

## Corporate Racial Citizenship: How Black Cultural Philanthropy Reinforces Capitalism<sup>1</sup>

*Museums as Ritual Sites:  
Civilizing Rituals Reconsidered*

4-14-22

**Chapter Summary:** This chapter investigates corporate patronage at the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) to investigate the ritual functioning of museums through the lens of capitalism and race. Examining markers of patronage at the museum's physical and virtual site, I explore how corporate support functions as a form of diversity capital by signaling that firms are not only good corporate citizens, but specifically good corporate racial citizens. To develop the concept of *corporate racial citizenship* and its ties to Black museum patronage, I draw on a wide array of data such as participant observation at NMAAHC's opening weekend and an archive of public relations texts on corporate giving to the museum. Theoretically, this chapter advances research on the ritual functioning of museums by extending Carol Duncan's (1995) analysis to an understudied category of museums—Black museums—and a less analyzed aspect of contemporary capitalism—race and corporate citizenship. This chapter also advances the growing scholarship on corporate social responsibility (CSR) by elaborating its specifically racial elements. Although CSR is now understood to be a core part of contemporary capitalism, there has been less analysis of the ways that race figures into this approach to business.

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<sup>1</sup> Banks, Patricia A. Forthcoming. "Corporate Racial Citizenship: How Black Cultural Philanthropy Reinforces Capitalism." In *Museums as Ritual Sites: Civilizing Rituals Reconsidered*, edited by Lieke Wijnia and James S. Bielo. New York, NY; Abingdon, Oxon; Routledge.