucicaut, however, Miller writes, "Mouret is too much a hodgepodge of varied observations and literary imagination, and too lacking in historical roots, to provide us with more than a feel for the development with which we are concerned" (21). Our article, on the other hand, follows Rachel Bowlby's assertion that "Zola's novels are always based on extensive research of the milieu"; she perceives a "striking linguistic parallel … with a recorded speech of the historical equivalent of Mouret … [which] draws attention to the fidelity of [Zola's] account" (44-45).

4. He promises to be in touch about making a deal with Mouret so long as *The Ladies' Paradise*'s upcoming Monday sale is as profitable as Mouret expects, and so the deal is made.

5. The display window only developed as an independent part of the shop around the middle of the eighteenth century. Previously it had been restricted by a little window that only permitted people to see into and out of the shop; it now became "a glassed-in stage on which an advertising show was presented" (Schivelbusch 146).

6. See the work of Jean-Martin Charcot and modern criticism of it.

7. In Volume I of *Capital* Karl Marx spoke of commodity fetishism, and certainly this is part of the equation. But beyond this, we are also suggesting the new platform of store displays forms yet another and entirely new apparatus of commercial display aesthetics.

8. *Girlhood* was screened at the Directors' Fortnight Selection in Cannes and the Contemporary World Cinema section of the Toronto International Film Festival.

9. The irony of places like Bagnolet and other *banlieue*s is that they were originally constructed as utopian, highly functional living systems, or "machines for living" as Le Corbusier has referred to them, but are now perceived to be concrete jungles, ghettos, and the site of numerous car bombings and violent racist attacks in the city. See George Packer, "The Other France."

10. Chin writes that, "Malls are often compared to theme parks such as Disneyland in part because, like theme parks, malls feature a carnivalesque atmosphere that is at once both controlled and utopian" (108).

11. Song on Rihanna's seventh studio album, *Unapologetic* (2012).

12. The blue lighting flatters the girls' skin, unlike the harsh fluorescent shop lights under which they are viewed as criminals. Fournier's choice to contrast these two scenes accentuates the similarly opposing decision by many cinematographers to utilize lighting that best suits Caucasian actors.

13. Rios cites Manuel Castells' concept of "resistance identities" (50).

14. See, for example, the United Nations Environment Programme's "Why Fast Fashion Needs to Slow Down."

15. Balko's interview with the authors of *Suspect Citizen*, Frank R. Baumgartner, Derek A. Epp, and Kelsey Shoub, demonstrates the wasted hours consistent with "stop and frisk" policing measures. Only 3 percent of these encounters produce any evidence of a crime, thus, according to the authors, "97 percent-plus of these people are getting punished solely because they belong to a group that statistically commits crimes at a higher rate" (Balko).

16. The concept of alienation as applied to the garment and fashion industries can be understood through analyses of feminist and/or racialized labour in both the developing and the developed world, such as those by Diane Elson and Ruth Pearson, "'Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers': An Analysis of Women's Employment in the Third World" (1981), María Angelina Soldatenko, "Made in the USA: Latinas/os?, Garment Work and Ethnic Conflict in Los Angeles Sweat Shops" (1999), and Jane L. Collins, "Mapping A Global Labour Market: Gender and Skill in the Globalizing Garment Industry" (2002). Fashion scholars investigate the ethics and effects of alienation upon industry, academic, and consumer trends. See, for instance, Guy Debord*, The Society of the Spectacle* (2010), Nancy L. Green, "Art and Industry: The Language of Modernization in the Production of Fashion" (1994), Theresa M. Winge, "'Green is the New Black': Celebrity Chic and the 'Green' Commodity Fetish" (2008), Anja Aronowsky Cronberg, "Can Fashion Ever Be Democratic?", and Anders Haug and Jacob Busch, "Towards an Ethical Fashion Framework" (2015).

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Evangeline Holtz Schramek holds an Honours B.A. in English Literature and Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia and the University of East Anglia (UK), an M.A. in Contemporary Canadian Literature from the University of Toronto, a Ph.D. candidacy in the Department of English and the Women's and Gender Studies Institute at the University of Toronto, and is currently a Master's of Policy candidate in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University).

Her previous article, published in Canadian Literature, investigated why Asian Canadian novels of the prairies — about female cowboys — are denied the label of "western."

## Carolyn L. Kane is the author of the award-winning book, Chromatic Algorithms: Synthetic Color, Computer Art, and Aesthetics after Code (University of Chicago Press, 2014).

Dr. Kane completed her M.A. in Media Studies at The New School University, earned her Ph.D. in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University (2011), and was awarded the Nancy L. Buc Postdoctoral Fellow in "Aesthetics and the Question of Beauty" at Brown University in 2014–2015. She was also on the Faculty of the Film and Media Department at Hunter College in the City University of New York (2011–2014) and is currently an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Communication and Design at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) in Toronto.

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