Anthropologica

Vol. 48 Nº 2, 2006

Canadian
Anthropology
Society

Société
canadienne
d'anthropologie

Guest Editors / Rédacteurs Invités:
Andrew P. Lyons and Harriet D. Lyons

The New Anthropology of Sexuality / La nouvelle anthropologie de la sexualité

Editorial Policy

Open to contributors from Canada and abroad, *Anthropologica* publishes in French and English, articles and reviews in all areas of cultural and social anthropology. All manuscripts are refereed anonymously by two reviewers.

Politique éditoriale

La revue *Anthropologica* publie en français et en anglais, des articles et comptes rendus produits par des chercheurs canadiens et étrangers oeuvrant dans les divers domaines de l'étude académique de l'anthropologie culturelle et sociale. Chaque manuscrit est soumis pour évaluation à deux lecteurs anonymes.

Anthropologica ISSN 0003-5459
Published at Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario for the Canadian Anthropology Society.
Publiée par Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario pour la Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie.
 Printed in Canada / Imprimé au Canada. We acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Trent University. / Nous reconnaissons l'aide financière apportée par le Counseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada et l'université Trent. We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs. / Nous reconnaissons l'aide financière du gouvernement du Canada, par l'entremise du Programme d'aide aux publications (PAP), pour nos dépenses d'envoi postal. Publications Mail Registration No. / Poste-publications enregistrement nº 09373. Agreement No. / Nº de la convention 40064165. Return postage guaranteed / Port de retour garanti.

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The Production of Race, Locality, and State: An Anthropology

Based on the keynote address to the 2003 Conference of the Canadian Anthropology Society (CASCA) on the theme of Anthropology in Troubling Times / Basé sur le discours principal prononcé à la conférence de la Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie (CASCA) de 2003 sur le thème «L'anthropologie en périodes de troubles».

Article

Book Reviews / Comptes rendues

Cover / couverture

Ptolemy VIII, his sister-wife Cleopatra II and his niece-wife Cleopatra III, make an offering to the gods. [Round-topped limestone stela with Ptolemy VIII before Egyptian deities, c. 142-116 BC. From the temple of Karnak, Thebes Egypt. Height 63cm, Width 51 cm. London, British Museum EA612.] Reprinted with permission of the British Museum.

Ptolémée VIII, sa sœur et épouse Cléopâtre II ainsi que sa nièce et épouse Cléopâtre III, font des offrandes aux dieux. [Stèle de calcaire arrondie à son sommet représentant Ptolémée VIII devant des divinités égyptiennes, env. 142-116 av. J.-C., Temple de Karnak, Thèbes, Égypte. 63 x 51 cm, Londres, British Museum, EA612.] Reproduit avec la permission du British Museum.

The New Anthropology of Sexuality

Andrew P. Lyons *Wilfrid Laurier University*
Harriet D. Lyons *University of Waterloo*

Popular images of our discipline often feature a focus on sexuality as one of the defining elements of anthropology. These impressions are only partly true, because there have been substantial periods of time when relatively little was written on the topic. Nonetheless, sexuality has been an intellectual concern of the anthropological tradition since the Age of the Enlightenment. It was involved in the formation of representations about "primitive others" in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries and was also crucial in the construction of images of difference within metropolitan societies. The questioning of such representations has formed an important part of the modern and postmodern history of anthropology.

In our recent book, *Irregular Connections*, we traced the appearances and disappearances of sexuality in the history of anthropology in Britain and North America. Ideas of sexuality played a critical role in the formation of the fictions of primitive promiscuity which underpinned many of the evolutionary schemata of the 19th century. In the late evolutionary period Edward Westermarck (1906-08 vol. II) attacked ideas of primitive promiscuity. He also discussed homosexuality in Morocco and concluded that homosexual desire could be culturally acquired. In the late 1920s Malinowski (1987) and Mead (1928) showed how the Trobrianders and Samoans offered a model of premarital heterosexual freedom which Westerners might—with due caution—wish to emulate. In the 1930s Isaac Schapera (1966) and Raymond Firth (1957) discussed sexual behaviour among the Tswana and the Tikopia. Then for about 40 years sexuality retreated from centre stage in our discipline, because anthropologists sought scientific respectability and therefore eschewed topics which were personal, not "serious" and uneasily transcended the nature–culture boundary.

In the middle of the 1970s the anthropology of sexuality came out of the cold. Its return marked ruptures with the past as well as continuities. In the postcolonial era anthropology's focus shifted from the periphery to the

metropolis so that our sexualities as well as the sexualities of "others" came under scrutiny. In addition there was increasing attention to gays and lesbians within Western societies and to same sex sexualities and "third genders" elsewhere. These ethnographic and theoretical trends reflected the convergence of many changes and dispositions: the personal *positioning* of the ethnographer in an era which no longer denied that ethnographers participated in the social fields they described; the advent in practice of the feminist second wave and gay and lesbian liberation; new sexual prescriptions and proscriptions in both metropolis and postcolony; Lacanian and Foucauldian notions of gender and sexuality and latterly the emergence of queer theory.

The connection between debates about morality, ideas of equality, hierarchy and difference and anthropological ideas about sexuality is not new. It dates back well before Mead and Malinowski to the first foreshadowings and the very early decades of our discipline. For example, in the 18th century Diderot, an anthropologically minded philosopher, idealized the sexual generosity of semi-fictional Polynesians in order to criticize the proprieties of his age (Diderot 1989). Edward Long and Charles White, both polygenists, propagated popular legends about the genitalia of blacks (Lyons and Lyons 2004:29-40). The theorists of mother-right—Morgan, Bachofen and McLennan—conjured "primitive promiscuity" as the zero point of morality from which Victorian society had thankfully evolved (Lyons and Lyons 2004:73-80). Richard Burton praised polygamy in Utah and Southern Nigeria in order to express his disdain for Victorian prudery (Burton 1861). Westermarck, Ellis and Crawley criticized the notion of primitive promiscuity in ways that may not have been accidental, because they were among the late Victorian and Edwardian critics of the sexual status quo (see Lyons and Lyons 2004:100-130). In other words the *content* of the nexus between moralities, hierarchy, sexualities and anthropology has varied greatly; however, the constant has been the *form* of the relationship which has served as an armature for disparate power modalities. In *Irregular Connections* we described that relationship as conscription, by which we mean:

> the deployment of data about sexual discourses and practices among "others" in discourses of power, morality, pleasure and therapy in the cultures where anthropological texts have predominantly been read and produced. Conscription may imply the reaffirmation of existing social hierarchies, or it may involve what Marcus and Fischer (1986) call "cultural critique." [Lyons and Lyons 2004:18]

While our debt to Foucault and Said is obvious, for better or worse this was our own discipline-specific variation on their grand themes. It is also obvious that some forms of conscription are acceptable to contemporary academic sensibilities and others are not.

If sexuality is an "especially dense transfer point for relations of power," as Foucault (1980:103) opined, surely that principle should hold cross-culturally. In other words, anthropology which is produced by discourses of power in "our own" culture may be involved in the description and theorizing of different transfer points of power in other cultures. This may take forms which combine signs that mediate terrains both familiar and unfamiliar to us. Ager's discussion of incest among the Ptolemaic rulers of Hellenistic Egypt over six generations is particularly interesting in this regard. Ptolemaic incest appears to have been an exaggerated imitation of the dynastic practices of the former indigenous rulers of Pharaonic Egypt. The author who is a classicist details seven cases of brother-sister marriage (one of which may have been a love match), two cases of uncle-niece marriage, two or three cases of cousin marriage, a couple of cases of exogamous dynastic alliance, a rape, several murders within the royal family, immense corpulence (in the case of Ptolemy VIII) and extraordinary extravagance.

Incest is a topic that remained a subject of debate within anthropology throughout long periods when little was said about sexuality in general, albeit the discussion was curiously disembodied. Ager reviews a number of the classic theories including instinctive and learned aversion, some sociobiological ideas about inclusive fitness and hypergyny as well as the never ending debate about the effects of inbreeding and concludes that none of them fit the facts of this particular case. For example, the question of diminished sexual attraction resulting from innate aversion or excess familiarity does not apply to marriages where love is often the least consideration, particularly if one's new spouse has just murdered one's offspring! Her conclusion is that for the Ptolemies, "incest takes its place as only one component in an integrated set of liminal behaviours symbolizing power and grounded in a philosophy of excess." The precise point of these actions is that they constitute a fundamental breach of basic taboos covering social behaviour, a demonstration that the powerful, like gods, are not subject to mortal rules. They embrace *tryphē*, excess, rather than *sōphrosynē*, which is temperance and self-control.

Ager's argument is strong because she is able to provide a context which makes Ptolemaic excess comprehensible. A similar attention to detail both anthropological and historical is provided by Marc Epprecht whose

remarkable recent book, *Hungochani: The History of a Dissident Sexuality in Southern Africa* (Epprecht 2004), revealed a wealth of data on same sex sexualities among the Shona and their neighbours. Epprecht raises issues of which many Africans and Africanists are aware. They came to the world's attention with the growing AIDS crisis which involves all forms of sexual activity and much besides. Robert Mugabe's decision to close the exhibit of books mounted by Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair reflected his belief that homosexuality was disgusting and was an un-African practice introduced by foreigners. We have ourselves noted similar beliefs among some Southern Nigerians and Kenyans. Such assertions have a precedent in the long but not total silence about same sex sexualities in Africa on the part of European colonizers, explorers, missionaries and anthropologists. With rare exceptions (e.g., some remarks by Junod and by Monica Wilson) social anthropologists said nothing about African homosexuality until the 1970s when Merriam wrote about the institution of the *kitesha* (a berdache like figure) among the Basongye and Evans-Pritchard finally published forty-year old material on Zande homosexuality for an anthropological audience. Epprecht conclusively reveals the assertions of power and hierarchical assumptions that create such silences—if acts and discourses about sex are concerned with transfer points of power, the same may be said of silence. Nineteenth-century racists who portrayed Africans as debauched and oversexed viewed uncontrolled heterosexuality as the zero point of progress. Homosexuality was regarded as a symptom of decadence, as opposed to primitivity, because of its presence in the Ancient World and some contemporary Islamic societies (and presumably because of its presence in the Victorian world too). African homosexuality, where it occurred, had to be the product of diffusion. Missionaries were generally too prudish, too busy with heterosexual "sins" like polygyny, and/or too worried about upsetting potential converts or potential donors to address the topic. Colonial governments were presumably embarrassed by institutions such as mine marriage which their policies facilitated. Early African nationalists, such as Kenyatta, who wished to refashion an acceptable cultural history for their peoples insisted on the foreignness of homosexuality and anthropologists who wished to gain their sympathy succumbed to pressures "to corral Africans into a reassuring nationalist allegory of exclusive heterosexuality."

Epprecht's work, here and in *Hungochani,* reminds us that the category label "natural" can be stigmatizing as well as exemplary. The alleged absence of same-sex eroticism was consistent with the image of Africans as the ultimate *Naturvolk,* with all of the ambiguities of racialized distancing and desire for a less problematic, more virile past which such a label implied. In Northern Europe in the late 19th century increasing attention was focussed on homosexuality which was marked as an "identity," a state of being rather than as events in people's lives, by medical sexologists, legislators, homophobes and by self-identified "Urnings" (whether or not it had been an identity before is an issue we cannot address in this space). There were debates at this time as to whether homosexuality was "natural" or "unnatural." Havelock Ellis thought that inverts were statistically uncommon but were created by nature. Because homosexuality was innate it could not be cured. It was wrong to persecute homosexuals. Edward Westermarck, who was sympathetic toward homosexuals, thought that homosexuality could be acquired in same sex environments such as Islamic schools (see Lyons and Lyons 2004:128-129). Descriptors like "innate" and "acquired," "natural" and "learned," are still contested concepts a century later, and their significance depends on the social context in which they are expressed.

Constance Sullivan-Blum, in her article "'The Natural Order of Creation': Naturalizing Discourses in the Christian Same-Sex Marriage Debate," explores the strategies employed by Christian conservatives, Christian liberals, and gay and lesbian people of varying religious persuasions, to support their positions on whether churches should recognize same sex marriage. Her analysis reveals that some relatively liberal heterosexual members of mainline congregations (including some ministers) as well as LGBT church members thought that homosexuality was natural, that "we no more choose our sexuality than we chose our genitals," and that gender was an expression of biological sex. God clearly does not intend to punish people for acting according to the way he created them. In contrast many evangelical church members felt that homosexuality was a voluntary sin, and as such was the product of decadence and corruption which gays and lesbians spread like a contagion. This is a kind of sexual constructionism, though obviously one with an opposite valence to the constructionism espoused by queer theorists and other critical theorists of sexuality.

Whether we label them as constructionists or essentialists, Sullivan-Blum's gay and lesbian subjects and most writers on sexuality during the last thirty years, including both Lacan and Foucault, have clung to the idea of sexual identity as a state of being. Queer theorists, including Judith Butler, have preferred to regard sexuality as a series of events involving role playing. In this model, "doing" sex is foregrounded and the notion of fixed sex-

ual identity is problematized. It could be argued that performance models are more suited to certain types of sexual practice than they are to others. Margot Weiss makes a strong claim for the applicability of Butler's insights to the practitioners of sadomasochism, dominance/submission and bondage whom she has studied in San Francisco. BDSM practitioners may (or may not) combine BDSM practice with gay, lesbian or bisexual actions, selecting between a plethora of choices, shopping for and selecting a range of equipment and props—a pastiche reflecting the fractured individual subjectivities often associated with late capitalism. They have managed to routinize their play, much as amateur photographers, audiophiles and political activists do, devouring internet catalogues, meeting for "munches" and *working* at their hobby. Weiss's analysis reminds one of Luhrmann's (1989) descriptions of neo-pagans in London whose sense of mastery and commitment increases with each hour they devote to magical practice.

With the possible exception of Ager, all of our contributors are very much concerned with the contemporary politics of sexuality. Epprecht's article is important to anyone who wishes to understand debates about AIDS in Africa, just as Sullivan-Blum's article sheds light on the North American debate on same-sex marriage. However, a large body of recent literature falls within the ambit of applied anthropology, being devoted to applying anthropological insights directly to global social problems such as trafficking of women, AIDS and clitoridectomy. Although we did receive one interesting submission on AIDS, it was not revised in time for this issue. Cole, in an article on services offered to Nigerian prostitutes by a program in Palermo, argues that projects of this kind may achieve success in harm reduction while failing to persuade substantial numbers of women to leave the streets. Reducing the harm suffered by those engaging in high-risk behaviours, such as prostitutes or drug addicts, as opposed to effecting cessation of such activities, is increasingly being accepted as a realistic goal of intervention projects. Cole provides a multi-causal analysis of the difficulty of dissuading trafficked women from prostitution, even when they are willing to accept assistance from those who would prefer to "rescue" them. Among the issues Cole raises is the nature of "consent" on the one hand and "trafficking" on the other. Most of the young Nigerian women he writes about came to Palermo voluntarily, knowing they were destined for prostitution. They might nonetheless be described as "trafficked," insofar as they were mostly unaware of the coercive and exploitative conditions in which they would work and insofar as physical and supernatural threats against them and their families are employed to keep them on the streets. Nonetheless, poverty and lack of opportunity at home and lack of other opportunities abroad makes many prostitutes willing to continue in their profession even after they have paid off their debts to the traffickers. In some cases, former prostitutes have become "madams" who control and assist in the exploitation of newly arrived women. The issue of "voluntary" participation in a situation of this sort is obviously a complex one, as Cole makes clear. Cole also argues convincingly that providing medical assistance, free condoms and other social supports is something worth doing, and that part of the responsibility for "trafficking" rests with the countries which receive (and provide the demand for) trafficked persons while refusing them legal status, police protection, basic amenities like housing and, above all, access to alternative employment.

The variety of topics covered by articles received in response to a general call for work on the anthropology of sexuality reveals what a complex topic sexuality has become. Indeed, defining sex and gender has itself become a flourishing enterprise. It may be that there is no concise, universally applicable definition of these terms. Articles in this volume have variously explored the issues of power, pleasure, survival, labour, consumption, symbolic meanings, emotion and agency, which minimally must be considered in working toward an understanding of such an important part of human experience. Such holistic understandings are what anthropologists pride themselves on.

We have noted that silence is as important as discourse. Significantly, the new anthropology of sexuality has rarely scrutinized the sexuality of the heterosexual, procreating couple who appear to comply with Western social norms. Foucault suggests that in the sexual discourses which began to emerge in the 18th and 19th centuries multiple domains of deviance were identified, classified and examined (though the objects of such study were rarely allowed to speak with their own voice), but that "the legitimate couple, with its regular sexuality, had a right to more discretion" (Foucault 1980:38). Several of the articles in this volume are in the tradition of critical sexual theory, which seeks to problematize the middle by writing from the periphery. As yet, work which breaks the privileged silence of the self-defined centre is relatively scarce in the anthropology of sexuality and represents an area of inquiry which needs to be developed.

We are grateful for we have learned from the authors represented in this volume. We hope their readers will share our gratitude and that some will be inspired to further exploration.

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La nouvelle anthropologie de la sexualité

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Traduction de Lori-Anne Théroux-Bénoni

Les représentations communes de notre discipline font souvent apparaître l'intérêt pour la sexualité comme un des traits distinctifs de l'anthropologie. Cette vision n'est qu'en partie fondée car pendant de longues périodes, relativement peu de choses ont été écrites sur ce sujet. Cependant, depuis le Siècle des lumières, il est vrai que la sexualité incarne une préoccupation intellectuelle dans la tradition anthropologique. Elle a servi au 18ième, au 19ième et au début du 20ième siècle, à la formation des représentations «des autres peuples primitifs» et a été d'une importance cruciale dans la construction des différences au sein des sociétés métropolitaines. Une part importante de l'histoire moderne et post-moderne de l'anthropologie s'attache à remettre en question ces représentations.

Dans notre récent ouvrage, *Irregular Connections*, nous retraçons l'apparition et la disparition de la sexualité dans l'histoire de l'anthropologie en Angleterre et en Amérique du Nord. Les idées sur la sexualité ont effectivement joué un rôle déterminant dans la formation de fictions sur la promiscuité primitive qui étayaient de nombreux schémas évolutifs au 19ième siècle. À la fin de la période qui consacrait ces schémas, Edward Westermarck (1906-1908, vol. 2) s'est inscrit en faux face à ces idées. Il a aussi examiné l'homosexualité au Maroc et a conclu qu'il était concevable que le désir homosexuel représente un trait culturellement acquis. À la fin des années 20, Malinowski (1987) et Mead (1928) ont démontré que les Trobriandais et les Samoans détenaient un modèle de liberté hétérosexuelle pré-maritale que les Occidentaux, non sans vigilance, auraient avantage à imiter. Ensuite, dans les années 30, Issac Schapera (1966) et Raymond Firth (1957) ont examiné le comportement sexuel des Tswana et des Tikopia. Puis, pendant près de 40 ans, les questions de sexualité ont quitté le devant de la scène anthropologique. En quête de respectabilité scientifique, les anthropologues ont évité les sujets personnels et peu «sérieux» et qui transcendaient avec un certain malaise la frontière entre «nature» et «culture».

Au milieu des années 70, l'anthropologie de la sexualité est rentrée en grâce. Ce retour a tout autant consacré des ruptures que des continuités avec le passé. Durant la période post-coloniale, l'intérêt anthropologique a quitté la périphérie pour se concentrer sur la métropole, si bien que nos sexualités, et plus seulement celles des «autres», sont tombées sous un regard inquisiteur. À ce moment, on assistait également au développement d'un intérêt pour les gais et les lesbiennes dans les sociétés occidentales. Ailleurs ce sont les sexualités entre personnes de même sexe et le «troisième sexe» qui ont attiré l'attention. Ces tendances ethnographiques et théoriques reflétaient la convergence de plusieurs changements et de nouvelles dispositions. À ce titre, notons la reconnaissance du *positionnement* personnel de l'ethnographe à une époque où l'on ne niait plus sa participation dans les champs sociaux qu'il s'employait à décrire. Notons également l'avènement pratique de la deuxième vague féministe et la libération gaie et lesbienne, les nouveautés dans les prescriptions et proscriptions sexuelles tant au niveau métropolitain que dans les post-colonies, les contributions conceptuelles de Lacan et Foucault sur les questions liées aux sexes et à la sexualité et, depuis quelques temps, l'émergence des théories allosexuelles[1].

Le lien entre les idées anthropologiques sur la sexualité et les débats sur la moralité, les idées d'égalité, la hiérarchie et la différence ne constitue pas une nouveauté. Ce lien remonte, bien avant Mead et Malinowski, aux toutes premières décennies de notre discipline. Au 18ième siècle par exemple, Diderot, un philosophe sensible aux questions anthropologiques, a idéalisé la générosité sexuelle de Polynésiens semi-fictifs afin de critiquer les convenances de son époque (Diderot 1989). Edward Long et Charles White, tous deux polygénistes, ont répandu des fables au sujet des organes génitaux des noirs (Lyons et Lyons 2004 : 29-40). Les théoriciens du droit maternel – Morgan, Bachofen et McLennan – ont quant à eux miraculeusement fait apparaître la «promiscuité primitive» comme le point zéro de la moralité à partir duquel la société victorienne avait, fort heureusement, réussi à évoluer (Lyons et Lyons 2004 : 73-80). Richard Burton a pour sa part fait l'éloge de la polygamie dans l'état de l'Utah et au Sud du Nigeria afin d'exprimer son dédain pour la pudibonderie victorienne (Burton 1861). Westermarck, Ellis et Crawley ont critiqué la notion de promiscuité primitive de diverses manières qui ne sont peut-être pas fortuites, tous figurant parmi les critiques du statu quo sexuel de la fin des ères victorienne et édouardienne (cf. Lyons et Lyons 2004 : 100-130). Autrement dit, le *contenu* des liens entre la moralité, la hiérarchie, la sexualité et l'anthropologie a considérablement varié; l'élément constant est toutefois la *forme* de cette relation qui a servi d'armature à ces types de pouvoir disparate. Dans l'ouvrage *Irregular Connections*, nous décrivons cette relation comme une conscription. Par ce terme nous entendons :

> l'usage de données sur les discours et les pratiques sexuels des «autres» au sein de discours sur le pouvoir, la moralité, le plaisir et la thérapie dans les cultures où les textes anthropologiques ont principalement été lus et produits. La conscription peut supposer la réaffirmation des hiérarchies sociales existantes ou elle peut comprendre ce que Marcus et Fischer (1986) appellent «la critique culturelle». [Lyons et Lyons 2004 : 18]

Si notre dette envers Foucault et Said transparaît clairement, il s'agit néanmoins, pour le meilleur ou pour le pire, de l'adaptation que nous faisons de leurs grands thèmes dans la discipline anthropologique. Il apparaît tout aussi clairement que certaines formes de conscription semblent acceptables pour les susceptibilités académiques contemporaines alors que d'autres ne le sont pas.

Si, comme le croit Foucault, la sexualité représente un lieu de transfert particulièrement dense des relations de pouvoir (1980 : 103), ce principe doit certainement être juste pour d'autres contextes culturels. Autrement dit, on peut envisager que l'anthropologie, qui est le produit de discours de pouvoir dans «notre propre» culture, serve à la description et à la théorisation de différents points de transfert de pouvoir dans d'autres cultures. Pour y parvenir, il serait nécessaire de combiner des signes qui serviraient d'intermédiaires entre des terrains qui nous sont ou non familiers. En ce sens, l'analyse qui fait Ager de l'inceste chez les souverains ptolémaïques de l'Égypte helléniste sur six générations est particulièrement intéressante. L'inceste ptolémaïque semble représenter une imitation exagérée des pratiques dynastiques des anciens dirigeants indigènes de l'Égypte pharaonique. L'auteure, spécialisée en lettres classiques, décrit sept cas de mariage entre frère et sœur (dont un semble être un mariage d'amour), deux cas de mariage entre oncle et nièce, deux ou trois cas de mariage entre cousins, quelques cas d'alliance exogame à la dynastie, un viol et plusieurs meurtres au sein de la famille royale. Elle décrit également une propension immense à l'embonpoint (notamment dans le cas de Ptolémée VIII) et une extravagance hors du commun.

L'inceste a fait l'objet de débats en anthropologie durant de longues périodes au cours desquelles la sexualité en générale n'était pas fréquemment abordée. Les analyses avancées étaient, cependant, étrangement désincarnées. Ager passe en revue un certain nombre de théories classiques, comme l'aversion innée ou acquise, les

idées socio-biologiques sur le caractère inclusif de certains attributs, et sur l'hypergynie ainsi que l'interminable débat sur les conséquences de la consanguinité. Elle conclut qu'aucun de ces cas de figure ne s'applique aux Ptolémées. Par exemple, la question de la diminution de l'attraction sexuelle causée par une forme innée d'aversion ou par une familiarité excessive ne doit pas être prise en compte dans les mariages où l'amour est, de toute façon, le dernier des soucis des personnes concernées, surtout lorsqu'une nouvelle épouse a d'abord pris le soin d'assassiner les enfants de son mari! La conclusion qu'elle tire de son analyse est que chez les Ptolémées, l'inceste ne représente qu'un comportement parmi un ensemble structuré de comportements liminaires qui symbolisent leur pouvoir et s'inscrivent dans une philosophie de l'excès. Tout l'intérêt de ces actions réside dans leur violation fondamentale des tabous usuels régissant le comportement social, ce qui démontre que ceux qui détiennent le pouvoir, pareils à des dieux, ne sont pas assujettis aux mêmes règles que les mortels. Ils sont plus attachés à *tryphē*, l'excès, plutôt qu'à *sōphrosynē*, qui correspond à la tempérance et au contrôle de soi.

La force de l'argumentaire d'Ager réside dans sa capacité à décrire le contexte nécessaire à la compréhension des excès ptolémaïques. Cette attention aux détails, tant anthropologiques qu'historiques, caractérise également le récent et remarquable ouvrage de Marc Epprecht intitulé *Hungochani : The History of a Dissident Sexuality in Southern Africa* (Epprecht 2004). Ce livre contient une multitude de données sur la sexualité entre personnes de même sexe chez les Shona et leurs voisins. Epprecht soulève des problèmes qui ont déjà attiré l'attention de nombreux Africains et africanistes. Ces problèmes ont reçu une attention internationale compte tenu de la pandémie du SIDA qui s'amplifie de jour en jour et qui affecte tous les types d'activités sexuelles et a également un impact bien au-delà de la sexualité. La décision qu'a prise Robert Mugabe de mettre fin à l'exposition de livres organisée par les gais et lesbiennes du Zimbabwe lors de la foire internationale du livre zimbabwéen reflète bien son opinion sur l'homosexualité : il s'agit pour lui d'une pratique écœurante et non-africaine qui a été importée par les étrangers. Nous avons nous-même remarqué des croyances de ce genre au sud du Nigeria et au Kenya. De telles affirmations ne sont pas sans précédent, comme l'indique le silence – certes long mais pas tout à fait complet – émanant de colons européens, d'explorateurs, de missionnaires et d'anthropologues au sujet de la sexualité entre personnes de même sexe en Afrique. Hormis de rares exceptions (par exemple les quelques remarques de Junod et de Monica Wilson), les socio-anthropologues ne se sont pas prononcés sur l'homosexualité en Afrique avant les années 70, lorsque Merriam a documenté l'institution de la *kitesha* (un personnage qui rappelle le berdache) chez les Basongye et Evans-Pritchard a finalement publié, à l'intention d'anthropologues, des données datant d'il y a plus de 40 ans sur l'homosexualité chez les Zande. Dans ses conclusions, Epprecht dévoile les allégations de pouvoir et les présupposés hiérarchiques qui créent de tels silences. En effet, si les actes et les discours sur le sexe s'organisent autour des lieux de transfert de pouvoir, il en est probablement de même pour les silences. Les racistes du 19ième siècle qui dépeignaient les Africains comme des débauchés «qui ne pensent qu'à ça» percevaient l'hétérosexualité incontrôlée comme le point zéro du progrès. Quant à l'homosexualité, elle était perçue comme un symptôme de décadence, sans pour autant s'inscrire au registre du primitivisme, étant donné sa présence dans l'ancien monde et dans certaines sociétés islamiques contemporaines (et probablement aussi vu sa présence dans la société victorienne). L'homosexualité en Afrique, si elle se manifestait, ne pouvait être que le résultat d'une diffusion. Pour exposer ce problème, les missionnaires étaient généralement trop pudibonds, trop occupés à gérer les «péchés» hétérosexuels comme la polygynie ou encore craignaient-ils de contrarier d'éventuels convertis ou des donateurs potentiels. Quant aux gouvernements coloniaux, ils étaient vraisemblablement gênés par des institutions comme le mariage minier, facilité par leur propre politique. Ainsi, les tous premiers nationalistes africains qui, comme Kenyatta, souhaitaient recréer une version acceptable pour leurs peuples de leur histoire culturelle, ont insisté sur le caractère étranger de l'homosexualité, appuyés par des anthropologues qui, souhaitant s'attirer leur sympathie, ont cédé à la pression «d'enfermer les Africains dans le rassurant enclos d'une allégorie nationaliste prônant l'existence exclusive de l'hétérosexualité».

Les travaux d'Epprecht, tant dans le présent numéro que dans son ouvrage, *Hungochani*, nous rappellent que l'étiquette «naturel» peut servir aussi bien à stigmatiser qu'à donner l'exemple. L'absence présumée d'érotisme entre personnes de même sexe allait de paire avec l'image des Africains en tant que représentants ultimes du *Naturvolk*, malgré toutes les ambiguïtés inhérentes à la création d'une distance basée sur la race et au souhait de détenir un passé moins problématique et plus viril.

Au Nord de l'Europe, au 19ième siècle, une attention croissante s'est focalisée sur l'homosexualité perçue comme une «identité», un état, plutôt que comme une suite d'événements dans la vie des gens. Cette vision était partagée tant par des sexologues, des législateurs et des homophobes que par des «Urnings» auto-proclamés

(l'espace étant limité, nous n'aborderons pas ici la présence ou l'absence historique de cette vision identitaire). À cette période, on débattait du caractère «naturel» de l'homosexualité. Havelock Ellis croyait que les invertis, bien que peu nombreux sur le plan statistique, représentaient toutefois des créations de la nature. L'homosexualité étant innée, elle ne pouvait être guérie et il était donc injuste de persécuter les homosexuels. Pour Edward Westermarck qui éprouvait de la sympathie à l'égard des homosexuels, l'homosexualité pouvait être acquise dans les environnements où se côtoyaient des personnes de même sexe, par exemple dans les écoles islamiques (cf. Lyons et Lyons 2004 : 128-129). Les qualificatifs «inné» et «acquis», «naturel» et «inculqué», demeurent des concepts controversés et leur signification dépend du contexte social dans lequel ils sont utilisés.

Constance Sullivan-Blum, dans son article intitulé «"L'ordre naturel de la création" : Les discours de naturalisation au sein du débat sur le mariage chrétien entre personnes de même sexe», analyse les stratégies mises en œuvre par des chrétiens, conservateurs et libéraux, et des gais et des lesbiennes de diverses confessions religieuses, pour soutenir leurs positions sur la reconnaissance par l'Église du mariage entre personnes de même sexe. Son analyse révèle que des hétérosexuels relativement libéraux, des membres de grandes congrégations (dont quelques pasteurs) ainsi que des membres d'église LGBT croient que l'homosexualité est naturelle, «qu'on ne choisit pas plus sa sexualité qu'on ne choisit ses organes génitaux» et que le fait d'être un homme ou une femme est la réflexion du sexe biologique. Dieu ne souhaiterait certainement pas punir les gens qui agissent en fonction de la façon dont il les a lui-même créés. En revanche, les membres d'églises évangéliques ont l'impression que l'homosexualité est un péché volontaire qui résulte de la décadence et de la dépravation que les gais et les lesbiennes répandent telle une contagion. S'il s'agit d'un type de constructivisme sexuel, il a clairement une valence opposée à celle du constructivisme qu'adoptent les théoriciens allosexuels et les autres critiques des théories de la sexualité.

Qu'on choisisse de les étiqueter comme des constructivistes ou des essentialistes, il est clair que les sujets gais et lesbiens de Sullivan-Blum, tout comme la plupart des gens qui ont écrit sur la sexualité au cours des trente dernières années, y compris Lacan et Foucault, ont préféré se raccrocher à l'idée que l'identité sexuelle représentait un état d'être. Toutefois les théoriciens allosexuels, y compris Judith Butler, ont préféré concevoir la sexualité comme une série d'événements comprenant des jeux de rôles. Selon ce modèle, l' «acte» sexuel est mis au premier plan et l'existence d'une identité sexuelle figée est remise en question. On pourrait soutenir que certains modèles performatifs sont plus à même de rendre compte de certains types de pratique sexuelle que d'autres. Margot Weiss met en application la conception de Butler pour analyser les adeptes du sadomasochisme, des jeux de dominance et de soumission et du bondage qu'elle a étudiés à San Francisco. Les adeptes du BDSM peuvent (ou non) combiner cette pratique avec des actes homo- ou bisexuels, choisir parmi une pléthore de possibilités, et faire des achats en sélectionnant parmi un éventail d'équipement et d'accessoires – autant d'actions qui évoquent le caractère fracturé des subjectivités individuelles souvent liées à la modernité avancée. Les adeptes ont réussi à inscrire leurs plaisirs dans des routines, de la même façon que le feraient des photographes amateurs, des audiophiles ou des militants politiques, en dévorant des catalogues sur Internet, en se rencontrant pour grignoter des «munches» et en *travaillant* sur leur passe-temps. L'analyse de Weiss rappelle une des descriptions de Luhrmann (1989) sur les néo-païens de Londres dont le sentiment de maîtrise et d'engagement était directement proportionnel aux heures dédiées à la pratique de la magie.

Tous nos contributeurs, sauf peut-être Ager, sont particulièrement sensibles à la politique contemporaine sous-jacente à la sexualité. L'article d'Epprecht est important pour quiconque souhaite comprendre les débats sur le SIDA en Afrique, tout comme celui de Sullivan-Blum éclaire le débat nord-américain sur le mariage entre personnes de même sexe. Toutefois, la majeure partie de la littérature récente appartient à la sphère de compétence de l'anthropologie appliquée et s'emploie à mettre directement en pratique les visions anthropologiques aux problèmes sociaux tels que la traite des femmes, le SIDA et la clitoridectomie. Nous avons reçu une contribution intéressante sur le SIDA mais elle n'a malheureusement pas pu être révisée à temps pour cette parution. Cole, dans un article traitant des services offerts aux prostituées nigérianes de Palerme dans le cadre d'un programme, soutient que si ce type de projet peut effectivement contribuer à réduire les dégâts, il ne parvient cependant pas à persuader un nombre important de femmes de quitter la rue. Circonscrire les préjudices auxquels s'exposent les gens qui adoptent des comportements risqués, par exemple les prostitués et les toxicomanes, au lieu d'enrayer de telles activités, est dorénavant accepté comme un objectif réaliste pour des projets d'intervention. Cole propose une analyse des multiples causes qui expliquent la difficulté de dissuader les femmes victimes du trafic de s'adonner à la prostitution, et ce même si elles sont davantage enclines à accepter de l'aide de ceux qui préfèreraient les «sau-

ver». Les questions que Cole soulève comprennent d'un côté la nature du «consentement» et de l'autre la nature de la «traite». La plupart des jeunes femmes nigérianes au sujet desquelles il écrit sont venues à Palerme de leur plein gré, en sachant très bien qu'elles étaient destinées à la prostitution. On peut néanmoins parler de «traite», ces femmes n'étant, la plupart du temps, pas au fait des conditions de coercition et d'exploitation dans lesquelles elles travailleraient et vu les menaces physiques et celles de châtiments surnaturels qui pèsent sur elles et sur leur famille afin de les forcer à rester dans la rue. La pauvreté, le manque d'opportunités dans leur pays d'origine et d'autres possibilités d'emplois à l'étranger amènent nombre de prostituées à poursuivre volontairement leur travail même une fois qu'elles ont remboursé leurs dettes aux trafiquants. Dans certains cas, d'anciennes prostituées se sont converties en «mères maquerelles» qui supervisent et encouragent l'exploitation des nouvelles venues. Comme l'indique Cole, il n'est manifestement pas simple, dans un tel contexte, de déterminer si leur choix résulte d'un acte pleinement volontaire. Mais l'auteur soutient aussi de façon convaincante que le fait d'offrir une assistance médicale, des préservatifs gratuits et un soutien social à ces femmes est loin d'être inutile et qu'une partie de la responsabilité de ce «trafic» repose sur les pays qui reçoivent ces personnes (et répondent donc à une demande dans leur propre pays), mais leur refusent un statut légal, une protection de la police, l'accès à des installations leur permettant de subvenir à leurs besoins de base (notamment l'accès au logement) et par dessus tout, la possibilité d'accéder à d'autres emplois.

La variété des sujets abordés dans les articles qui nous ont été soumis sur des thèmes liés à l'anthropologie de la sexualité révèle la complexité qui caractérise à présent ce sujet. Définir la sexualité et le sexe est devenue une entreprise fleurissante, même s'il n'y a peut-être pas de définition concise et universellement applicable de ces termes. Les articles compris dans la présente parution analysent, chacun à leur manière, les questions du pouvoir, du plaisir, de la survie, du travail, de la consommation, de la signification symbolique, de l'émotion et de la capacité d'action. Ces catégories d'analyse contribuent, de façon minimale, à éclairer notre compréhension de cette importante facette de l'expérience humaine dans la tradition holistique si chère aux anthropologues.

Nous avons déjà mentionné que le silence est aussi important que le discours. Fait révélateur, la nouvelle anthropologie de la sexualité s'est rarement intéressée à la sexualité des couples hétérosexuels qui procréent et semblent se conformer aux normes sociales occidentales. Foucault suggère qu'au sein des discours sur la sexualité qui ont commencé à émerger au 18ième et au 19ième siècle, on a identifié, classifié et examiné de multiple champs de déviance (notons cependant qu'on a rarement donné la parole aux objets de ces études). Par contre, les couples légitimes dotés d'une sexualité ordinaire ont eu droit à plus de discrétion (Foucault 1980 : 38). Nombre des articles réunis dans ce volume s'inscrivent dans la tradition critique des théories sexuelles qui cherchent à problématiser le centre à partir d'écrits sur la périphérie. Jusqu'ici, les travaux qui rompent le silence privilégié qui entoure ce centre auto-proclamé sont relativement rares en anthropologie de la sexualité et il s'agit donc là d'un domaine d'étude à développer.

Nous avons appris des auteurs présents dans ce numéro et tenons à leur exprimer notre gratitude. Nous ne pouvons que souhaiter qu'il en soit de même pour les lecteurs et espérer que certains d'entre eux y puiseront l'inspiration nécessaire pour poursuivre l'exploration.

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Notes

1 NDLT Le terme *allosexuel*, formé à partir du préfixe *allo-*, qui signifie «qui est d'une nature différente», a été inventé pour rendre en français le mot anglais *queer*. Ce dernier terme, traditionnellement utilisé pour parler péjorativement des hommes homosexuels, a été récupéré, vers la fin des années 80, pour désigner, dans une nouvelle acception inclusive et axée sur la différence sexuelle, l'ensemble des personnes homosexuelles, lesbiennes, bisexuelles et transsexuelles. Ces personnes sont aussi désignées, en anglais comme en français, par différents acronymes composés des lettres *G*, *L*, *B* et *T*, qui sont les initiales des mots *gays* (ou *gais*), *lesbians* (ou *lesbiennes*), *bisexuals* (ou *bisexuels*) et *transgenders* (ou *transsexuels*). [Office québécois de la langue française, 2005]

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The Power of Excess: Royal Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty

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Abstract: The Greco-Macedonian dynasty of the Ptolemies, which ruled Egypt from 322 until 30 BCE, established early on a practice of incestuous marriage in the royal house. This custom, which may have had a number of pragmatic functional purposes, was on a more profound level symbolic of royal power. But royal incest, as practised by the Ptolemies, was only one of a larger set of behaviours, all of which were symbolic of power, and all of which were characterized by lavishness, immoderation, excess and the breaching of limits in general.

Keywords: incest, marriage, Ptolemy, Cleopatra, power, excess

Résumé : Les Ptolémées, dynastie gréco-macédonienne qui régna sur l'Egypte de l'an 322 à l'an 30 av. J.-C., avaient très tôt établi la pratique du mariage incestueux dans la maison royale. Si cette pratique résultait probablement de plusieurs objectifs pragmatiques et fonctionnels, elle symbolisait surtout, à un niveau plus profond, l'étendue du pouvoir royal. L'inceste royale, telle que la pratiquaient les Ptolémées, ne représentait cependant qu'un comportement parmi tant d'autres qui symbolisaient collectivement leur pouvoir et se caractérisaient par le luxe, l'immodération, l'excès et la violation des règles de façon générale.

Mots-clés : inceste, mariage, Ptolémée, Cléopâtre, pouvoir, excès

The subject of incest continues to spark much discussion in the scholarly literature. The foci for such discussion are multifaceted: the genetic consequences of inbreeding, the problem of sexual abuse within the family, the psychological factors promoting (or suppressing) incestuous behaviours, the complexity of symbolism underlying the concept of incest itself. The breadth of this topic, and the many angles from which it may be addressed, particularly invite a multidisciplinary approach. The intent of this paper is to offer a different perspective on the subject of symbolic incest, a perspective which draws on the study of a culture not generally represented in the anthropological literature. The author, as a classicist, feels some diffidence at making this offering to an audience of anthropologists; nevertheless, it is to be hoped that this window on a classical culture may help in some small way to inform the ongoing and vibrant debate on this topic.

In the Hellenistic Age, conventionally defined as the era of ancient Greek history following the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE), the kingdom of Egypt was ruled by a Greco-Macedonian dynasty descended from Alexander's general Ptolemy. The Ptolemaic kingdom, which came to an end with the suicide of Kleopatra VII in 30 BCE, was the most enduring of the Hellenistic monarchies, those realms established in the wake of Alexander's death in the territories conquered by the hyperkinetic Macedonian. Alexander's "empire" was an ephemeral one, fragmenting upon his death into several polities ruled by *arriviste* monarchs whose sole claim to legitimacy was their role as companions and followers of Alexander. Thus, one characteristic shared by each of the Hellenistic kingdoms was the ethnic divide between ruler and ruled: the indigenous inhabitants of Asia Minor, the Middle East, and Egypt now looked to ruling houses of Greco-Macedonian descent. In some of the kingdoms there was occasionally a mingling of royal blood with that of the natives of the region, but ethnic exclusivity was the general rule,

at least in Ptolemaic Egypt: Kleopatra VII, the last reigning monarch of the Ptolemaic dynasty, was also said to have been the first member of her house even to learn to speak the Egyptian language.

The Ptolemies practised another kind of exclusivity as well. Not only did they refrain from intermarriage with the native Egyptians; as time went on, the dynasty increasingly eschewed exogamous marriage altogether, at least for the reigning couple. Brother-sister marriage became the preferred model, though the family also presents examples of cousin and of uncle-niece marriage. Incest is therefore a striking feature of the Ptolemaic monarchy, a practice singular enough to draw comment from virtually all scholars who have written on the subject of Ptolemaic Egypt—yet so enigmatic a practice that a satisfactory explanation of it has still remained elusive.[1] It is the purpose of this article to suggest at least a partial explanation of this Ptolemaic custom by examining its symbolic meaning, and in so doing to provide further support for certain anthropological theories about the symbolic meaning of incest in general and royal incest in particular.

The connections between incest and power have been persuasively drawn by William Arens (1986), among others.[2] An examination of the incestuous marital strategy pursued by the dynasty of the Ptolemies supports the view that royal incest is symbolic of power. The Ptolemies should therefore be considered alongside other cultures which have adopted such practices when the question of royal incest and its links to power is debated. But the record of the Ptolemaic house also provides an opportunity for a more nuanced insight into the relationship between incest and power. The history of the dynasty demonstrates that incest was just one of a complex set of royal behaviours that were all representative of the extreme power of the family, and that all had the same thing in common: excess, prodigality, and "cultural flamboyance" (Gates 2005:153). Restraint and moderation were not characteristic of the members of this family; rather, the Ptolemies preferred to display their might through actions that could better be described as "over the top." The Ptolemies crossed numerous boundaries of cultural and moral norms. Thus, incest takes its place as only one component in an integrated set of liminal behaviours symbolizing power and grounded in a philosophy of excess.

Before tackling the main point of this paper, groundwork needs to be laid in two areas. First, we need to establish Greek conceptions of and attitudes towards incest, since the Ptolemies, as a Greco-Macedonian dynasty, drew primarily on a Hellenic heritage (the Egyptian element in their self-conception will be discussed below). Such an examination will in turn help to highlight how incest may be linked to the notion of excess in general. Secondly, a brief historical survey of the development of the practice of incest in the Ptolemaic house seems necessary. It is not fair to assume that an anthropological audience is intimately acquainted with the details of Ptolemaic history, and furthermore it is important to track some of the other dynastic behaviours which would not be at all apparent from a simple (or even complex) genealogical chart.

The ancient Greeks had no single word translatable as "incest." The modern Greek word, *haimomixia*, "mingling of blood," does not appear before the 9th century AD (see Rudhardt 1982:731-732). Nevertheless, the periphrases used by the ancient Greeks are as heavily value-laden as the Latin term *incestum* ("impurity, unchastity, defilement, pollution"). In particular, Greek expressions referring to incestuous behaviour make it clear that the Greeks saw the act as hateful to the gods.[3] But the Greeks also found incest abhorrent because it implied a lack of restraint, a loss of self-control. One of the cardinal Greek virtues was the ethic of *sōphrosynē*, a term which embraces meanings of discretion, self-control, temperance and moderation. Incest is just one of the behaviours which breaches sōphrosynē:

> Some of the unnecessary pleasures and desires are immoral, [says Plato],...[the] sort that emerge in our dreams, when the reasonable and humane part of us is asleep and its control relaxed, and our bestial nature, full of food and drink, wakes and has its fling and tries to secure its own kind of satisfaction...there's nothing too bad for it and it's completely lost to all sense and shame. It doesn't shrink at the thought of intercourse with a mother or anyone else, man, beast or god, or from murder or sacrilege. There is, in fact, no folly or shamelessness it will not commit. [Plato *Republic*, Lee translation 1955:571]

The 2nd century CE Greek writer Plutarch, echoing Plato's judgement, further specifies that the intemperance resulting from the loss of sōphrosynē leads one to indulge in forbidden foods as well as forbidden sex (Plutarch *Moralia*, Babbitt translation 1927:101a). Though Plutarch does not specifically state that such "unlawful meats" might represent repasts of a cannibalistic nature, it is certainly the case that much ethnographic literature, ancient as well as modern, links incest with cannibalism.[4] Incest and cannibalism each symbolize the ultimate transgression of limits, the most dreadful offence against kindred flesh. Eating one's own kind is gastronomic incest, and it is noteworthy that mythic acts of cannibalism often involve dining on one's relatives. Thyestes, one of the great

criminals of Greek myth, eats his own sons and rapes his own daughter. Restraint and moderation, the observation of boundaries, of limits—in a word, sōphrosynē before this ultimate self-indulgence.

The Greeks clearly believed that incest was repugnant not only to the gods, but to all right-thinking human beings. Such distaste for and/or disapproval of incestuous mating is something that the Greeks share with virtually every other known culture.[5] It need hardly be stated, however, that precise *definitions* of the approved degree of kinship for marriage and/or sexual relations can vary greatly from one culture to the next. The ancient Greeks were certainly repelled by the notion of parent-child or full sibling incest—there is plenty of evidence for such attitudes—but in general they were considerably more endogamous in their practices than is modern Western society. First cousin-marriage was fully acceptable and very common; and in the city-state of Athens, at least, it was permissible for an uncle to marry his niece, and even for a half-brother to marry a half-sister, provided that they were children of the same father, not the same mother.

The Ptolemies ruled Egypt for a span of nearly three centuries; the individual members constituting this house over that period were very numerous indeed, and their inter-relationships became increasingly convoluted. A simple glance at the genealogical chart (see Figure 1, next page) might prove confusing rather than illuminating. It is moreover unlikely to provide a sense of the historical context within which the custom of incestuous Ptolemaic marriages began, or the circumstances under which the practice continued and intensified. The next few paragraphs will therefore endeavour to provide a (brief) survey of the incestuous patterns pursued by the Ptolemaic dynasty, as well as examples of some of the more extreme intra-dynastic behaviours.[6]

The first sibling marriage in the family was that between Arsinoë II, daughter of Ptolemy I, and her paternal half-brother Ptolemy Keraunos. It was an inauspicious start to the custom, given that Keraunos celebrated the wedding by murdering his half-sister's two sons by her previous husband. As this marriage started off rather on the wrong foot, it was considerate of Keraunos to get himself killed in battle not long after. By that time, Arsinoë may already have fled to Egypt, where she then took part in the first full-sibling marriage of the dynasty by marrying her younger brother Ptolemy II, a marriage that ultimately gave them both the epithet *Philadelphos*, "Sibling-lover." This marriage was far more significant than the earlier one to Keraunos. Not only was Ptolemy II the ruler of Egypt, while Keraunos was merely a volatile adventurer, but the full-sibling marriage was a much greater departure from tradition than the half-sibling one.[7]

That the Greco-Macedonian subjects of the Ptolemies were, to say the least, troubled by this first full brother-sister marriage is suggested by the appallingly sycophantic poem commissioned from the Alexandrian court poet Theokritos. In his *Idyll* 17, Theokritos likens the marriage of Ptolemy and Arsinoë to that of the Greek deities Zeus and Hera, brother and sister, king and queen of the gods, above and beyond reproach:

> From Zeus let us begin, and with Zeus in our poems, Muses, let us make end, for of immortals he is best; but of men let Ptolemy be named, first, last, and in the midst, for of men he is most excellent...he and his noble wife, than whom none better clasps in her arms a husband in his halls, loving with all her heart her brother and her spouse. After this fashion was accomplished the sacred bridal also of the immortals whom Queen Rhea bore to rule Olympus; and single is the couch that Iris, virgin still, her hands made pure with perfumes, strews for the sleep of Zeus and Hera. [Theokritos *Idylls*, Gow translation 1952:17.1-4, 128-134]

Such an official court posture suggests the need to quell a shocked response among a population who would find much to gossip about in such a marriage—or perhaps, not so much to quell (as we shall see below) as to direct. Undirected, the popular response was liable to result in such crude remarks as that of another of the contemporary poets, one Sotades, who quipped: "You're shoving your prick into an unholy hole" (Athenaios 1951:621a; author's translation). That Ptolemy and Arsinoë took their public image quite seriously is pretty clear from the sequel to this ill-advised jest: Sotades was hunted down by one of Ptolemy's officers, sealed into a lead jar, and dropped into the sea to suffocate or drown, whichever came first.

Arsinoë and Ptolemy Philadelphos had no children by each other; the ruler's heir came from his previous marriage, and did not follow the marital example set by his father. The sibling marriage was no doubt still in the category of a singularity, rather than an established dynastic custom. It suited the political plans of Ptolemy II that the younger generation's marriages be exogamous rather than endogamous: his son Ptolemy III was married to a princess (a half-cousin) who brought Cyrene back into the Egyptian fold, while he was able to employ his daughter Berenike as a useful tool in his struggle with the Seleukids of Asia by marrying her to Antiochos II.[8] It is therefore not until the next generation that we find another Ptolemaic precedent: the marriage of the full brother and sis-

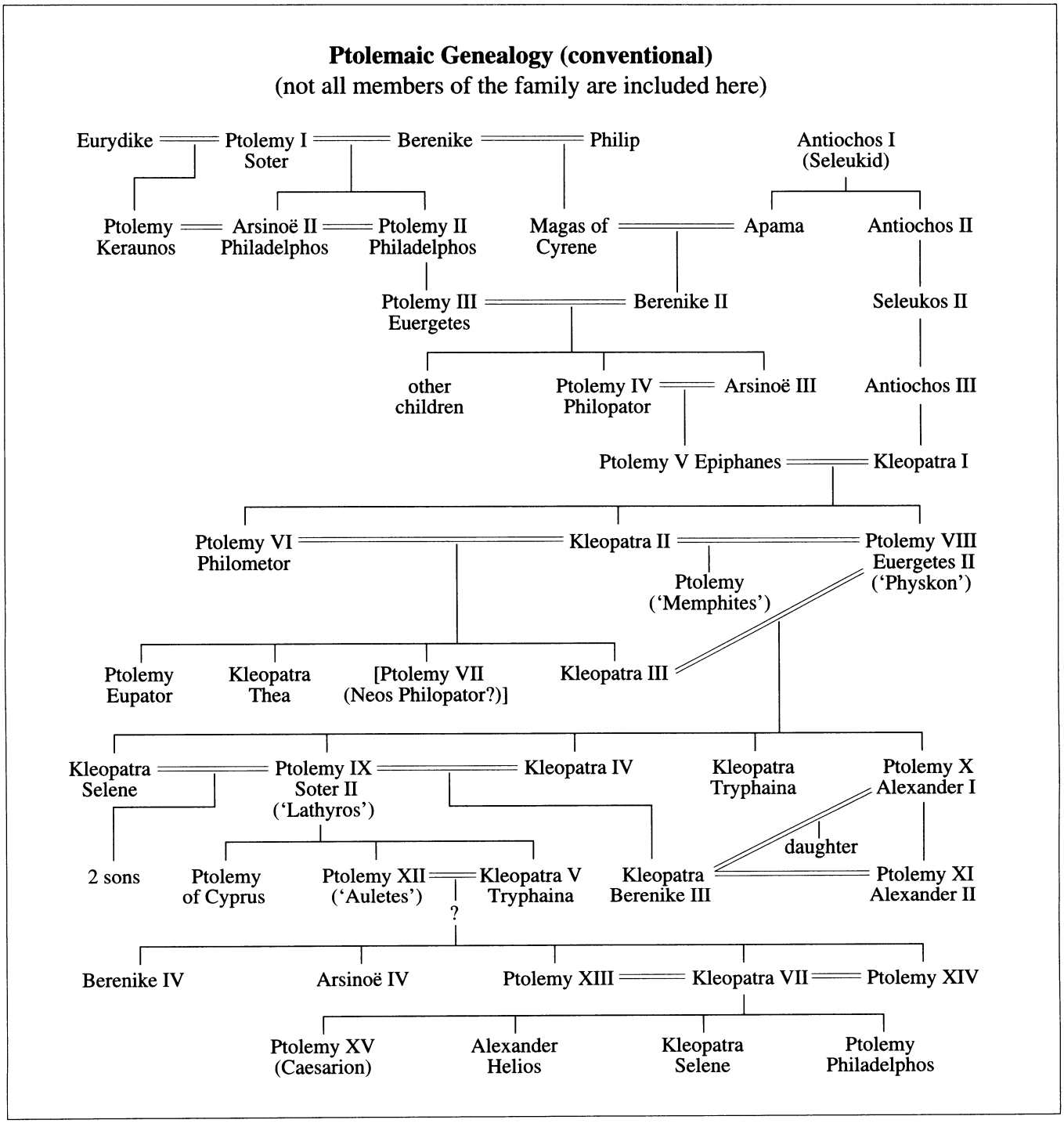

Figure 1: Ptolemaic Genealogy

ter, Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, *and* their production of a son. Ptolemy V, then, is the first product of a Ptolemaic sibling marriage.

Ptolemy V, who was orphaned at an early age, was an only child, perhaps because his father Ptolemy IV was reportedly far more interested in his lavishly inebriate lifestyle and his various mistresses than he was in his sister-wife. Ptolemy V therefore had no opportunity to engage in the burgeoning dynastic custom of sibling marriage. Fortunately for his marital prospects, however, his Seleukid kinsman Antiochos III declared war on him. After permanently removing Syria from the Ptolemaic

kingdom, Antiochos sealed a peace treaty with the junior Ptolemy by marrying him to his daughter Kleopatra, the first of her name to enter the Ptolemaic house. Since Ptolemy and Kleopatra were third cousins, this marriage barely causes the needle on the incest-meter to quiver. Nevertheless, the offspring of this marriage more than made up for this failing, and the marital entanglements of Ptolemy VI, Kleopatra II, and Ptolemy VIII—and *their* children—in the end took Ptolemaic incest to new heights.

After the early death of Ptolemy V and, subsequently, Kleopatra I, the elder of the two boys, Ptolemy VI, was married to his sister. But Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, while their own relationship was to all appearances amicable enough, suffered a perpetual affliction in the person of their younger brother. This is not the place to examine all the vicissitudes of the struggle between the siblings; suffice it to say that the Ptolemy who eventually became Ptolemy VIII spent a considerable amount of time and energy throughout his brother's lifetime in trying to oust that brother from the throne. Ptolemy VI, however, had the reputation of being a good and kindly ruler, and was not himself overly fratricidal. Ptolemy VIII therefore was able to spend many formative years as governor in Cyrene, where he waited, as Peter Green says, like some "vast, malevolent spider," to seize his chance (Green 1990:537). That chance came when Ptolemy VI died prematurely in 145 BCE. The elder son of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, Ptolemy Eupator, had already predeceased his father, and the younger son may have been too young to consider as his father's heir. The Alexandrians therefore brought Ptolemy VIII back from Cyrene and married him to his sister. What happened next is luridly described by Justin, the 3rd century CE Roman writer and great lover of grim sensationalism:

> In Egypt, King Ptolemy [VI] had died, and an embassy was sent to the Ptolemy [VIII] who was king of Cyrene to offer him the throne, along with the hand of Queen Kleopatra, his own sister....As for [Ptolemy VII, the son of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra], on the day of the wedding at which the king was taking his mother in marriage, Ptolemy [VIII] killed him in his mother's arms amidst the arrangements for the banquet and the rites of the marriage, and entered his sister's bed still dripping with the gore of her son. [Justin, Yardley translation 1994:38:8.1 and 8.4]

Justin's melodrama rouses some suspicions, given that he had already employed the motif of the child slain in his mother's arms on the day of her wedding to the murderer in his tale of an earlier Ptolemaic sibling marriage (that of Arsinoë II and Ptolemy Keraunos). Still, a son of Ptolemy VI would always be a danger to Ptolemy VIII while he lived, and while he might not have been quite so irretrievably villainous about the whole thing as Justin reports, it is not hard to believe that Ptolemy VIII would have done away with the boy at the first opportunity. Kleopatra II's own subsequent history shows her to have been a woman of considerable ambition and not at all averse to marital and dynastic warfare. Ptolemy VIII would not have felt he could trust her, and the simple fact of the marriage would have made little difference to the degree of his trust. As long as his sister had a living son, she had the potential to rid herself of her brother, and choose a filial co-ruler instead, as did Kleopatra VII many generations later.

The next move in the dynastic game could not have done much to improve the trust and affection between Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII. Not long after Kleopatra bore their first child (Ptolemy "Memphites"), her brother either raped or seduced her daughter (his own niece on both sides), impregnated her, and subsequently married her.[9] The marriage to Kleopatra III might have been Ptolemy VIII's political ambition all along, but in 145 Kleopatra II was no doubt still too powerful for him to bypass or displace her in favour of her daughter. In any case, the marriage to Kleopatra III represents a clear and unprecedented departure from the monogamous pattern of Ptolemaic sibling marriage (Whitehorne 1994:110; Ogden 1999:143). From this point on, the protocols refer to King Ptolemy, Queen Kleopatra "the sister," and Queen Kleopatra "the wife": what John Whitehorne has labelled a "ghastly *ménage à trois*" (Whitehorne 1994:123).

This ménage does not appear to have been a particularly happy one, in spite of, or more probably because of, the close family ties. Kleopatra II had plenty of reason to loathe her brother-spouse even before his return to Alexandria, given his repeated efforts to oust her first husband, Ptolemy VI, from the throne. The murder of her young son would certainly have crystallized her hatred for her surviving brother. As for Kleopatra III, she seems to have transferred whatever loyalty she might once have had to her mother wholly to her uncle; the intrusion of Ptolemy VIII into the Alexandrian court therefore also brought about (or exacerbated?) an alienation between mother and daughter. The familial tensions were inevitably mirrored by political rivalries, and in the late 130s, Kleopatra II temporarily gained the upper hand and forced her brother and her daughter out of Alexandria. She may have hoped to place her 12-year-old son, Ptolemy Memphites, on the throne at her side, but she was cruelly forestalled in this by her brother: Ptolemy VIII murdered the boy (his own son), had the body dis-

membered, and sent it to his sister as a birthday present.[10] As in 145, Ptolemy dealt with the threat of a potential rival through the simple expedient of murdering the youth. Dynastically speaking, it made no difference to him that Memphites was his own son, since he already had two other sons by Kleopatra III. This action, which robbed Kleopatra II of her last male progeny, ensured that she would ultimately have to turn back to Ptolemy VIII himself for a familial co-ruler. Thus, more remarkable than Ptolemy's savagery—for which all the ancient sources revile him—is the fact that subsequently we find him back in Alexandria again, ruling at the side of his sister and his wife. Kleopatra II, who had her brother to thank for the murder of two sons, not to mention the alienation and rivalry with her own daughter, was evidently willing, for the sake of her own power, to put up with him until he died.[11]

Familial affection is not more outstandingly characteristic of the later generations of the Ptolemaic family. Ptolemy VIII died in June of 116, Kleopatra II a few months later, perhaps helped along the way by her loving daughter (Otto and Bengtson 1938:136, 144; see also Huß 2001:630-631). Upon his death, Ptolemy left the throne to his niece-wife Kleopatra III and "whichever of their sons she should prefer."[12] Whatever its motivation, this particular act may be ascribed to Ptolemy VIII's "evil genius" for creating strife.[13] Under the circumstances, both sons of course considered that they had a legitimate claim; the volatile situation was exacerbated by the fact that Kleopatra III is said not only to have favoured the younger, Ptolemy X Alexander, but to have harboured a positive hatred for the elder, Ptolemy IX "Lathyros," or "Chickpea" (Pausanias 1979:1.9.1). This hatred found expression in the seemingly arbitrary and high-handed demand that Ptolemy IX divorce his sister-wife Kleopatra IV—one of the rare Ptolemaic sibling marriages which is specifically attested to have been a love-match—and marry another sister, Kleopatra Selene (who may have been more sympathetic with her mother?).

The affection, or at least the favour by default, which Kleopatra III lavished on Ptolemy X was probably disproportionate, when we consider that he ultimately murdered her.[14] After ridding himself of his domineering mother, Ptolemy X married his niece, Kleopatra Berenike III, the daughter of his brother Ptolemy IX and (probably) their sister Kleopatra IV. As was the case with her great-grandmother, Kleopatra II, dynastic continuity upon the death of the king was subsequently provided by the female consort: when Kleopatra Berenike's uncle-husband Ptolemy X died, his brother Ptolemy IX returned to Alexandria and reigned there in association with his popular daughter, the widow of the deceased ruler. Although some have argued that Lathyros actually married his daughter, this seems most unlikely: the evidence for it is very shaky, and marriage in the direct line of descent would have been completely without precedent among the Ptolemies.[15]

In 80 BCE, when Ptolemy IX died, dynastic continuity once again pivoted around Kleopatra Berenike. For a short time she ruled alone, but sole female rule was clearly an abnormality, too unnatural to be tolerated for long. Accordingly, a candidate for co-ruler was found: her cousin and stepson, Ptolemy X's son, Ptolemy XI, was brought to Alexandria and married to her. The marriage of Kleopatra Berenike and Ptolemy XI, according to the conventional reconstruction of Ptolemaic genealogy, was less incestuous than many Ptolemaic unions. Bennett (1997), however, suggests a closer relationship for the pair, making them half-siblings in addition to being cousins. Nevertheless, in certain respects the degree of incest in this union has little significance, at least in terms of any genetic impact it might have had on potential offspring: Ptolemy XI, in a fit of inexplicable imbecility, murdered his bride less than three weeks into the honeymoon. The Alexandrians, who had far more reason to be loyal to the long-familiar and well-loved Kleopatra Berenike, and who moreover were accustomed to being kingmakers and kingbreakers, set upon their new and fatuous king and tore him to pieces.

Upon the death of Ptolemy XI, the throne went to a son of Ptolemy IX, Ptolemy XII "Auletes," the "Flute-player." Rumours of Auletes' illegitimacy mean that we cannot establish who his mother was with any certainty, though Bennett does argue that he was the child of a full-sibling marriage, the love-match between Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra IV (Bennett 1997:46-52).[16] Auletes also married a sibling, one Kleopatra V Tryphaina, thought to be a daughter of Ptolemy IX; as is the case with a number of members of the family, while paternity may be fairly certain, "maternity" is not, and since we do not know who either Auletes' or Kleopatra Tryphaina's mother(s) were, we do not know whether theirs was a full- or a half-sibling marriage.

The last member of the Ptolemaic line to rule Egypt was, of course, Kleopatra VII, who also poses a problem in terms of her maternity. She was the daughter of Auletes, but whether she was also the daughter of Kleopatra V Tryphaina, or the daughter of another unknown wife of Auletes, or the bastard daughter of one of his concubines is unknown, though the balance of probability may tip in favour of her being the daughter of Tryphaina, and hence the child of a sibling union.[17] Kleopatra VII herself

may (or may not) have married each of her younger brothers, Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV, in succession. The first died during the civil war he fought against her and Julius Caesar in 48-7 BCE; the second she is said to have poisoned in 44 BCE on her return to Egypt in the wake of Caesar's assassination, in order to make room for her son by the Roman. If the sibling marriages did occur, it is highly unlikely that either of them was ever consummated (Dio Cassius 1955-61:42.35; 42.44).[18] Certainly Kleopatra's children did not come from the incestuous dynastic marriages: her eldest child, Ptolemy XV "Caesarion," was fathered by Julius Caesar, while her three younger children were the offspring of her liaison with Marc Antony.

Ptolemaic Incest: A Viable Dynastic Strategy?

An anthropology audience has no need of a general discussion of the problems posed by incest as a dynastic practice. A great deal of the literature on the topic has been devoted to the potential consequences of inbreeding, as well as to the barriers presented by cultural incest "taboos" (whatever their origins or functionality) and by apparently naturally-occurring inhibitions against incest (the Westermarck effect). It is not the intention of this paper to engage in definitive discussion of any of these issues; this section will, however, touch on them briefly as they affect our view of how the Ptolemies managed to pursue, more or less successfully, a strategy of dynastic incest and inbreeding for a span of roughly two centuries. Should the family not simply have imploded in a welter of birth defects, mental deficiency and cultural-emotional malaise and wretchedness?

The "barrier" presented by the cultural taboo may perhaps be most easily dismissed. It was pointed out earlier that the ancient Greeks and Macedonians shared the wellnigh universal aversion to incest, though in general their cultures were accepting of unions close enough to cause unease to the modern Western mind. Yet the whole point behind the concept of "taboo" is that it represents something consecrated to special individuals, while barred to society in general.[19] Royalty are obvious candidates for those "special" people who are allowed to engage in behaviours not open to the common run. The Ptolemies, therefore, like other royal families which have practised incest, did not "break" a taboo by engaging in sibling marriage—rather, they fulfilled the taboo and gave it meaning, demonstrating their own extraordinariness by breaching a limit constraining the actions of ordinary people.[20] Taboo is a thing "set apart." By their incestuous actions, the Ptolemies *became* "taboo" (see Bischof 1972:28), set apart and untouchable by ordinary standards of human behaviour.

If the existence of a cultural taboo presents no real barrier against *royal* incest, indeed provides a positive incentive for it, what of the natural obstacle created by the Westermarck effect? If Ptolemaic siblings were subject to the same processes which seem to affect most humans—that children raised in close proximity to one another from an early age tend to eschew one another as sexual partners in later life—how could the monarchy have been successful not only in carrying out the formal rituals of endogamous marriage generation after generation, but also in having those marriages entail sufficient sexual activity to result in royal offspring? The conviction that the Westermarck effect should have been so efficacious in inhibiting the sexuality of royal sibling-pairs as to effectively render such marriages infertile prompted Ray Bixler to produce an article debunking the amount of incest that actually occurred in the royal families of Ptolemaic Egypt, Inca Peru and old Hawai'i (Bixler 1982a; also 1982b).

Bixler is right in criticizing the naive and generalizing statements made by some earlier writers on the subject of Ptolemaic incest (notably Ruffer 1921), though his own arguments are seriously flawed.[21] In any case, his energies seem misplaced, at least insofar as he is concerned to defend the viability of the Westermarck hypothesis. He argues forcefully that the Ptolemaic marriages involved little or no sexual attraction: few would be inclined to disagree with him on this point, but that is not the same as stating that these marriages involved no sexual activity. The whole issue of the Westermarck effect is really largely beside the point when it comes to the question of royal incest. For one thing, infants in a large royal household may well be brought up in circumstances which do not feature the kind of proximity and intimacy which is thought to foster the Westermarck inhibition (Arens 1986:109; Bixler 1982a:267; Fox 1980:48; Mitterauer 1994:246; Shepher 1983:61, 131; Wolf 1993:160-161). For another—and far more importantly—royal marriage is not, and never has been, inspired primarily by sexual attraction. Royal spouses who lack sexual feelings for one another, whether or not they happen to be related to one another, have still managed to produce heirs. One could hardly imagine Kleopatra II and Ptolemy VIII harbouring warm feelings of any sort for each other, whether sexual, fraternal, or even just barely civil in nature. Yet the exigencies of dynastic necessity led to the conception and birth of Ptolemy Memphites, evidently in the immediate wake of the murder of Kleopatra's son at her brother's hands.[22]

Neither cultural prohibition nor natural inhibition would seem, then, to have presented a barrier to the suc-

cess of the incestuous strategy of the Ptolemaic dynasty (or any royals, for that matter). More problematic is the matter of inbreeding, the genetic consequences of incest. One classicist has summed up the popular view succinctly, if not perhaps very scientifically:

> If the word "degeneration" has any meaning at all, then the later...Ptolemies were degenerate: selfish, greedy, murderous, weak, stupid, vicious, sensual, vengeful, and...suffering from the effects of prolonged and repeated inbreeding. [Green 1990:554]

It seems that incest and inbreeding are the markers of a much more generalized dynastic corruption, a corruption that culminates in the character deficiencies of the most infamous member of the line, Kleopatra VII:

> Certain elements in her character may have been due to this persistent inbreeding—notably her total absence of moral sense, and a tendency to murder her brothers and sisters which may have been partly an inherited family habit. [Grant 1972:27]

It is probably fairly safe to dismiss this vision of a Kleopatra genetically driven to familial murder, presumably as a result of the concentrated build-up of morally (rather than mortally) lethal recessive alleles in her system. Nevertheless, a few words should be addressed to the matter of the genuine physical consequences inbreeding might have had for the Ptolemies. Daniel Ogden has indicted the Ptolemaic practice of incest, and consequent inbreeding, as the cause of various problems suffered by the dynasty (Ogden 1999:67-116).[23] The offspring of incestuous Ptolemaic marriages, he argues, were regularly "genetically compromised," and the Ptolemies as a result suffered from depressed fertility, enhanced mortality, and a number of genetic disorders.

The "evidence" for such genetic compromise, however, springs from a priori reasoning. Inbreeding is now known to enhance the potential for genetic problems: therefore, the Ptolemies *must have* experienced these problems, to a greater or lesser degree. But the negative genetic consequences of inbreeding are "probabilistic, not deterministic" (Durham 1991:301). They do not inevitably appear in all offspring of incest. Furthermore, the assessment of biological or demographic "evidence" from antiquity is a notoriously tricky undertaking. As far as the Ptolemies are concerned, all we have is the literary evidence, supplemented by some artefactual evidence in the form of sculpture and coin portraits; and such evidence as we have cannot be taken to provide proof of Ogden's thesis.

Indeed, the inbreeding Ptolemies were no less fertile—productive of viable offspring—than any of the neighbouring non-incestuous dynasties, and often considerably more fertile. There are numerous examples one could point to; an outstanding one would be the inbred Kleopatra III, who bore five apparently healthy children in quick succession to her uncle Ptolemy VIII, all five of whom went on to breed children of their own (some of them with each other).[24] Almost all the incestuous Ptolemaic marriages resulted in offspring, and the only ones which seem to have been unproductive of children had ample reasons other than impeded fertility. Arsinoë II was probably already about 40 when she married Ptolemy II, and both brother and sister already had heirs (though Arsinoë admittedly had lost two of hers at the hands of her half-brother). As the first fully incestuous marriage in the dynasty it is likely that its purpose was chiefly symbolic and political, and not meant for the production of heirs.[25] Like the last incestuous marriages in this house (the putative marriages of Kleopatra VII to her brothers), this first incestuous marriage may well have entailed no sexual activity at all. The only other childless Ptolemaic marriage was that of Ptolemy XI and Kleopatra Berenike, and since the groom murdered the bride before the honeymoon was out, the infertility of this marriage can scarcely be taken as evidence of genetic compromise.

If incestuous Ptolemaic marriages produced just as many (and frequently more) children as the dynastic marriages of their Hellenistic contemporaries, what can be said of survival rates? Did Ptolemaic offspring suffer from an enhanced mortality rate, one greater than that of the local commoners or the neighbouring royalty? Again, not so far as the available evidence shows. Naturally, some Ptolemaic children died young: a lengthy inscription offers touching testimony to the sudden death of a young Ptolemaic princess, Berenike, the daughter of Ptolemy III and Berenike II (Bagnall and Derow 2004:no. 164), while Ogden (1999:86) makes much of the untimely death of Ptolemy Eupator, heir of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II.[26] But legitimate heirs (sometimes, unfortunately, more than one) survived to occupy the throne in almost every case of succession, and even the rare exceptions—where allegedly illegitimate (non-inbred?) heirs succeeded—are wrapped in sufficient genealogical controversy to allow scholars to argue that these alleged bastards were indeed after all the legitimate offspring of incestuous dynastic unions.[27]

In arguing that the Ptolemies did indeed sustain genetic damage through their habit of inbreeding, Ogden attaches great significance to the monstrous obesity of both Ptolemy VIII (known as "Physkon," "Pot-belly"), and his son, Ptolemy X (Ogden 1999:97-98):[28]

> To the Romans...[Ptolemy VIII] was as ludicrous a figure as he was a cruel one to his fellow-citizens. He had an ugly face, and was short in stature; and he had a distended belly more like an animal's than a man's. The repulsiveness of his appearance was heightened by his dress, which was exceedingly fine-spun to the point of transparency, just as if he had some motive for putting on display what a decent man should have made every effort to conceal. [Justin, Yardley translation 1994:38.8.8-9]

> Through indulgence in luxury [Ptolemy VIII's] body had become utterly corrupted with fat and with a belly of such size that it would have been hard to measure it with one's arms; to cover it he wore a tunic which reached to his feet and which had sleeves reaching to his wrists; but he never went abroad on foot except on Scipio's account....Ptolemy's son [Ptolemy X] Alexander also grew fatter and fatter....The master of Egypt, a man who was hated by the masses, though flattered by his courtiers, lived in great luxury; but he could not even go out to urinate unless he had two men to lean upon as he walked. And yet when it came to the rounds of dancing at a drinking-party he would jump from a high couch barefoot as he was, and perform the figures in a livelier fashion than those who had practised them. [Athenaios, Gulick translation 1955:549e; 550a-b]

Ogden argues that Ptolemy VIII's fat issues, as well as his evident lack of stature, point to unusual genetic problems attendant on inbreeding. And yet Ptolemy VIII, the "grossest" of all the Ptolemies, in behaviour as well as appearance, was not himself the product of excessive inbreeding.[29] Furthermore, the second passage just cited provides ample evidence for the real reason behind the corpulence of both father and son: theirs was a lifestyle disease. Excessive nurture, in the form of gluttonous living, rather than nature in the form of a putative concentration of damaging recessive genes, is surely the answer.

The matter of the excessively luxurious lifestyle of the Ptolemies will be addressed further below; it is in fact central to the point of this paper.[30] For the moment let it simply be said that, while it cannot be denied that the Ptolemies *may have* at times suffered from the potentially adverse effects of inbreeding, the available evidence does not demonstrate clearly that at any given point they actually were so affected. Although Walter Scheidel's intensive demographic study of inbreeding in Roman-era Egypt does not touch on the Ptolemies, his conclusions could easily apply to the Ptolemaic evidence as well:

> All in all, the available evidence from Roman Egypt cannot be taken to refute the model of increasing inbreeding depression and its potentially disastrous consequences for the offspring of brother-sister matings. *At the same time, neither the census returns nor any other sources I am aware of offer any indications of unusually elevated levels of infant mortality and severe physical or mental handicaps among the inbreeding families of Roman Egypt.* [Scheidel 1996a:28][31]

Royal Incest: Consciously or Unconsciously Determined?

The previous section argued that the Ptolemies found incest on the whole to be a viable royal strategy: that they were able to propagate their dynasty through a more or less regular series of closely incestuous marriages, and that whatever genetic damage they *may* have sustained over time is invisible in the record (and would probably never have been apparent to the Ptolemies themselves as something resulting from their mating practices). But the mere viability of the custom of royal incest does not in itself account for its desirability. The simple fact that incestuous behaviour for the Ptolemies was not ruled out by culture or nature, and that they were apparently reasonably lucky on the inbreeding front, does not explain why they should have adopted the practice in the first place, or clung to it so tenaciously. This question, though it may have taken a long time to reach, is the main point of this paper.

Classical scholars who have studied the Ptolemaic dynasty have made various conjectures as to the possible reasons for Ptolemaic incest. Most of the rationales suggested have been of a more or less pragmatic nature, or at least have been grounded in the notion of a conscious decision deliberately taken by the Ptolemaic rulers. It is therefore perhaps no coincidence that there still exists a sense of scholarly dissatisfaction, a conviction that the real reason for Ptolemaic incest still eludes analysis. While several of the proposals are likely to have some merit in that these consciously pragmatic rationales may well have contributed to the functionality of Ptolemaic incest, it is my belief that the picture is incomplete without consideration of the symbolic (and arguably at times unconscious) underpinnings of the practice.

Among the more pragmatic reasons suggested for the institution of incest among the Ptolemies is the notion that these Greco-Macedonian newcomers to Egypt sought acceptance from the Egyptian population by adopting a native practice (Burstein 1982; Hombert and Préaux 1949; Macurdy 1932:118; Ogden 1999:77-78; Turner 1984:137-138). Although this view has been criticized on the grounds that the Egyptian Pharaohs did not engage in sibling marriage to the extent that modern popular belief would have

it (Bonhême and Forgeau 1988:319; Černý 1954; Middleton 1962; Robins 1993:26-27), it is clear that the ancient Greeks (and others) held the firm belief that Egyptian brothers and sisters, royal or common, were prone to marrying each other. "The Egyptians also made a law, they say, contrary to the general custom of mankind, permitting men to marry their sisters, this being due to the success attained by Isis in this respect" (Diodoros, Oldfather translation 1933:1.27). "Ptolemy [II] was in love with his sister Arsinoë, and married her, flat contrary to the traditions of Macedonia, but agreeably to those of his Egyptian subjects" (Pausanias 1979:1.7.1). Whether or not this view was true to the Egyptian reality is therefore not relevant; what matters is what the Greeks believed about the Egyptians. It cannot be mere coincidence that this foreign dynasty adopted a practice that was widely held to be one of the most striking of the local customs. Yet this cannot be the only answer. Royal sibling marriage also took place in the neighbouring Seleukid kingdom (far more rarely, it is true), and may even have been instituted there before the Ptolemies began to practise it (Ogden 1999:125-126).[32] And in any case, asserting that the Ptolemies copied the Pharaohs only begs the question, why would the *Pharaohs* have engaged in it?

Diodoros connects the putative Egyptian custom of brother-sister marriage to the Egyptian reverence for the goddess Isis. Isis was one of the great goddesses of Mediterranean antiquity, a culture-hero, civilizer, and founder, along with her brother-husband Osiris (Diodoros, Oldfather translation 1933:1.13-22). Isis and Osiris were said to have loved each other so deeply that they made love while they were still both in the womb (Plutarch *Moralia* 1927:356a). When Osiris was killed and his body dismembered and scattered throughout Egypt by his brother Set, the grieving Isis wandered up and down the length of the Nile collecting her dead brother's remains. From his partially revivified corpse she succeeded in conceiving Horus, the divine infant who would grow up to take vengeance on Set and restore order to the world (Diodoros, Oldfather translation 1933:1.21; Plutarch *Moralia* 1927:357f-358b). The divine trio of Isis, Osiris, and Horus had weighty political significance as well. The living Pharaoh was assimilated to Horus, while the one immediately deceased was identified with Osiris, ruler of the dead; the new Pharaoh's task, like Horus,' was always to re-establish cosmic order, order which had been thrown into disarray and confusion by the death of his predecessor. As for Isis, whose name refers to the royal throne, she was literally the seat of political power.

Isis and Osiris therefore represented civilization and order over chaos and disorder; furthermore, they were emblematic of a marital love that was also a sibling love. In this they had counterparts in other cultures, including the Greeks themselves. The ruling deities of ancient Greece—Zeus and his consort Hera—were also full brother and sister. It was only incest among humans that was loathsome to the Greek gods, who had every right to engage in the practice themselves. For royalty to follow suit was of course to suggest that incestuous royals were more than human, that they were raised to the plane of divinity. Theokritos' poem in praise of Ptolemy II (cited above) specifically makes the connection between the marriage of Ptolemy and Arsinoë and that of Zeus and Hera. This was propaganda for Greek consumption, as it was Ptolemy's Greek subjects who were more likely to shudder at the marriage. For the native Egyptians, the marriage's analogy with Isis and Osiris would have been far more meaningful. It is significant that throughout the centuries the Ptolemaic dynasty strove to evoke these deities in numerous ways besides sibling marriage. Ptolemaic queens were repeatedly assimilated to or identified with Isis; Arsinoë II, the first participant in a sibling marriage, is a particularly good example.[33] One wonders whether Ptolemy VIII, who is said to have shipped the dismembered remains of her murdered son to his sister Kleopatra II during the civil war between the siblings, was mocking and challenging her claim to any association with Isis, the goddess whose greatest feat had been the restoration of her murdered and dismembered spouse.

Perhaps connected to the political-religious ideology of assimilating the royal dynasty to the gods is the argument that incest prevents the royal blood from being tainted by mingling with that of lesser beings (mere mortals and commoners). Several scholars have found a solution to the enigma of Ptolemaic incest in this conscious notion that endogamy promotes purity (Chamoux 2003:223; Grant 1972:26; Heinen 1978; Mitterauer 1994; Whitehorne 1994:91), but this does not seem to be a compelling solution, at least not by itself. Royalty, even godlike royalty, can always marry other royalty (though this could bring its own set of problems, as we shall see). The Hellenistic dynasties regularly married into each other, and the Ptolemies participated in this too: over the years numerous Ptolemaic princesses married Seleukid men (though it was rare indeed for a Ptolemaic ruler to take a non-Ptolemaic bride).

Putative ancient notions of the special qualities of royal, perhaps even divine, blood, find some resonance with the views of sociobiologists, who maintain that "royal incest is best explained in terms of the general sociobiological paradigm of inclusive fitness" (Van den Berghe and Mesher 1980:300). The concentration of genetic mate-

rial after generations of incestuous marriage practices would eventually result in a scenario where the king would be close to "cloning" himself. As someone who is very far from being a specialist in this field, I do not believe I can comment on the lively debate surrounding sociobiological theories of incest, or sociobiology in general.[34] I would simply state that it seems difficult to see how any of the sociobiological notions about dynasties seeking *genetic* fitness and survival could ever have been consciously determined, as they surely must have been if this motivation is to make any sense.

Sociobiologists have also seen royal incest as "the ultimate logical outcome of hypergyny," the female marital strategy of "marrying up" (Van den Berghe and Mesher 1980:303). This brings up the question of the role of Ptolemaic females in all these dynastic chess moves. Did the Arsinoës and Kleopatras deliberately seek marriages with their brothers because otherwise they had "almost no way to go but down" (Van den Berghe 1983:100; see also Arens 1986:110; Herrenschmidt 1994; Shepher 1983:130)? The answer seems to be, "probably not." Strong-willed many of the Ptolemaic women certainly were, but theirs were not the marital choices driving this dynasty. Arsinoë II could never have persuaded Ptolemy II to marry her unless the marriage suited and benefited him (Burstein 1982; Carney 1987; Hazzard 2000:81-100),[35] while one can scarcely imagine Kleopatra II marrying Ptolemy VIII if she had not been compelled to (at least, so long as she wished to retain her own position). Furthermore, it is questionable whether marriage to neighbouring royalty, such as the marriage of Ptolemy II's daughter Berenike to the Seleukid king Antiochos II in the mid-third century, really represents a step "down." Several Ptolemaic princesses married neither down nor up, but "sideways" (chiefly to Seleukids).[36]

Lateral marriages to Seleukids do highlight some more pragmatic reasons why the Ptolemies might have found endogamy more functional than exogamy. Marriage to foreign royalty always gave an excuse and a lever for interference from a rival monarch, as the Ptolemies knew only too well from their own behaviour. The third century marriage of Berenike to Antiochos was in fact an aggressive Ptolemaic move, a marriage settlement forced on the Seleukid ruler in the wake of a (poorly-documented) war that evidently went better for the Ptolemies than for the Seleukids. It was clearly Ptolemy II's intention that his daughter's child should inherit the Seleukid throne (Antiochos had been forced to agree to set aside his previous wife Laodike and her two sons). The Ptolemaic plan backfired when Antiochos died unexpectedly, and Berenike and her infant were murdered, allegedly at the behest of Laodike. Yet this situation ultimately offered Berenike's brother, Ptolemy III, a lever for interference: he invaded the Seleukid kingdom and made enormous inroads into it, claiming legitimacy for his actions through his kinship with the murdered queen and her child, the legitimate heir. In the next century, the Seleukids paid back Ptolemaic aggression with interest, again by means of an exogamous marriage. Antiochos III imposed his daughter Kleopatra on young Ptolemy V in the wake of a war won by the Seleukid, and he is said to have done so as part of a deliberate effort to subvert the Ptolemaic kingdom (Jerome *Commentary on Daniel* 1958:11.17). This marriage connection subsequently enabled Antiochos III's son, Antiochos IV, to do what Ptolemy III had done 75 years before: invade the neighbouring kingdom, this time Egypt, ostensibly on behalf of a threatened and still minor legitimate heir. Thus, although the Ptolemies were always willing to marry off excess females to Seleukids, they strove wherever possible to reserve a Ptolemaic bride for the royal heir. Such an extremely endogamous union brought with it no set of aggressively ill-mannered in-laws.

A number of pragmatic rationales, as suggested by various scholars, have been gathered here: pure political expediency in some cases, a consciously devised platform of religious propaganda in others. But I have been maintaining throughout that the picture is incomplete without looking at the symbolic content of royal incest, and symbolic motivations may or may not have been conscious ones: "the participants [are not] necessarily aware of this cultural intent or message" (Arens 1986:148). It is in a symbolic context that the link between incest and power stands out so clearly.

Notions of chaos and disorder characterize incest. The Chinese and Indonesian terms for it evoke concepts of disorder and disharmony (Arens 1986:5-6; Needham 1974:63-4), while the later Greek compound *haimomixia* implies an undifferentiated mixing and mingling. The mythic adversary of Oedipus—the Sphinx—manifests this chaotic disorder in her scrambled genetic makeup, embodying woman, lion and bird.[37] Malinowski's famous statement on the taboo also associates incest with disorder; according to him, human society avoids incest simply because otherwise there would be "complete social chaos...the upsetting of age distinctions, the mixing up of generations, the disorganization of sentiments, and a violent exchange of roles" (Malinowski 1927:251).[38] Oedipus' bitter cry of spiritual agony captures vividly that sense of inappropriate roles and affect: "born from those who should not have borne me, living with those I should not have lived with, killing those I should not have killed!"[39]

And yet the breaking of barriers, the flouting of civilized structures, the invitation to open a door into the world of chaos, may be beneficial, provided that it is done by the right individual: the extraordinary one, the divine one, the magical one, the royal one. Oedipus is the incarnation of all the "grisly horror" that humans have ever associated with incest, a horror compounded by the dreadful chain of fate or coincidence that ensnares this morally innocent victim. But Sophocles' great tragedy, in which Oedipus discovers his true identity and thus the terrible reality of his existence and his actions, is not entitled *Oedipus the Incestuous* or *Oedipus the Parricide* or even just plain *Oedipus:* it is called *Oedipus the King.*[40] The point is that Oedipus is not just any ordinary mortal. He is a king, and if he has committed incest, that incest was central to his ascent to the throne. *Oedipus the King* focusses chiefly on the horror of Oedipus' self-discovery and the agony of its aftermath. But a later play of Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus,* suggests that, even blind and in exile, convicted of parricide and incest, Oedipus is still extraordinary, and has the power to bestow blessings on others.[41]

Incest appears to unlock power, particularly creative power. Numerous creation myths emphasize the power of incestuous sexuality to bring order and structure out of chaos. In Greek myth the structuring of the world is carried out through the mating of Gaia (Earth) with her son Ouranos (Heaven); the Zoroastrian god Ohrmazd engages in incestuous sex with his daughter Spendarmat (Earth) in order to advance creation;[42] Lot's daughters seduce their father in order to give birth to a new race in the wake of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah;[43] and "the representation of brother and sister as a symbolically parental couple in descent ideology" forms part of the creation mythology of a number of cultures (Moore 1964:1309).[44]

It is those with extraordinary stature—gods, first humans, royalty—who engage in this powerfully creative incest, who can breach the boundaries between civilization (which they themselves participate in creating and securing) and the chaotic forces of disorder. Royalty in particular is a liminal state, at the outer (upper) boundaries of society, and in many cases at the borders between human and divine. By stepping beyond those bounds, through the commission of incest, royalty elicits that creative power. Mary Douglas argues that individuals undergoing a rite of passage, or otherwise in a transformative state, return from those borderline, chaotic places beyond the community to which they have gone with the power to recreate order (Douglas 1966:94-104; see also Turner 1967). Thus royalty, through participation in an act evocative of chaos and disorder, may deliberately summon forth calamity, only to overcome it and restore the order necessary for the community to continue. In effect, royal incest fights fire with fire, or rather, chaos with chaos.

Royal incest thus "draws attention to actors engaged in cultural performance rather than reproductive strategy" (Arens 1986:122). Arens argues that royal incest is in fact primarily a symbol of power, rather than a means to attain pure blood heirs.[45] "The theme of incest plays a major part in the deification procedure [of the king of the African Shilluk], for it reflects the ability of the would-be king to violate a basic rule and survive the encounter with a symbolic act of potency and creation" (Arens 1986:123).[46] The power elicited by royal incest is not simply a personal power, the exercise of which would indeed be tyranny: it must be a power wielded on behalf of society. "The king and society are one, while his vitality and goodwill are essential to Shilluk continuity. With him, there is order, and without him, chaos" (Arens 1986:129).

The Egyptian context of the Ptolemaic dynasty would have brought them up against the vital cosmic role of the Egyptian Pharaoh, a responsibility the Ptolemies would also have borne. Pharaoh defends not only his people and his nation, but even the very fabric of the world, subduing cosmic chaos and re-establishing cosmic order after the death of the previous Pharaoh. As Horus, he avenges the death (and disordering through dismemberment) of his father Osiris at the hands of Set (Bonhême and Forgeau 1988:63-70; Koenen 1983, 1993). The creation and ordering of the world is threatened by the death of every Pharaoh; every new Pharaoh must restore that order and that creation, responsible as he is for Maät, for cosmic order and justice (see Bonhême and Forgeau 1988:110-120, 132; Heinen 1978; Koenen 1983, 1993; Quaegebeur 1978:246; Winter 1978). It would be difficult of course to argue that royal incest was inevitably demanded by a cosmic role of the defender of order against chaos, either for the Pharaohs or for the Ptolemies. After all, these cosmic roles were originally defined for the native Egyptian Pharaohs, and while they did pursue incestuous marriages, they were not particularly rigorous about it (certainly not as rigorous as the Ptolemies). Yet it is certain that royal incest's symbolic creative potency could only enhance the ruler's ability to re-enact the cosmic drama of the gods.

Thus, stepping beyond boundaries, as exemplified in acts of incest, may be emblematic of creativity and power. But the sexual barriers mandated by society were not the only limits breached by the Ptolemies. Their dynastic behaviour in general was evocative of excess and intemperance in all directions. Their marriage practices would therefore seem to have been only one piece of a larger puzzle.

The Philosophy of Excess

As we saw earlier, the Greeks condemned incest not only on the grounds that the gods found it hateful. They also saw it as representative of completely immoderate self-indulgence, of a total loss of all restraint. Such self-indulgence might take many forms, unrestrained indulgence in sex and food being two of the most obvious breaches of moderation and self-restraint. The Ptolemaic record offers one glaring nexus of excess in every facet of life: Ptolemy VIII. Grotesquely obese gourmand, vile husband to his sister, (allegedly) rapist of his niece, murderer of children (including his own), Ptolemy VIII epitomized all that was contrary to the notion of sōphrosynē. He was, in short, "a monster steeped in murder and incest," at least to one Victorian classicist (Mahaffy 1895:377).[47] The clear decadence of these over-indulgent Ptolemies has been read as a sign of political decay ever since antiquity. The Greek historian Polybios, writing in the second century BCE, blamed the beginnings of the decline of the Ptolemaic empire on Ptolemy IV, who neglected affairs of state and indulged himself instead in "shameless amours and senseless and constant drunkenness" (Polybios, Paton translation 1922:5.34, 10).[48] In more recent years, as evidence for the negative genetic consequences of inbreeding has mounted, it is the procreative aspect of Ptolemaic marriage practices that has been indicted for their perceived political degeneration (Green 1990; Ogden 1999): a putative scientific basis for a 2000-year-old prejudiced perception.

Were the Ptolemies really nothing more than a pack of self-indulgent, gluttonous, sexually voracious sots, with no policy beyond the gratification of every whim, the more extreme the better? Surely not. A more careful examination of Ptolemaic royal ideology reveals that their philosophy of excess was grounded in a carefully mapped out strategy of propaganda and self-presentation. In 1948, J. Tondriau published an article in which he argued that the Ptolemaic royal philosophy deliberately rejected the traditional virtue of sōphrosynē, and extolled instead sōphrosynē's opposite: tryphē (Tondriau 1948c; see also Heinen 1983). The Greek word tryphē is most often translated as "luxury," and carries with it also a sense of delicacy, or softness, of wanton behaviour, and in general a lack of stern self-control. As a concept, it may seem to be rather odious, and so it certainly was interpreted by many of the Greek and Roman philosophers and writers who exalted the notion of moderation and the mastery of the self.

Nevertheless, as with incest itself, there could be a positive side to a propaganda that emphasized luxury and ostentatious display. Certainly the incredible wealth of the Ptolemies could scarcely have been imagined had they restricted themselves to public habits of sōphrosynē, and wealth of course (for a ruling dynasty) implies both power and benefaction (what the Greeks called *euergetism*). The literary record has left us with several descriptions of dazzling public displays of wealth and luxury put on by the Ptolemies, displays of staggering proportions. Such spectacles were clearly intended to impress subject, friend, and potential enemy alike with Ptolemaic power: the power to do good to those deserving of their friendship from their inexhaustible store of wealth, and the power to purchase the military might necessary to do harm to those undeserving of that friendship.

The most famous of these exhibitions to a modern reader is probably the arrival of Kleopatra VII at Tarsos in 41 BCE. Summoned to meet Marc Antony, she decided to get the upper hand from the start by staging a classic display of Ptolemaic wealth, and in so doing, upstaging Antony:

> She sailed up the river Cydnus on a golden-prowed barge, with sails of purple outspread and rowers pulling on silver oars to the sound of a reed-pipe blended with wind-pipes and lyres. She herself reclined beneath a gold-embroidered canopy, adorned like a painting of Aphrodite, flanked by slave-boys, each made to resemble Eros, who cooled her with their fans. Likewise her most beautiful female slaves, dressed as Nereids and Graces, were stationed at the rudders and the ropes. The wonderful smell of numerous burning spices filled the banks of the river. Some people formed an escort for her on either side all the way from the river, while others came down from the city to see the spectacle. The crowd filling the city square trickled away, until at last Antony himself was left alone, seated on a dais. [Plutarch *Life of Antony*, Waterfield translation 1999:26][49]

This passage from Plutarch, made so famous by Shakespeare's adaptation of it, captures not only the unbelievable wealth underlying Ptolemaic tryphē, but also its sensual quality, and the delicacy, softness, and perceived effeminacy associated with this type of luxury. Ptolemy VIII and his famously transparent garments mentioned earlier, "a sort of see-through nightdress" (Whitehorne 1994:107), would not have been out of place on Kleopatra's barge, though perhaps his allegedly repellent personal appearance might have struck a sour note. Yet even the prodigious obesity of Ptolemy VIII finds its own place in a dynastic philosophy which emphasized wealth, luxury, excess and plenty.[50] In fact, the surviving official portraits of Ptolemy VIII and his son, the equally famously fat Ptolemy X, highlight rather than downplay their corpulence.

The luxury and magnificence of tryphē, as remarked above, emphasized the dynasty's *euergetism*, its ability and willingness to bestow beneficence. Tryphē is also an emblem of power, and not simply because of the obvious equation between power and wealth. Tryphē—excessive luxury, immoderate display, wanton self-indulgence—implies a lack of control. Lack of self-control, of course, is one manifestation of tryphē, and those critical of the Ptolemies, like Polybios, or the arrogant Roman legates who visited Ptolemy VIII and sneered down their virtuous Roman noses at the poor fat king as he tried to keep up with them while they marched about Alexandria, would have argued that the Ptolemies simply were not masters of themselves.[51] But if they were not masters of themselves, their lack of restraint in all things surely implied for all to see that neither was anyone else master of them. Excessive indulgence, particularly indulgence in things forbidden, underscores the absolute omnipotence of royalty. There is no superior power capable of coercion, and not even the gods would intervene to check Ptolemaic behaviour.

Ptolemaic incest should therefore be considered in the context of the Ptolemaic philosophy of excess in general, a connection which has not hitherto been drawn. Ptolemaic freedom to indulge, and to do so ostentatiously and deliberately, is representative of power. Incest, as the most illicit of sexual acts, is almost demanded by a royal philosophy of power that recognizes no limits or restraints and that is prepared to overstep all boundaries. The peculiarly Ptolemaic dedication to tryphē may indeed be why this dynasty was more determinedly incestuous than the native Pharaohs had been. The Ptolemies may first have adopted sibling marriage because of the reports about native Egyptian behaviour; but it would have resonated so well with the rest of their philosophy that it inevitably became central to it. Ptolemy II was the first to engage in full-sibling marriage, as he was also the first on record to present the kind of stupefying public displays of wealth that subsequently became associated with the Ptolemaic dynasty generally.[52] As for Ptolemy VIII, we may speculate that the exceedingly hyperbolic (even for his family) behaviour that he exhibited in all dimensions may be linked to the fact that he had spent so many years of his life in rather uncertain circumstances. After decades of semi-exile in Cyrene, at odds with the rulers in Alexandria, he would have been concerned to establish his power and authority by any and all means, pragmatic and symbolic, once he finally ascended the throne.

Tryphē and incest are also linked through the gods of the Ptolemies. Of all the Greek gods, the Ptolemies claimed to have a special relationship with Dionysos, and repeatedly assimilated themselves to him (see Cerfaux and Tondriau 1957; Heinen 1978; Lunsingh Scheurleer 1978; Queyrel 1984, 1985; Sullivan 1990:230; Tondriau 1948a, 1950, 1952). A god of fertility and all the good things in life—particularly the vine and its products—Dionysos is representative of delivery from care and inhibition. His gift of wine induces and epitomizes the lack of restraint associated with tryphē, and may lead to acts of forbidden sexuality. Since at least the 5th century BCE, Greeks (and Egyptians) had accepted the equation of Dionysos with Osiris, to whom the rulers of Egypt also assimilated themselves (Diodoros 1.13; Herodotos 2.42; Plutarch *Moralia* 364e-365f.). Both are gods associated with incest, and both are gods of fertility and the life force, a power manifested in the myths of both of them, myths which feature death, dismemberment and rebirth.[53] Both Dionysos and Osiris are liminal gods, gods who pass beyond the borders of death into chaos, and who return, bringing power back with them.[54] Deities of both tryphē and incest are thus united in the unique Greco-Egyptian context of the Ptolemaic monarchy, and incest and tryphē are the mainstays of the Ptolemaic royal propaganda.

That it *was* propaganda, i.e., meant for public consumption, seems certain. Even if the Ptolemies themselves did not always consciously apprehend every nuance of their symbolic behaviour, it can hardly be credited that they would have engaged in this symbolism only behind closed doors, so to speak. Yet many classical scholars have professed themselves puzzled over some of the more overt behaviours which would have called attention to the incest, on the grounds that the dynasty should have preferred to sublimate or disguise it somehow. This is particularly a question that arises with the first marriage, that of Ptolemy and Arsinoë Philadelphos. One scholar, for example, thinks that the epithet "Sibling-lover" was chosen in order to "soften the incestuous nature of the relationship," since it should emphasize the fraternal—rather than erotic—nature of Ptolemy and Arsinoë's love for one another (Fraser 1972[1]:217).[55] Yet the choice of such a flagrantly "in your face" epithet surely deliberately accentuates the incest rather than deflecting attention away from it. Incest, like the Ptolemaic tryphē with which it was connected, would have lost all its symbolic value if it was not publicly celebrated.

Did this royal program of excess in all things work? It is difficult to judge this matter, given that we are forced to read Ptolemaic history through a screen of bigoted ancient authors who reviled the self-indulgent Ptolemies from their own upper-class standpoint of Greek sōphrosynē and Roman *simplicitas*. We also must contend with the historical reality that interposes between

us and the Ptolemies the centuries-long domination of the military might of Rome. Ptolemaic Egypt, under its last ruler Kleopatra VII, was the last of the great Hellenistic kingdoms to fall to Rome, and the writers of Augustan Rome echo the hysterical hatred that Kleopatra's Roman enemies whipped up against her and all things Ptolemaic. But from the point of view of the common people of ancient Egypt and the Hellenized East, a Ptolemaic ruler such as Kleopatra was a provider of bounty and the promise of better things to come, and not purely on material grounds. The symbolic aspect of Ptolemaic beneficence is well captured in Plutarch's account of Kleopatra and Antony's meeting at Tarsos: "the word went out to all that Aphrodite was making merry with Dionysos for the good of Asia" (Plutarch *Life of Antony* 1988:26; author's translation).

Although the ancient sources largely condemn Ptolemaic tryphē, they are in fact less prone to abominate or at least comment on Ptolemaic incest than writers of a more recent era. The 1st-century CE Jewish writer Josephus, who drew on the memoirs of Kleopatra's enemy, Herod the Great, to compose his history, and who consequently presents one of the most poisonous portraits of Kleopatra to survive, did not criticize Kleopatra for marrying her brothers, only for (allegedly) murdering them (Josephus *Against Apion* 1977:2.57-8; *Jewish Antiquities* 1998:15.89; *Jewish War* 1997:1.359-60). Polybios criticizes Ptolemy IV for the sordid extra-marital affairs which kept him *out* of his sister's bed, and even a 5th-century CE Christian writer can comment that Ptolemy VIII's great crime against his sister Kleopatra II was setting her aside in favour of her daughter, not marrying her in the first place (Orosius *Against the Pagans* 1964:5.10, 6; Polybios 1922:5.34, 10). It is noteworthy that no ancient author speaks ill of the full sibling marriage of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II, perhaps because it was evidently an amicable and successful one. It is modern writers who tend to fixate on the incest specifically, blaming it (or rather, the consequent inbreeding) for the ostensible "degeneration" of the Ptolemaic dynasty and kingdom (a judgment which peculiarly, yet repeatedly, fails to take note of the fact that the Ptolemaic kingdom survived longer than any of its Hellenistic counterparts).

Peter Morriss has commented that modern Anglo-American society tends to be less tolerant of the blurring of boundaries (especially sexual boundaries) than many cultures which are perceived as less "advanced" (Morriss 1997:276-280). Although no one could designate the classical culture of the ancient Mediterranean as anything less than highly sophisticated, it is true that it was in general more tolerant of close-kin sexuality than subsequent Western cultures have been.[56] The differing perspectives of ancient and modern commentators on the subject of Ptolemaic incest would seem to support Morriss' observation. Morriss further argues that contemporary Western culture tends to believe that its own prejudices and taboos are based on hygiene and science, rather than superstition. Recent scholarly arguments to the effect that Ptolemaic "degeneration" was the result of genetic, if not moral, decay again may say more about the perspective of the commentators than about the reality of the historical dynasty. In order to understand the enigma of Ptolemaic incest more fully (and perhaps we shall never understand it completely), it seems vital that we at least make the attempt to free ourselves from the age-old conviction that the Ptolemies were a degraded and corrupt race.

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Acknowledgments

A more extensive version of this paper (for a classicist audience) appears in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 125 (2005). I am very grateful to my colleagues in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Waterloo—Professors Maria Liston, Harriet Lyons, Robert Park and Anne Zeller—and to Professor Andrew Lyons of Wilfrid Laurier University for their help and suggestions. I would also like to thank the anonymous referees of *Anthropologica* for their comments. Any errors in this paper are of course my own.

Notes

1 Among the more recent publications dealing with Ptolemaic incest, see Carney 1987; Bennett 1997; Ogden 1999:67-116; Hazzard 2000:85-93. Hopkins 1980, 1994, Shaw 1992, Parker 1996, and Scheidel 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 2002, 2005 focus on the phenomenon of incest among commoners in the Roman period in Egypt, not on the Hellenistic royal incest that preceded it.

2 See Ross and Rapp 1983 for comments on the social and political construct of sexuality in general.

3 *Anosios* or *anagnos sunousia* ("unholy, impure intercourse"); *gamos asebēs*, "impious marriage."

4 See Strabo 1927:4.5, 4; Isocrates *Panathenaicus* 1928:121-122; Sextus Empiricus *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1996:3.245-248; Hooper 1976:227; Labby 1976:171; Schneider 1976:162; Arens 1979:14, 27-28, 146 and 1986:vii-ix; Parker 1983:98, 360, 364; Durham 1991:291; Arfouilloux 1993; Nagy 2000; Archibald 2001:20-21; Moreau 2002:30.

5 The only apparent cases of non-royal culturally-approved full sibling incest are the Roman period in Egypt: Hopkins 1980, 1994, Shaw 1992, Bagnall and Frier 1994:127-134,

Scheidel 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 2002, 2005, Parker 1996, Hendrix and Schneider 1999, Gonis 2000; and Zoroastrian Persia: Lee 1988, Herrenschmidt 1994, Mitterauer 1994, Scheidel 2002; see Storrie 2003 for sibling incest among the Hoti of Venezuelan Guiana. On cultures which have practiced *royal* incest, see Goggin and Sturtevant 1964:202-207.

6 There are unfortunately some gaps and uncertainties in our knowledge, and some points of dispute in the genealogical reconstructions. As the main point of this paper is the issue of the symbolic meaning of Ptolemaic incest, it is the overall pattern of marriage and mating within the family (rather than the finer points of specific detail) that is of interest.

7 Athenian custom would not have baulked at the paternal half-sibling marriage, though of course neither Arsinoë nor Ptolemy Keraunos was an Athenian.

8 The Seleukids were the rival Hellenistic dynasty which laid claim to Syria and much of the Middle East.

9 Diodoros 1933:33.13; Livy *Periocha* 1929:59; Justin 1994:38.8; Valerius Maximus 2000:9.1 (ext.) 5. The marriage to Kleopatra III took place between 8 May 141 and 14 January 140 (Huß 2001:606; Hölbl 2001:195, 217), but Kleopatra had already given birth to her uncle's child (the future Ptolemy IX) in 142.

10 Diodoros 1933:34/35.14; Livy *Periocha* 1929:59; Justin 1994:38.8; Valerius Maximus 2000:9.2, (ext.) 5.

11 The dating formulae of royal documents indicate that the trio was back together again in Alexandria as of 124.

12 Justin 1994:39.3; *cf.* Pausanias 1979:1.9.1-2.

13 The phrase is Grace Macurdy's (1932:152).

14 Justin 1994:39.4; Pausanias 1979:1.9.2.

15 For the assumption of a unique father-daughter marriage between Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Berenike, see Fraser 1972 (1):124; Whitehorne 1994:175; Ogden 1999:95. Against the notion of such a marriage: Bevan 1968 [1927]:334; Bennett 1997; Chauveau 1998; Shipley 2000:212; Huß 2001:667-668; Hölbl 2001:212.

16 Bennett is expanding on a suggestion of Mahaffy; against Bennett see Huß 2001:672-673. Sullivan 1990:88, 91 comments on the possibility that Auletes (and Kleopatra V Tryphaina) were the legitimate children of Ptolemy IX and Kleopatra Selene.

17 Strabo asserts that only Auletes' eldest daughter, Berenike IV, was legitimate, but the possibility exists that he is confusing her with Kleopatra Berenike, declared by Pausanias to be the only legitimate child of Ptolemy IX (Strabo 1927:17.1.11; Pausanias 1979:1.9.3). The "argument from silence" may have some bearing on the question of Kleopatra VII's legitimacy: if she had been illegitimate, we would certainly expect her Roman enemies to have made political capital of it (as capital was made of Auletes' alleged bastardy), and there is no hint that they did so. Since Kleopatra VII was born in 69, and Kleopatra V Tryphaina is present in the record at that time as Auletes' wife, it seems very likely that she was Kleopatra VII's mother (Bennett 1997:60).

18 Criscuolo 1989, 1994 doubts that Kleopatra was ever actually married to her brothers, arguing that the title *Philadelphos* was an emblem of familial solidarity rather than necessarily of a sibling marriage. See also Hölbl 2001:231, 237.

19 *OED*^{2}: "set apart for or consecrated to a special use or purpose; restricted to the use of a god, a king, priests, or chiefs, while forbidden to general use." See also Arens 1986:6-7.

20 The symbolic significance of the royal "fulfillment" of taboo will be discussed further below.

21 Bixler focusses only on sibling marriage. He ignores (for example) the high inbreeding co-efficient of an uncle and inbred niece pair such as Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III (see further below); he fails to take note of the production of any children other than those who inherited the throne; and he traces the rulers only through the male line, ignoring the existence of such dynamic and vigorous female co-rulers as Kleopatra III, Kleopatra Berenike, Berenike IV and Kleopatra VII, all of whom were daughters of sibling incest.

22 Although the question of the Westermarck effect is largely irrelevant in the context of royal incest, it is interesting to note Roscoe's arguments about amity and aggression, positing an actual link between incestuous sexuality and familial aggression of the sort so observable in the Ptolemaic dynasty. Roscoe 1994 shows that the Westermarck inhibition is the result of familial amity and security, while incestuous sexual feelings tend to arise in family situations which feature strife, aggression, and conflict (see also Erickson 1989, 1993; Hardy 2001). The notorious lack of affect, and indeed the outright hostility of some of the Ptolemaic incestuous pairs (such as Ptolemy IV and Arsinoë III, or, outstandingly, Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra II), could serve to illustrate Roscoe's point. Roscoe also draws a connection to the widespread cultural-mythic links between cannibalism (particularly of kin) and incest.

23 Scheidel's expansive study (1996a) deals with the genetic question in great detail, but focuses on Roman-era marriages among commoners in Egypt, rather than with the royal Ptolemaic dynasty.

24 The inbreeding coefficient (F) of an uncle-niece pair if there is no family background of inbreeding is 0.125; Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III, however, were related in multiple ways, and for them, F would have been 0.25, the same as for a parent-child or full-sibling pair (calculated using Wright's method of path coefficients; see Vogel and Motulsky 1997:551-552).

25 Ptolemy took care to adopt his children to his sister, so that she became their putative mother in any case. There was little need to complicate matters by producing half-siblings via the new marriage, a situation which might only have led to "amphimetric strife" in the next generation (Ogden 1999).

26 Eupator was probably 12 or 13 when he died; since his father had recently named him as co-regent, it seems unlikely that he was suffering from any obvious physical or mental defect.

27 Controversy arises when the sources are silent as to the identity of the mother of some of the royal offspring (for example, Ptolemy XI), or state outright that so-and-so was illegitimate, as in the case of Ptolemy XII, who was (not-so-affectionately) dubbed "Nothos" ("Bastard") by the Alexandrian populace. But we saw above that it is at least possible to argue that even Ptolemy XII was the offspring of a full-sibling union (whether it was one to be considered "legitimate" or not might be another matter).

28 Cf. Grant 1972:27. For official portraits (and discussion) of Ptolemy VIII, see Kyrieleis 1975:63-4, pl. 52-53; Smith

1988:93-4, cat. 73, pl. 75.17; Ashton 2001:55; Walker and Higgs 2001:54-57, cat 21, 22; Stanwick 2002:cat 79-104.

29 His parents were only third cousins.

30 The prodigality and self-indulgence of the reigning Ptolemies can be traced back at least to Ptolemy II, who suffered greatly from gout, the classic disease of dissipated living (Tunny 2001).

31 My emphasis.

32 The Seleukids too may have looked to pre-existing examples such as the Zoroastrian dynasty of Achaemenid Persia, or even the Hekatomnid dynasty of Karia (Hornblower 1982:358-363).

33 She is the one Ptolemaic queen who offers the most extensive and varied associations with Isis until we come to Kleopatra VII, who employed the epithet *Nea Isis*, the "New Isis." On Ptolemaic queens' (especially Arsinoë II's) association with Isis (and Aphrodite, equated with Isis), see Tondriau 1948b; Fraser 1972 1:197-198, 237-244; Dunand 1973:80-92; Thompson 1973:121; Quaegebeur 1978, 1988; van Nuffelen 1998-99; Ashton 2001.

34 For criticism of the sociobiological approach to royal incest, see Kitcher 1985, especially 275-279; against Kitcher, see Sesardic 1998 and Leavitt 1990; (against Leavitt, see Moore 1992).

35 The traditional view (now debunked) had held that the incestuous marriage (and Ptolemy's divorce of his first wife) was the result of the powerful Arsinoë manipulating her weak-willed younger brother (Huß 2001:309; Longega 1968:72-73; Macurdy 1932:118; Turner 1984:136; Walbank 1984:67).

36 Kleopatra Thea (daughter of Ptolemy VI and Kleopatra II) married three different Seleukid rulers; Ptolemy VIII and Kleopatra III's three daughters each married Seleukids (two of them only after they had taken a turn at marrying their brother Ptolemy IX). Berenike IV, daughter of Auletes, brought in co-regent husbands from outside; her two younger brothers (who ultimately may or may not have married their sister Kleopatra VII) were no doubt considered too young to be viable as co-regents. Kleopatra VII's relationships with leading Romans represent a unique circumstance.

37 See Twitchell 1987:44-51 for artistic images of the monstrous "sexual chaos" associated with incest.

38 Sociologists and clinicians also use the term "chaotic" to describe family circumstances which give rise to incestuous sexual abuse (Bourcet et al. 2000; Rudd and Herzberger 1999), as well as the emotional state of incestuous abuse victims (Brown 1993:32-33).

39 Sophocles *Oedipus the King* 1990:1184-1185; author's translation.

40 In fact, the Greek title of the play is *Oedipus Tyrannos*, which could of course be translated as *Oedipus the Tyrant*. Although the word *tyrannos* at an early stage of Greek history was a neutral one, there are sufficient references within the play's text to give rise to the view that Sophocles was deliberately presenting Oedipus as a somewhat ambiguous figure. On the whole, however, it seems evident that Sophocles intended Oedipus to be seen as a morally positive ruler. The play is better known by its non-tendentious Latin title *Oedipus Rex*.

41 In this play, the elderly Oedipus makes his way to the territory of Athens, where he prophesies to the Athenian king Theseus that his bones will sanctify and protect whatever land receives them; Theseus grants him sanctuary, and Oedipus finally disappears mysteriously in an earthquake, with the implication that the gods have called him home at last.

42 See Herrenschmidt 1994, who connects Zoroastrian *xwêtôdas* (incestuous marriage) with creation myth.

43 *Genesis* 19.30-38; see Arens 1986:120.

44 Rudhardt 1982:745-746, 762-763 emphasizes the transformative power of incest in Greek mythology, where many tales featuring incest result in a metamorphosis. Cf. the role of the male and female chiefs of the Ihanzu of Tanzania, whose symbolic incest plays a recreative role, and whose pairing echoes the pairing of male and female Ptolemaic rulers (Sanders 1998).

45 Arens' theory on incest and power is convincing, although his view that there is (almost) a complete disjunction between royal incest and royal reproduction is not applicable to the Ptolemies.

46 See also de Heusch 1958 on other African cultures; de Heusch argued in favour of royal incest in these cultures being the result of cultural diffusion from ancient Egypt.

47 It is perhaps no coincidence that the particularly excessive Ptolemy VIII was also unique in committing not only "ordinary" royal incest, but also what Françoise Héritier has defined as incest of the "second type," by marrying a mother and daughter and thereby creating an incestuous relationship between the two women as well (Héritier 1999). Héritier argues that this type of incest was capable of rousing extremes of horror, pointing out that in some societies it called for the most severe punishments (the Old Testament mandated burning alive for all three participants in such a relationship: *Leviticus* 18.17 and 20.14).

48 It is worth pointing out that Polybios is actually criticizing Ptolemy IV's non-incestuous affairs with mistresses; his incestuous marriage to his full sister Arsinoë III was considered legitimate.

49 *Cf.* Shakespeare *Antony and Cleopatra* 1990:2.2, 201-228, which is based very closely on the Plutarch passage. The majestic arrival of Kleopatra at Tarsos actually pales into insignificance when compared with the spectacular processional pageant put on by her ancestor Ptolemy II sometime in the 270s BCE (for which see Athenaios 1951:196a-203b).

50 The horn of plenty (cornucopia) was the symbol of Ptolemaic queens in coinage and sculpture (Heinen 1978; Thompson 1973).

51 For the Roman embassy to Alexandria, see Diodoros 1933:33.28b, 1-3; Plutarch *Moralia* 1927:200f-201a; Justin 1994:38.8; Athenaios 1951:549e. On Ptolemy VIII trying to make a *positive* display of tryphē to the Romans, see Heinen 1983.

52 Hill Gates (citing Clifford Geertz) refers to the "'theater state' tactics" of certain polities: "flashy monumentalism, spectacular public ritual ... and the lavishly detailed apotheosis of rulers. This repertory of cultural flamboyance accords well with the shock value of royal incest" (2005:153). Gates refers in general to polities smaller and less developed than ancient Egypt (and indeed seems not to appreciate the distinction between Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt), but her point about rule by "cultural flamboyance" at a time

when the rulers have not fully consolidated their position may have some relevance to the early Ptolemaic dynasty under Ptolemy II.

53 In the Orphic tradition, Dionysos is the offspring of Zeus and Zeus' daughter Persephone; torn apart and devoured by the evil Titan gods, his heart was rescued by Zeus, who sewed it into his thigh, where Dionysos was regenerated and ultimately reborn.

54 See Rudhardt 1982; Persephone and Adonis (whose cult was particularly fostered by Arsinoë II) are also identified as liminal deities who are born of incest and who have special power over death. Reed (2000) notes the especially strong link the Ptolemies made between Adonis (previously unassociated with Egypt) and Osiris.

55 See also Pomeroy 1984:36, Hauben 1989, and Hazzard 2000:67 for other expressions of puzzlement or for interpretations of Ptolemaic behaviour based on the a priori assumption that Ptolemy would have wanted to downplay the incest.

56 The incest prohibition in Europe and North America has oscillated over time. In the medieval period, the prohibited degrees of kinship were vast: "At their most draconian, ... these prohibitions banned sexual intercourse between all relatives connected by consanguinity or affinity to the seventh degree, and between persons linked by compaternity (spiritual affinity) to the fourth degree" (Archibald 2001:11). In the modern Western world, the (fluctuating) boundary tends to lie along the line of first-cousin marriage (see Bratt 1984).

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"Bisexuality" and the Politics of Normal in African Ethnography

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to explore the contemporary implications of the dismissal of "bisexuality" in the ethnography of sub-Saharan Africa. It problematizes the ways in which same-sex sexuality was represented in African ethnography, showing how colonial-era anthropologists tended to suppress, minimize or exoticize evidence of such practices in conformity with colonial ideologies, practices and prevailing debates around gender and sexuality in Europe and America. In the light of critiques launched by feminist, postcolonial and queer theorists against such anthropological representations, this paper demonstrates that the continual denial of "bisexuality" in Africa in the colonial era has become unsustainable.

Keywords: bisexuality, colonialism, Africa, queer theory

Résumé : Le but de cet article est d'explorer les conséquences contemporaines du rejet de la «bisexualité» dans les œuvres ethnographiques d'Afrique sub-saharienne. Il pose le problème de la façon dont la sexualité entre personnes de même sexe a été représentée dans l'ethnographie africaine, démontrant la tendance des anthropologues de l'ère coloniale à supprimer, minimiser ou tropicaliser les évidences de telles pratiques en conformité avec les idéologies, les pratiques et les principaux débats de l'époque coloniale sur les différences entre les sexes et la sexualité en Europe et en Amérique. Étant donné les critiques émanant des théories féministes, post-coloniales et allosexuelles contre ces représentations anthropologiques, le présent article démontre que le rejet continuel de l'existence de la bisexualité en Afrique durant la période coloniale est devenu une position intenable.

Mots-Clés : bisexualité, colonialisme, Afrique, théorie allosexuelle

Anthropologists have played a central role in documenting the diversity of human sexuality as it is understood and expressed in different cultures around the world. Scholars in many other disciplines, including my own of history, are often heavily dependent upon their research. However, as Lyons and Lyons (2004) among others have persuasively demonstrated, anthropologists at times "conscripted" select evidence and even fabricated "facts" about the people they studied in order to advance ideals and preferences around sexuality in their own societies. By conjuring idealized or exoticized Others, they helped to create an understanding of "normal" and "modern" by way of contrast. This has resulted in a body of purportedly empirical or scientific data that in retrospect we can see as deeply flawed, morally normative, and sometimes actually complicit in the construction and maintenance of racist colonialist structures. Indeed, to one African critic, the ethnography of African cultures generated by European and American scholars from the 1920s to the 1950s was so "useless" in empirical terms that it is only useful today to the extent that it sheds light on how those colonial structures could function (Owusu 1978).[1]

Owusu was much too harsh in such a sweeping judgment. In at least one specific area, however, the critique is warranted to a significant degree. This is the commonplace assumption or assertion as an unqualified fact that Africans south of the Sahara either did not practice same-sex sexuality in their traditional societies, or that they only did so so rarely that it was inconsequential. From the vast generalizations of late 18th- and 19th-century travellers, to colonial-era codifications of custom, to modern studies of sexually transmitted diseases, sexuality, prisons and masculinities, social science research has tended to portray Africans as virtually unique in the world in this respect. Same-sex issues meanwhile remain largely invisible in much of the resources available to HIV/AIDS educators in Africa, including what are otherwise frank

discussions about sexual health and sexual cultures. The non-existence or irrelevance of homosexual transmission among black Africans is apparently such a given that it typically does not even warrant a footnote or a web-link in this material.[2]

And yet, since Dynes (1983) and Aina (1991) first flagged hidden homosexuality and bisexuality in Africa as potentially important research questions, a growing body of research, activism, and art have comprehensively demonstrated the falseness of the "fact" of Africans' exclusive heterosexuality. Moodie (1994), Harries (1994), Gevisser and Cameron (1994), Murray and Roscoe (1998), Kendall (1999), Lockhart (2002), Njinje and Alberton (2002), Epprecht (2004), GALZ (2002), Epprecht and Goddard (In press) and Morgan and Wieringa (2005), for example, thoroughly document the presence of diverse expressions of same-sex sexuality in Africa—in traditional societies, in colonial institutions and in present-day settings. A growing, pan-African network of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) associations also attests to diverse, indigenous, same-sex and bisexual cultures and practices in Africa.[3] A range of images written or produced by Africans in fiction, theatre and film further destabilizes the stereotype of the "pure" African heterosexual.[4]

These sources on the whole do not propose a timeless, archetypal African gay or lesbian in opposition to that older stereotype. Rather, the women and men who have same-sex sexual relations most often also continue to marry, to have children, and to engage in heterosexual relationships. Whether this should properly be termed "bisexual" is a matter of debate. However, whether men who sometimes have sex with men but do not identify as homo- or bisexual (MSM), and whether women who sometimes have sex with women but do not identify as lesbian or bisexual (WSW) exist in Africa in greater numbers that commonly assumed or asserted cannot in good scholarship be disputed. That it *does* continue to be disputed is a cause for far greater concern than academic quibbling over numbers. Indeed, scholars, activists, and community leaders who deny the existence of MSM and WSW in Africa, who rationalize it as imported or recent, or who simply disregard the evidence, may be fuelling unhelpful or even dangerous homophobic and xenophobic rhetoric. Such rhetoric stigmatizes already vulnerable groups and self-evidently impedes HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention campaigns. The government of Uganda offered an especially disturbing case of this in November 2004 when it threatened to bar international donors from the country if they provided safer-sex education that might be useful to homosexuals (Seesholtz 2005).

Clearly, many factors contribute to the tenacity of the no same-sex sexuality in Africa argument. The ethnography, however, is unquestionably foundational in that it provides a scientific-sounding canon that gives authority to contemporary claims about what is normal and traditional, and what is deviant, non-existent or modern. But how trustworthy is that canon? Murray and Roscoe (1998) pointed to key discrepancies in the documentary record dating as far back as the 18th century. But what remains to be done is to show how and why the silences that helped to define an essentially heterosexual African-ness were first achieved and then changed over time. Those changes offer insight into the complex relationship between colonial rulers and subjects, and can help us to understand why some Africans today still remain attracted to and defensive of colonial notions of normal. Awareness of this history could also move us toward more pointed research about sexuality in the present that could, in turn, improve our ability to design more effective interventions against HIV/AIDS. A queer analysis of African ethnography could also sharpen the postcolonial critique of anthropology more generally by alerting us to hitherto unsuspected essentialist, "Westocentric" terms and concepts that remain embedded in our research tools.[5]

Early Accounts of Gender and Sexuality

The first accounts of gender and sexuality in Africa by European travellers tended to stress what they perceived as African women's subservience and easy sexual availability to men, Africans' seeming lack of sexual modesty and guilt, the practice of polygyny and the emphasis on fertility in African cultures. These were typically exaggerated and sensationalized, but on the whole captured a basic truth: African societies traditionally placed an extremely high and prodigiously overdetermined value on heterosexual marriage and reproduction. Individual sexual desire was largely subsumed to the broad interests of the extended family or lineage or enabled in ways that did not endanger those interests (reputation, political alliance, material production, spiritual health and more). Hence, for example, the highly-valued chastity of unmarried girls in many southern and eastern African societies was preserved while at the same time allowing a limited outlet for adolescent sexual curiosity and desire through the custom of non-penetrative (between-the-thighs) sex play. Hence also a wide range of fictive kinship relationships that ensured family and lineage stability while allowing for such idiosyncrasies of individual sexual behaviour as adultery, impotence and celibacy.[6]

Same-sex exceptions to heterosexual norms were also noted from as early as the 16th century. These were usu-

ally couched in vague but strongly disparaging language. Sir Richard Burton's grand overview of world sexuality, for example, notes a Portuguese document from 1558 that observed "unnatural damnation" (a euphemism for male-male sex) to be esteemed among the Kongo (Burton 1885:246-247). Andrew Battell, who lived among the Imbangala in the 1590s, was similarly disapproving: "They are beastly in their living, for they have men in women's apparel, whom they keepe among their wives" (Purchas 1905 vol. VI:376). Jean Baptiste Labat, cribbing from an Italian explorer in the same region of Angola, also described a caste of cross-dressing male diviners whose leader was "a shameless, impudent, lewd man...deceitful to the last, without honor. He dresses ordinarily as a woman and makes an honor of being called the Grandmother" (Labat 1998:163). Images of African polymorphous perversity and flexible gender systems along these lines then found their way into European middlebrow culture in the 18th century, notably in the ostensibly realistic novels by Castilhon (1993) and Sade (1990).

We need to be extremely cautious about taking these early accounts at face value. Moreover, little was said in them about the erotic content of same-sex relationships. Jumping ahead in time, however, the queer research noted above has established that these passing condemnatory references contained a fundamental truth. Same-sex relationships existed in African societies with a wide variety of motives, practices and emotions involved, including affection and fertility control. We have also learned that there was often a ritual or symbolic significance to, for example, anal penetration by one man of another. As was the case with incest, breaking a normally strong taboo could bring the taboo-breaker into direct contact with powerful ancestral or other spirits. To perform anal intercourse with a male under proper conditions could thus bring good crops or hunting, protection from evil spirits, and greater virility in marriage. According to Günter Tessman (1998:156), adult, married Pangwe men in the German colony of Kameroon understood mutual acts of sodomy not as an act of pleasure but as "wealth medicine." From elsewhere in Africa come whispers of chiefs who fortified their authority against political rivals, warriors who prepared for battle, boxers who steeled for their matches, and mine-workers who sought protection from rockfalls or achieved a promotion and raise, by resorting to such medicine. The power of the medicine stemmed in part from the secrecy of the act. New research by lesbian anthropologists suggests that there were also unspoken erotic relationships between African women within the rubric of spirit mediumship or divination. This was in addition to same-sex sexual play, experimentation, "accidents" and love affairs.[7]

Between the early, obscure and scandalized allusions, on the one hand, and contemporary queer scholarship on the other, something happened. With rare exceptions, a more or less collective silence descended on the topic. That silence creates an impression of radical discontinuity between the present and near-past, an apparent discontinuity that in turn is sometimes cited as proof that same-sex sexuality did not exist in Africa until introduced by whites in the colonial or even more recent periods. A close examination of the silence as it is affirmed in authoritative texts, however, suggests that the major discontinuity was not in Africa at all, but in Europe and America, whence came the authors of those texts. As a first step toward understanding the yawning gap in African ethnography on this issue, therefore, we need to consider factors in Europe and America that may have affected the way that anthropologists and other social scientists saw, interpreted, and wrote up their African evidence.

Michel Foucault (1978) provides the starting point. He first argued that the industrial and scientific revolutions of the late 18th and 19th centuries brought about a profound transformation in ideas about the nature of sexuality and the propriety of certain gender roles and identities. This change occurred as a result both of new scientific knowledge and changing class structures. As many scholars have since richly detailed with specific reference to Europeans' and Americans' relations with non-Western societies in this period, the rising class of bourgeoisie in the industrializing countries promoted ideas that served their material interests. This included the notion that broad types of people were by their very nature not only different but less suited to govern and to enjoy the economic and social privileges that the bourgeoisie were claiming for themselves. These racial and sexual Others also provided negative standards against which new social norms and ideals among the bourgeoisie could be affirmed, notably, black or native as opposed to and inferior to white, and female as opposed to and inferior to male.

One critical new standard in the emerging ideology was unwavering heterosexual desire and self-control over all other sexual feeling or expression. Same-sex sexual relations had long been taboo—indeed, punishable by death—in Western European society. In the pre-industrial era, however, such relations were understood as discrete acts of sin that could be atoned for or purged through prayer or mortification. In the emerging ideology, by contrast, sin gave way to the notion of homosexual character in whom the discrete act implied a whole range of deep personality flaws. An array of scientific-sounding arguments consolidated that character into a figure to be despised, shunned and repressed (ideally, self-repressed)

out of existence. Scientific homophobia in turn helped to consolidate a sex–gender system that emphasized virile masculinity and domestic femininity. This reified dichotomy of gender roles and identities was then harnessed to the causes of bourgeois class formation, more efficient exploitation of a disciplined industrial labour force, and nation or empire building.[8]

This emerging consensus about sexuality held that homosexuality was anomalous to nature, but that it flourished or was contagious under certain conditions. Above all, the more decadent or lax the civilization, the more widespread was the character and cultural flaw. The late stages of ancient Rome and the Arab or Turkish empires were often cited as both proof of this and as a harsh lesson: decadence leads to widespread homosexuality, effeminacy and pacifism among men which result in military defeat and humiliation by more virile societies. This understanding of history implied that homosexuality could (indeed, should) be contained or eliminated through rigorous moral instruction, strict parenting and state intervention.

Black Africans figured significantly in the debates about nature and civilization, virile versus decadent. Few Europeans by this time had travelled in Africa south of the Sahara and little reliable was known about black African societies. The prevailing prejudice, however, was that black Africans were generally uncivilized and close to nature. By definition this meant that they could not be decadent or exhibit social traits and behaviours assumed to come with civilization. The emerging consensus on homosexuality thus required that Africans conform to the expectation of a supposedly natural lack of sexual diversity (or rather, perversity, deviance, and corruption in the parlance of the time). Edward Gibbon was the first to put this forth, albeit only as wishful thinking in a passing reference explaining factors in the decline and fall of the Roman empire (1925:506). But soon after him, someone who had actually travelled in Africa brought the first authoritative seal of personal experience to the theory. The English explorer William Browne spent several years wandering about the Middle East and North Africa in the 1790s. In his account of those travels he simply noted that "paederasty" was rare in primitive Sudan as compared to decadent western Asia (Browne 1806:293).

The idea that Africans did not engage in same-sex sexual practices gained currency as the frontiers of European rule expanded into the interior. Christian missionaries at the forefront of that expansion had their hands full challenging the formidable array of what they regarded as heterosexual immoralities in African societies (polygyny, child-betrothals, marriage by cattle, female genital mutilation and so on). Railing and reasoning against these visible practices, they had little interest in further stirring the pot of cultural conflict with too-close enquiry into more secretive ones. Indeed, the absence of overt homosexual relationships was sometimes the one straw of hope to clutch at to maintain their faith that an otherwise dispiriting struggle against "savage" lustiness could be won. There was also the concern of upsetting the sensitivities of readers back home. Eschewing details altogether, using deeply euphemistic language (like "nameless vice"), or reverting to Greek and Latin to describe the offensive behaviours are thus the mainstay of missionary and other early travellers' and ethnographers' accounts.[9]

Efforts by colonial regimes to codify African customary law around gender and sexuality similarly showed scant interest in querying exceptions to Africans' heterosexual norms and ideals. Far from complicating the rhetoric of the civilizing mission, they typically prompted African informants to confirm the prevailing African-as-savage (close to nature, heterosexual) interpretation. The case of Basutoland is instructive. Soon after it became a protectorate of the Cape Colony, a commission of enquiry was set up to find out what Sesotho custom said. Interviewing elderly Basotho men through an interpreter, the commissioners raised the issue of "unnatural crime" with two witnesses only. These two senior chiefs calmly assured the commissioners that such crime did not exist, which was duly accepted as fact (Cape Colony 1873). In other cases where even that much direct testimony was not available or solicited, colonial magistrates simply applied their own logic and presumptions to fill in the gap. Why, for example, would African men and boys turn to each other for sexual release when African women and girls were so easily available for their enjoyment, including by thigh sex? By this reasoning, since there was no apparent need or function for same sex sexuality in African societies, it should not exist.

Exceptions to this narrative arose from those rare cases where male-male sexual behaviour was so overt that it could not be blithely rationalized out of existence. In those cases, it tended to be construed as a consequence of Africans' contact with decadent outsiders, Arabs above all, whose sordid reputation in Orientalist discourse was firmly entrenched. The most infamous instance was that of Mwanga, the *kabaka* (king) of the Baganda people from 1884-99. Mwanga was said to have been corrupted toward bisexuality by his Muslim advisors at court, a moral danger that culminated in the sexual abuse and martyrdom of young Christian converts (Ashe 1970:218; Faupel 1965:82). Cureau, meanwhile, accounted for more mundane occurrences of "homosexualism" in French territo-

ries by pointing to "Semites" coming from the east and disreputable Europeans from the West (1915:166). Ibrahim Fawzi, an Egyptian soldier and administrator under British generals Gordon and Kitchener in the Sudan, portrayed sodomy as symbolic of the moral decay of Egypt's Turco-Circassian rulers. The Mahdist revolt emerges from this trope as a legitimate, purifying, African response to foreign immorality (Jacob 2005:159). The unpublished commissions of enquiry into "unnatural vice" among mine workers in the Johannesburg area in 1906 and 1907 added Chinese and Portuguese to the list of corrupting elements (Epprecht 2004).

This is not to say that claims of exotic influences on African societies were unalloyed Orientalist fabrications. On the contrary, the fact that Arabic or Persian words for homoerotic relationships are widespread in Islamic parts of Africa suggests at least a modicum of truth in the claim of cultural influence on this issue.[10] That the theory of an exotic origin of same-sex sexuality became generalized to the whole of Africa, however, was definitely not the result of careful research by missionaries or anyone else. The most authoritative statement of that theory in fact came from a man with only limited experience in Dahomey and on the Swahili coast but with almost unlimited, explicit contempt for blacks—Sir Richard Burton.[11] Burton's terminal essay to his translation of the Arabian Nights is a grand mustering of prevailing conceits and snippets of evidence into a global theory of sexual "perversion." It does not specifically refer much to Africa at all beyond declaring that the so-called Negro parts of the continent lay on the outside of what Burton called the Sotadic zone of the world. This fantastical climatic and cultural zone comprised those places where same-sex sexuality was supposedly tolerated if not widely practiced or celebrated. Being outside the zone meant that most of Africa was lumped together with northern Europe as an area where same-sex sexuality was supposedly rare and disapproved. Unlike northern Europe, however, Africa's assumed low level of cultural sophistication placed its inhabitants at heightened risk of contagion by Sotadic zone enthusiasts.

Absurd as this may seem today, Burton's thesis proved popular and enduring. In retrospect this was clearly not so much because of its empirical accuracy but because of how the thesis flattered his main audience—imperial-minded, bourgeois, and self-consciously virile Englishmen. The notion that sexually innocent, non-Sotadic Africans were at risk of contagion or corruption by Portuguese and Arabs also served their paternalistic vision of colonial and missionary interventions to protect Africa from those people. Indeed, so obvious and common-sensical had that threat to Africans from morally corrupt outsiders become by the 1930s that colonial officials in some cases expressed amazement and disbelief when confronted with evidence to the contrary.[12]

Yet even as this narrative of primitive, natural, and at-risk heterosexuality was being constructed, a small number of anthropologists and other researchers who looked closely were finding evidence to contradict it. Men such as J. Weeks, Ferdinand Karsch-Haack, Kurt Falk, Günter Tessman, M. Haberlandt, Louis Tauxier, Adolphe Cureau and R.P.G. Hulstaert all reported forms of same-sex sexuality in traditional settings in their wanderings in Africa in the late 19th and early 20th century, including, as noted above, male-male anal penetration for "wealth medicine." In most cases this was simply presented in passing as dry, descriptive fact or scientific curiosity. It is likely, however, that some of these men were wrestling with confusion about their own personal sexuality and their accounts may have been self-interested or self-justifying. Tessman, for example, was known to be "attracted to men, more particularly African men whom he encountered during his ethnographic expedition in Cameroon" (Bleys 1995:219).[13] In other cases, the authors deployed their African evidence to score points about broad issues then being hotly debated back in Europe. African evidence was particularly useful to those who wished to do battle against moralistic and xenophobic models of homosexual corruption in European society. Ferdinand Karsch-Haack, notably, drew upon his findings among hunter-gatherers in Angola and Namibia to argue that they proved homoeroticism was not a condition of decadent civilization but an innate phenomenon to all of humankind: "We should finally give up the fiction that Sodom and Gomorrah are only in Europe and that everywhere else holy customs reign...the most unnatural vices, which we regard as the most recent ways of stimulation of an over civilized culture are practised there in the light of day, in the open, as common practice" (Wierenga 2001:13).[14] Tessman also used his evidence from Cameroon to suggest lessons for contemporary European audiences: "Punishment through temporal justice exists among no tribe, since no one feels harmed by homosexual relations" (Murray and Roscoe 1998:156). At a time of an emerging cult of militarist and extremely homophobic masculinity that eventually became Nazism, this was a fairly brave political point to make.

Karsch-Haack's and others' seeming proof of inborn homosexuality did not attract much attention among Africanists at the time. One reason is that the same-sex practices they described clearly did not impinge upon the dominant heteronormative ideals and kinship concerns. That is, while African men might take boys or other men

as lovers, and while African women might enjoy sensual relationships with other women or girls, they did not see this as inimical to or exclusive of normal, highly valued marriage and reproduction. The men and women who took partners of the same sex in fact were often adolescents or young adults self-consciously practising for marital roles. In other cases they were properly married and reproductive adults who nonetheless took same-sex lovers for various reasons, including ritual protection of men's masculine dignity against "pollution" by women. Tauxier (1912:569-570), for example, described how particularly beautiful young boys were groomed as *soronés* (pages) for the Mossi chiefs and other court dignitaries. Dressed as girls, they played the role of passive sex object on Fridays, only, when elites were proscribed from touching the female flesh that they enjoyed for the rest of the week. Martin (1913) and Seligman and Seligman (1932) also mentioned age-differentiated homosexual relations among warriors in the powerful military state of Azande. Those warriors were often simultaneously the heads of large polygynous households. Nadel, who was quite open about his belief that anthropology should serve to make colonial governance more efficient even noted a bisexual polygynous marriage among the Nuba (male husband, female wife and male wife) and other "perverts" who subsequently graduated without stigma to normal marriage (1947:109, 285). As for the relatively widespread practice of woman-woman marriage, only a single speculative exception from Dahomey allowed for the possibility of an erotic element (Herskovits 1967:340). Elsewhere, functionalist explanations of the practice prevailed, mainly how it provided heirs for widows and maintained the stability of the lineage against potential claims by biological fathers.

According to the prevailing taxonomy of perversion, all of this meant that no "real homosexuality" was involved. There was thus no need to investigate any further what amounted to a colourful but basically irrelevant native foible. Indeed, the one man who did substantively investigate during his fieldwork in the 1930s self-censored his findings for nearly four decades (Evans-Pritchard 1970, 1971—to be discussed below). Isolated references to same-sex phenomena or transvestism within authors' "tribes" were further isolated by the fact that the authors virtually never referred to or compared their findings with descriptions of analogous occurrences in other studies.

"Civilized" Vice and Colonial Insecurities

Complicating matters for anthropologists in this era was that Africans did not stay still. They moved from traditional to modern, and from raw to semi-civilized in the parlance of the day. One manifestation of this flux was in new forms of same-sex sexuality among Africans that began to appear, and to be talked about on the margins of public debate, in the late 1890s and early 1900's.[15] These included a male-male sexual relationship associated with industrialization and large-scale male migrant labour among Africans (so-called mine marriages or *inkotshane* in the case of southern Africa), military service (most notoriously in the "Bat d'Af" of French North and West Africa), and prison or criminal gang homosexuality (such as the so-called Ninevite system in the South African case). In the first, men took younger men or boys as servants and "wives" for the duration of their employment contracts. As Moodie (1988, 1994) and Harries (1990, 1994) explain, these temporary male-male marriages often served (and in fact were often self-consciously intended by the men themselves) to strengthen traditional marriage with women back in the rural areas. Boy wives allowed the men to avoid costly and potentially unhealthy relationships with female prostitutes in town (although mine husbands sometimes still went for those as well). Homosexual gangs and prison relationships were also usually construed as short-term expediency or a symbolic assertion of masculine power and identity in a context that otherwise sought to crush African men's sense of dignity. The South African government, at least, was alert to an extremely disturbing political element (anti-white, anti-colonial) in the homosexuality within these gangs (see South Africa 1913:236).

Publicity about such developments was potentially devastating to the mine companies and colonial governments alike. What kind of civilizing mission was it that abetted "unnatural" and "odious" behaviours in the very people it was supposedly protecting? Various governments and companies consequently took steps to contain the damage in public relations terms by, for example, distracting attention with noisy, repeated public campaigns against female prostitutes. After an initial flurry of missionary indignation about mine wives, even their public remonstrances fell silent in lieu of quieter propaganda from the pulpit and mission station.[16]

Anthropologists, by and large, tacitly supported those efforts to suppress or contain the scandal. For example, to allay public fears that the practice of mine marriage was spreading among African labourers, the government of South Africa through the 1920s and 1930s disingenuously maintained that it was basically confined to Shangaan or VaThonga men from Mozambique. Supporting this view was the massive ethnology of South African tribes built around the photography of Albert

Duggan-Cronin in the 1930s. Henri-Phillipe Junod, the son of the very missionary who had led the campaign against mine marriage in the early 1900s, provides the only mention of "unnatural vice" in the entire multi-volume collection in his chapter on the VaThonga (Junod 1935). This was long after it was privately well-known that many other ethnic groups were implicated and indeed that a common vocabulary around male-male sex had developed over a whole vast region as far away as Malawi.

Another illuminating example of this marginalizing or trivializing discourse comes in an article by Percival Kirby entitled "A Secret Musical Instrument" (1942). Behind its anodyne title, a mystery of Africa's strange ways is unfolded and solved for the reader. A percussion instrument, not seen by a European since 1694, turns up at an exhibition in Windhoek. The intrepid anthropologist goes far into the bush in search of its meaning. The "tribesmen" there are surprised and amazed to see the instrument, but refuse to say more until the white women in the visiting party are withdrawn. A player is sent for but vigorous debate ensues. Who, really, could join in the song? Was it for men, women, or hermaphrodites? Kirby names his two main informants, both European. Finally, on page four, the penultimate page of the article, the answer to the mystery is revealed: doctor and "sodomite" can play the *ekola*. They use the instrument and accompanying song to assist men so-inclined to come out from their masculine gender role to a feminine one (apparently a permanent but only mildly stigmatising condition). Conclusion: "It would appear that in the ekola we have an example of a ritual musical instrument of considerable antiquity, the true nature of which has hitherto remained unexplained, and the use of which has, in spite of the march of civilization, lingered on to the present time" (Kirby 1942:350).

Perhaps surprisingly, even the dubious genre of "sexology" that emerged in the middle colonial period also notably understated or denied the possibility of same-sex sexuality in Africa. Authors such as Bryk (1964), Jacobus X (1937) and Rachewiltz (1964), do not deserve respect for their methodology (mostly gossip and hearsay), apparent intention (to cater to a voyeuristic readership who preferred their pornography in a reputable disguise) or tone (often frankly racist and homophobic). Nonetheless, they did catalogue a range of sexual behaviours (and indigenous African terms for them) that took place within the rubric of normal village life. By not including plausible evidence about same-sex sexuality, however, they contributed to erasing the issue from the realm of discussion. Rachewiltz (1964:280), for instance, in a single chapter devoted to "sexual deviations" gives a single example of homosexuality that is not lifted from Bryk and Jacobus. This refers to an oasis in Egypt. Bryk is even more definitive when he simply pronounces that "The abnormal in sexual life is despised in Africa" (1964:230).

How to explain this reticence to investigate or even to titillate? Part of it undoubtedly stemmed from Africans' own denial, taboo, reticence, euphemism, and "doublethink" on the topic. Monica Wilson, for example, who appended two short oral interviews about male homosexuality among the Nyakyusa, makes clear that her informants were breaking a profound code of secrecy by sharing their knowledge of these matters with her (Wilson 1951:196-197). Brian MacDermot also gives a hint of his frustration in this respect when he saw a Nuer man dressed in women's clothes (and whom he later learned was addressed as a woman and who was married to another man). This was "so totally against what the Nuer had been telling me, that I questioned Doerdering [his translator] carefully, but this failed to produce any further explanation. Perhaps this goes to show how easily the people will accept the ruling of a prophet, or again *how easily their own rules can be changed should the gods be willing*" (MacDermot 1972:119-120, my emphasis). T.O. Beidelman, who mentions in a footnote that "a few men enjoyed homosexual relations" without detriment to their marriages, remarks that it took him six years of living among the Kaguru before his informants entrusted him with this information (1993:273, ftn 16).

The fact that MacDermot, like his colleagues in this period, did not pursue the investigation any further also likely reflects an underlying discomfort or disgust with the topic. To Hulstaert (1938:95) homosexuality was nothing less than "malice." For others, however, it may have been close social ties with colonial officials and missionaries, and the desire to spare them embarrassment, which led to self-censorship. The sex itself was not necessarily the issue but rather, the other behaviours that often attended the sexual relationship, at least in those places where same-sex sexuality was most visible (mines, prisons, streets, courts). Violence, abuse of power over children, extortion, alcohol abuse and prostitution were relatively common in those situations, reflecting badly both on the colonial system and the men involved.

Culturally Westernized African elites with whom the anthropologists often worked closely and depended upon for translation and networking, likely added to the effect. Striving to appear respectable according to colonial standards, this most articulate group of Africans reinforced the starting assumption that African dignity depended on the suppression of certain secrets deemed disreputable. Indeed, white settlers and colonial officials often used

crudely racist language to demean African integrity and to emasculate or effeminize African men. Anthropologists who felt empathy with "their" tribes may have been loath to impugn their subjects with too close an enquiry into disapproved behaviours or implicitly compromised masculinity. The very first African trained as an anthropologist at the London School of Economics underscored this point by, first, mocking "professional friends of Africa" who might presume to contradict or qualify an authentic African interpretation of African tradition and, second, categorically denying the existence of same-sex sexuality in traditional Gikuyu society (Kenyatta 1961 [1938]:xviii, 162). Ironically, Kenyatta supports the latter claim with that old colonial argument that homosexuality was "unnecessary" since the opportunity for heterosexual sexual play was so readily available.

Lyons and Lyons (2004) point to yet a further factor. In their overview of the history of sexuality studies in anthropology worldwide, they argue that the middle-to-late colonial period witnessed a generalized retreat from sexuality topics as anthropology sought to carve out a niche for itself as a "respectable" discipline within academe. In most cases this retreat was likely unconscious as the dominant culture identified Politics, War, Economics, Kinship and so forth, as legitimate areas of scholarly investigation. In others, the retreat was made under direct pressure from institutions that disapproved of what they considered salacious or marginal topics. Homophobia and biphobia were especially intense in the context of Cold War tensions in the 1950s and 1960s. To publish something that showed too much interest in same-sex sexuality, or that did not cast it in a poor light, was a risky career move for professional scholars, particularly in the United States.

All in all, as David Coplan frankly admitted when finally breaking an eighty or more year silence on male-male sexual relationships among Basotho mineworkers, "some of our colleagues would rather this aspect of migrant life be left unexamined" (1994:137).

Gays Rights and Queer Anthropology

Times began to change quite rapidly in the 1960s, including steps to decriminalize and destigmatize homosexuality in law, psychiatry and popular culture in the West. Destigmatization then afforded the topic growing legitimacy as a research question across a range of social sciences. This produced some unexpected findings when the issue was raised in Africa. Tanner (1969:302), for example, was the first scholar to consider male-male sex in an African prison. Although he continued to characterize homosexuality as essentially Other to presumably Real Africa (that is, largely confined to Arab and Somali prisoners), his remarks about local Ugandan participants actually contradict that old stereotype. Another striking piece of research from this time came from revolutionary Guinée, where French psychologist Pierre Hanry carried out the first self-consciously scientific study of same-sex practices among African youth. No less than 17% of his high school boy informants admitted to having participated in homosexual relations, not for money or because of rape, but for experience and, presumably, for fun (Hanry 1970:86). This and other findings pertaining to young men's and women's sexuality were so far out of line with prevailing stereotypes that they led Hanry to recommend radical changes to the sex education curriculum.

Political decolonisation in this period removed one of the stumbling blocks to such enquiry. It also opened the door to trenchant self-reflection about the relationship between anthropology and colonial rule. A growing number of anthropologists revisited data they had previously ignored or suppressed. Evans-Pritchard's observations and explanations of "sexual inversion" among men and women in Azande are perhaps the best known such case, published just before his death (1970, 1971). The year after Angola achieved its independence, Carlos Estermann broke over two centuries of silence about *kimbandas* (also known as *chibados*) among the Kwanyama. Estermann, drawing on his observations as a Catholic priest in Angola the 1920s-40s, matter-of-factly described both these cross-dressing men ("passive homosexuals" who formally married) and "lesbians" who pointedly did not claim spirit possession to explain their sexuality (Estermann 1976:196-197).

Two articles by John Blacking (1959, 1978) also neatly illustrate the shift to re-evaluate earlier research. In both of these articles, Blacking describes and analyses a fictive marital relationship between Venda girls that he uncovered at high schools in 1950s South Africa. In both articles, the lesbian-like content of the relationships under study is thoroughly concealed by innocuous titles. In the first, however, Blacking explicitly denies that the relationship involved sex play or was "actively homosexual," despite noting that the girls "may sleep together under the same blanket as 'husband' and 'wife'" (1959:157). In the later article, by contrast, he concedes that the girls "enjoyed intimate physical contact" extending to kissing, petting and the use of home-fashioned dildoes with each other (1978:109). Did the girls' actual behaviour change in the intervening years or was Blacking simply being more forthright? Gay (1985), who found a similar, well-established type of relationship among Basotho girls in the 1970s, suggests the latter.

Where the transfer of political power from whites to blacks was stalled, as in apartheid South Africa and in the self-declared Republic of Rhodesia, new research broached homosexuality in part as a strategy to sharpen the critique of colonialism and capitalism. Charles van Onselen, notably, in a seminal study of African migrant labour in colonial Rhodesia, argued that male-male sexuality and bestiality in the mine compounds had been tacitly condoned and exploited by the mine companies from as early as the 1910s and 1920s (van Onselen 1976:174-175, 307). South African church leaders also began openly debating how to deal with mine marriage as early as 1970, a phenomenon that they largely blamed on the apartheid regime (Berglund 1970).

A quixotic attempt by the South African government to keep with the times ironically may have fuelled the impression that homosexuality among Africans was indeed a new manifestation of apartheid. This was a series of dictionaries that emerged from so-called grand apartheid, the project to consolidate ethnic and linguistic distinctions between Africans in the 1950s and 1960s. Part of that project involved creating dictionaries to render official versions of languages that corresponded to newly designated African homelands or Bantustans. Headed by P.J. Joubert of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, the apartheid linguists ventured into areas previously considered too scandalous to include. Joubert's unusual determination to discover or invent African words for "homosexuality" and "homosexualist" may have reflected a personal, closeted interest in the topic. But whatever the case, the translations he and associates produced were so forced that no native-speaker would easily recognize their meaning: "homosexuality" in Zulu, for example, was rendered as *ukubhebhana kwababulili-bunye* ("two people of one sex being intimate with each other"). Tsonga was even more ridiculous: *ku va ni rinavelo ra rimbewu leri a nga na rona*. Such a clumsy attempt to make something visible using literal translations of European concepts would have discredited the exercise among native-speakers (indeed, when tested on Zulu speakers at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the phrase above first elicited bafflement and then unanimous consensus that ukubhebhana, meaning "intimacy"—was used quite inappropriately). To anyone who was actually paying attention to these minor shenanigans of apartheid ideologues, it would have provided a proof that Europeans were indeed trying to impose homosexuality on Africans.[17]

The most common response to such material was simply to ignore it—the copy of *Érotisme Africain* that I consulted at an important research library still had most of its pages uncut from the publisher 35 years after publication. In other cases, intrusions of historical or sociological evidence about same-sex sexuality prompted an actively defensive reaction by anthropologists determined to uphold the heterosexual reputation of "his" or "her" people. Eileen Krige, for example, whose original research was carried out in the 1940s, published an article in 1974 whose categorical language sought to shut down speculation that there might be a sexual element in the famous woman-woman marriage of the Lovedu rain queen (Krige 1974:34). Van Onselen's history of migrant labour also elicited a defensive response from a leading anthropologist of the Shona people, Michael Gelfand. Although van Onselen had placed the blame for homosexual relationships and bestiality primarily on the European mine-owners and impoverished migrants from Malawi, Gelfand clearly felt compelled to protect "his" people from possible slur. The methodology of his research does not give confidence in his impartiality, particularly bearing in mind that he conducted it during the height of violence in the struggle by black Zimbabweans to overthrow white supremacist rule. Gelfand (white man) first interviewed four Shona chiefs and studied the written transcripts of some of their native court cases. In this way, not too surprisingly, he found homosexuality to be "rare" (Gelfand 1979:202). A subsequent investigation involving interviews with 15 chiefs and a colleague at the university found that "None was able to confirm the existence of either homosexuality or lesbianism" (Gelfand 1985:137).

Gelfand's intervention was almost certainly intended to demonstrate solidarity between white liberals and African elites at a time of intense political and cultural struggle against institutionalised racism. J. Lorand Matory (2005), drawing upon the insights of Michael Herzfeld (1997), has used the term "nationalist allegory" to describe this kind of collusion between foreign anthropologists and local nationalists. He illustrates the concept with cases from Brazil and Nigeria, the latter focusing on the changing ways that the *oricha* cult among the Yoruba has been treated in the literature. There have long been suspicions that homoerotic elements of Brazil's *candomblé* religion originated in Yoruba practitioners of oricha who had been transported across the Atlantic as slaves. In trying to trace this link, Matory came across a respected Yoruba art historian who twice personally witnessed a ritual act of anal penetration by one oricha priest upon another. What is of interest to Matory is not how common the practice was, or whether it had meaning to the men as a sensual or homosexual experience. Rather, the key issue is that a scholarly witness chose not to publish his dramatic observations, self-censoring out of a sense of "cultural intimacy" or the shared desire among nationalist-

minded elites to repress certain facts about national culture that could be construed as embarrassing in light of an imputed homophobic colonial or international gaze.

Postcolonial conditions, including economic distress, politically unrepresentative governments, and a new generation of bossy Westerners, created pressures to corral Africans into a reassuring nationalist allegory of exclusive heterosexuality.[18] Despite this, a new generation of African anthropologists began to produce work that tentatively conceded and tried to explain same-sex sexuality in traditional cultures, especially as it appeared in cases of spirit possession (Bozongwana 1983 and Ngubane 1977, for example). Additionally, small social scenes and informal networks of blacks who self-imagined and identified through the imagery of international gay life or gay liberation had begun to appear in major African cities as early as the 1970s. Drawn into political activism in the 1980s and 1990s by the anti-apartheid movement, by the struggle against HIV and AIDS, and by gathering state- and church-sanctioned homophobia, black Africans began to voice explicit challenges to traditional cultures of discretion (closets). Partisans of such gay rights activism quickly picked up the existing historical and ethnographic evidence as a potential ally to be cultivated and coaxed into service.

The first such interventions tended to be naïve about the history of anthropology and colonialism, to treat the sources uncritically, and to throw to the wind due caution around translation and context. Attempts to plug Africa into a global queer theory on the basis of such patchy evidence were typically not very successful.[19] The early scholarship that took same-sex sexuality seriously nonetheless made significant contributions. Perhaps the biggest was to confound the lingering Victorian-era assumption that same-sex sexuality somehow endangered hegemonic heteropatriarchal gender roles and identities. Judith Gay was among the first to show how wrong that assumption was and, indeed, that the exact opposite applied in her close study of the fictive "mummy-baby" among Basotho girls. Gay (1985) found that the girls shared enough physical intimacy to appear lesbian-like by Western standards of the erotic. But the mummy-baby relationship actually enabled successful and safer heterosexual dating, notably by providing a relatively safe way for the girls to practice new notions of romantic love and sexual foreplay. The girls themselves valued lesbian-like relationships with heterosexual marriage in mind. Gay also showed that these lesbian-like relationships sometimes continued beyond adolescence, where they helped to stabilize heterosexual marriages under severe stress by long-term male absence. Similar seeming contradictions emerged from studies of male-male sexuality, including Donald Donham's analysis of the *ashtime* role (or gender identity) in Maale society of southern Ethiopia. Ashtime (translated as male "transvestites") performed domestic labour and ritual functions in the king's court. One of the latter, apparently, was to enable the king and other men to avoid the supposed pollution of having sex with women just prior to a major religious ceremony. The king, as "the male principle incarnate," had to be protected from even the merest whiff of female sexuality at key moments in the ritual life of the nation. For men to sleep with ashtime at those times was thus, ironically, a means for them to help preserve the symbolic, heterosexually virile masculinity of the head of the nation. In no way was penetrating an ashtime regarded as homosexual, bisexual or unmanly.

Studies conducted by expatriate researchers were inevitably occluded by at least one and often more translations, as well as the heavy cultural and political baggage the different interlocutors brought to the meaning of homosexuality, transvestite, lesbian and so forth. A critical turning point in the history of African sexuality studies therefore came when African gays and lesbians themselves first began to speak directly to academic audiences about their experiences and perspectives. Among the first was Zackie Achmat's (1993) powerfully argued, erotically charged critique of white scholars who suppressed or gave a functionalist spin to evidence of male-male desire among African men in their analyses. Achmat urged a new generation of scholars not to fear homophobic or heterosexist nationalist allegories but boldly to seek evidence of the diversity of sensual desire among Africans as among any other group of people in the world. The remarkable flowering of queer anthropology, among other scholarly and artistic interventions noted at the beginning of this article, has ensued.

The new queer anthropology has thoroughly and dramatically destabilized both the African-as-lusty-heterosexual and the tired categories of heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual. It requires an article or more on its own. For now, however, it serves my argument to draw attention to just one of the more striking testimonies to the diversity of relationships and identities that formerly were subsumed within old silences and categories. McLean and Ngcobo's informants were black, female-identified transgender men in Johannesburg known as *skesanas.* They spoke of *mapantsula* (super macho, gangster types who "accidentally" have sex with the skesanas), *injongas* (men who have sex in the active role with passive-role skesanas yet who claim to be heterosexual, even though in some cases they were formerly skesanas) and *imbubes* (men

who have sex with skesanas and who claim to be heterosexual but secretly enjoy being penetrated. But then, what skesana would agree to take the active role? Implicit in the imbube role were skesanas or perhaps injongas who secretly enjoyed penetrating a male-identified person). A skesana who never graduates to become an injonga may be a "real homosexual," also known as *istabane*. "Chris" explained some of the difficulties: "I am in a relationship with a skesana. His name is Sello. I am an injonga, but my real secret is that I am an imbube" (McLean and Ngcobo 1994:168). As for the sex itself, these highly sexually active young men did not consider mutual masturbation to be sex. Older men and injongas often saw even anal penetration as nothing more than play, joking or an obligation due to them.[20]

Conclusion

South Africa enshrined its present gay-friendly constitution in 1996. Since then, LGBTI activists have won dramatic legal victories and have helped to pioneer a nascent pan-African sexual rights network. These achievements sometimes obscure the fact that even in South Africa, homophobia remains a real threat to out gays and lesbians, often amplified by xenophobia and stigma against people living with HIV or AIDS. Elsewhere in Africa, violently homophobic rhetoric is frequently explicit and backed by state power. The coming out material discussed above is thus courageous on a personal level. The new anthropology, whether it explicitly aligns itself with global queer studies or not, also represents the kind of bold challenges to mainstream scholarship predicted by Kath Weston in her reflections on queer ethnographic research (1998). These would include:

First, establishing beyond reasonable objection that most African societies had normative ways of dealing with sexual difference that were discreetly hidden within the dominant heteropatriarchal norms. Sweeping claims about non-existence or murderous, dogmatic hostility to same-sex sexuality are thus empirically unfounded. Expressions of same-sex sexuality, moreover, changed over time in response to many factors, almost certainly including interventions by Western anthropologists.

Second, the research raises compelling questions on a number of contemporary issues. Are men who sometimes have sex with men but do not admit it and do not consider themselves homosexual or bisexual a more significant vector for HIV than has previously been considered? Do women who have sex with women yet consider themselves straight or normal engage in practices that would more accurately be termed bisexual or lesbian-like? It seems likely.

The new anthropology also causes us to reflect on whether the attitudes and political agendas that obscured MSM and WSW from the view of earlier anthropologists and other researchers had a bigger role in shaping heteronormative gender roles and identities in the majority population than has thus far been investigated. That is, even if homosexual practice is not commonplace, or recognized as such, could homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism and other "invisibilizing" discourses be significant cultural influences on the majority population? If so, interventions aimed at the majority population today (for women's empowerment and for sexual health, notably) cannot afford blithely to ignore insights coming out of queer scholarship and activism.

The fact that the new anthropological studies of same-sex sexuality *do* continue to be largely ignored or downplayed in mainstream literature on sexuality in favour of old, nationalist or even colonial allegories thus becomes an artefact of interest in and of itself. It suggests a conclusion that supports Frederick Cooper's analysis of a highly complex relationship between Africans and their colonizers and of the powerful, ambiguous legacy of colonial-era imagining and re-shaping of normal in African consciousness. The vicissitudes in the visibility and meanings attributed to "bisexuality" and other same-sex sex relationships in Africa suggests an enduring, but clearly quite problematic fascination with those colonial constructions of African-ness.

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Notes

1 Owusu (1978). See also Faris (1973) for a close study of one particularly avid colonialist, S.F. Nadel, whose work is noted below.

2 Alerting us to the dangers of such silencing, see Phillips (2004) and Epprecht and Goddard (In press).

3 See the website *Behind the Mask* (www.mask.org) for activities, aspirations and preferred lexicon of sexual rights activists in Africa.

4 See Brooks and Bocahut (1998), for example, and Tcheuyap (2005) for analysis of key fictional and cinematic representations of African same-sex sexualities.

5 Oyéwùmí (1997). Explorations of global queer theory in developing world contexts include Herdt (1997) and Prieur (1998). The term "queer" remains problematic to many African activists but Amory (1997) makes a good case in its favour. Arnfred (2004) and Reid and Walker (2005) bring specific focus to theorizing Africa sexualities. Rigid dichotomization of straight versus gay with bisexual in the exact middle is articulately challenged with reference to global case studies in Murray (2000), but the problematic

concept of bisexuality is the pre-eminent concern of Storr (1999). See Weston (1998) and Lyons and Lyons (2004) on the history of anthropology's treatment of sexuality questions, and Nnaemeka (2005) for a strong African critique of Western scholars' activism vis-à-vis a similarly controversial issue (female genital cutting). My engagement with colonial studies follows cautions and insights astutely laid out by Cooper (2005). An important aspect of these critiques of Africanist scholarship is in pointing out the dangers of extrapolating arguments from a local study to the whole of Africa. I acknowledge this, and that the bulk of my primary research comes from around southern Africa. However, the parallels in published and secondary literature from elsewhere on the continent, including Egypt and the Maghreb (Inhorn 2005; Jacob 2005; Murray and Roscoe 1997), are so strong on this issue that the broad scale is warranted, at least for this preliminary venture. Finally, I frame the analysis in light of Michael Herzfeld's concept of "cultural intimacy" (1997) whereby diverse groups of people for different reasons come to share and to shape essentialist ideas about national or ethnic identity.

6 A truly vast literature exists that makes these points, including much of the ethnography cited below. Important overviews can be found in Amadiume (1997), Kaplan (1997) and Davison (1997).

7 Njinje and Alberton (2002) and Morgan and Wierenga (2005). For sources on male-male sexuality as medicine, see Estermann (1976), Niehaus (2002), Epprecht (2004) and Matory (2005).

8 See, notably, Bleys (1995) and Stoler (2002).

9 See David and Charles Livingstone (1865:284) for an allusion to self-censorship or deliberate averting of eyes on this issue; and Johnston (1897:395, 408) for an important example of ostensibly scientific observation where the discussion of African boys' "vicious" behaviour veers off into Latin. The missionaries who compiled the first generation of African language dictionaries further consolidated the impression of non-existence of same-sex sexuality, either by not providing translations for words they considered obscene or by imposing literal translations that erased nuance in the indigenous usage.

10 S.F. Nadel, for example, found only Arabic words for rumoured behaviour in the royal harems of Nupe (1942:152). See also Murray and Roscoe (1997) and Amory (1998) on Islamic influence the Swahili coast.

11 See Lyons and Lyons (2004) for a succinct discussion of Burton's work, racism and the context of his times.

12 See Epprecht (2004:91), for example.

13 Bleys cites several German sources. Robert Aldrich (2003) also suggests that repressed homoerotic feelings may have been relatively common among colonial explorers and conquerors.

14 Karsch-Haack (1911:130) translated and cited in Wierenga.

15 See, for example, Cureau (1915), Weeks (1909), and Junod (1911 and 1962 [1916]).

16 See Moodie with Ndatshe (1994) and Harries (1994). Research into private mission archives on this issue remains to be done. But note, for an example, the striking contrast between Junod's early polemics and the silence of his fellow Swiss Protestant missionaries and their Basotho evangelists on the Witwatersrand in the 1930s through the 1950s (Khouthu 1939 and Mabille 1949, notably).

17 P.J. Joubert, K.J. Khuzana, no date *Afrikaans-Engels-Zoeloe* and *Afrikaans-Engels-Tsonga* Johannesburg: SABC. Remarkably, in his crude determination, Joubert somehow managed to miss the fact that Tsonga actually had an indigenous word for "servant" that could also mean "boy- or mine-wife": *bukhontxana,* in common usage for at least five decades (Harries 1994; Junod 1962). Another, even more eccentric source in this respect is Fischer (1985), who lists convoluted translations for homosexuality, homosexualist, lesbian, sodomy, pederasty and pederast, all for the first time ever in Xhosa.

18 See Kashamwa (1973) for a buccolic view of Tutsi sexuality, for example, or Amadiume's (1987) defence of African women's heterosexuality against Western lesbian innuendo.

19 Herdt (1997), for instance, cites but four diverse studies to back his summary of the research on same-sex sexuality in Africa. Among other critics of over-reach in the queer anthropology, see Pincheon (2000).

20 McLean and Ngcobo (1994). See Lockhart (2002) for another anthropological study of the semantics of sex among Tanzanian male prostitutes, relating this to HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

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"The Natural Order of Creation": Naturalizing Discourses in the Christian Same-Sex Marriage Debate

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Abstract: Same-sex marriage is the centre of a vitriolic debate in mainline Christian denominations in the United States. Both those who advocate for same-sex marriage and those who repudiate it employ naturalizing discourses to legitimate their claims. Feminists argue that naturalizing discourses are used to authorize social power. Liberals and evangelicals vie for the power to frame the debate over same-sex marriage. LGBT Christians, on the other hand, both contribute to and resist these discourses; most claim that their sexual orientation is beyond their control, while others evoke a sense of personal agency thereby rejecting the premise of the entire debate.

Keywords: same-sex marriage, Christianity, naturalizing discourses, homosexuality

Résumé : Le mariage entre personnes de même sexe est au centre d'un débat au vitriol au sein des grandes confessions chrétiennes aux États-Unis. Qu'ils soient en faveur du mariage gai ou qu'ils s'y opposent, les participants au débat font usage d'un discours de naturalisation pour légitimer leurs propos. Pour les féministes, les discours de naturalisation servent à autoriser le pouvoir social. Si les mouvements libéraux et évangélistes se disputent le pouvoir de formuler la question sur le mariage gai, les Chrétiens LGBT, pour leur part, contribuent à renforcer ces discours tout en leur opposant une résistance. Ils affirment d'une part que leurs orientations sexuelles sont indépendantes de leur volonté ; de l'autre, ils évoquent leur capacité individuelle d'action, rejetant par le fait même les prémisses qui sous-tendent le débat.

Mots-Clés : mariage entre personnes de même sexe, christianisme, discours de naturalisation, homosexualité.

Same-sex marriage is at the vortex of a vitriolic debate in mainline[1] Christian denominations in the United States. Both those who advocate for same-sex marriage and those who repudiate it employ naturalizing discourses to legitimate their claims. Mainline Christian denominations bring together liberal, evangelical and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT)[2] Christians who employ disparate rhetorics that are usually examined in isolation. This diversity makes mainline denominations unique sites in which to explore the naturalizing discourses employed in the same-sex marriage debate. Yanagisako and Delaney (1995) argue that naturalizing discourses are used to authorize social power. Currently, there is a struggle in many Christian denominations for the power to direct the future practices of the Church. Same-sex marriage marks the site of that struggle.

As Yanagisako and Delaney (1995) point out, discourses that construct aspects of human social life as "natural" render them outside of human agency and control. Naturalizing homosexuality, in fact, allows liberal Christians to state that homosexuality is actually ordained by God (Thumma 1991). The rite of marriage, therefore, must be extended to same-sex couples if the Church is to deal with them as Jesus would. This view is understood to be in opposition to an evangelical perspective, which claims that only heterosexuality is natural while condemning homosexuality as unnatural. Evangelicals purport that in marriage men and women exist in a complementary relationship and together reflect the wholeness of God's character. Hence marriage must be reserved for heterosexual couples in order to replicate the natural order established by God at creation.

LGBT Christians negotiate between these competing discourses in their churches. They contribute to the naturalizing arguments of liberals at times, while at other times, they resist them in an effort to preserve their sexual agency. Many LGBT people do, in fact, experience their sexuality as natural, arising from deep, unconscious

drives rooted in innate, physical causes. Nonetheless, many of the LGBT people I talked to had previous heterosexual experiences and some confessed to the occasional heterosexual attraction. Despite the complexity of their personal sexual experiences, LGBT participants frequently naturalize sexual orientation, thereby simplifying the representation of their sexualities. There is a minority discourse, however, among the LGBT Christians I spoke with that bypasses the familiar categories of sexual orientation with innovative contentions for a personal sexual agency that has the potential to shift the premise of the debate.

In order to explore this situation, I engaged in participant-observation in mainline churches in upstate New York from 1995 until 2000. During the year 2000, I interviewed 64 people including 18 individuals who actively opposed the inclusion of LGBT Christians in their churches. They referred to themselves as "evangelicals." I also interviewed 23 people who actively promoted including LGBT Christians in their churches. They referred to themselves as "liberals." These 41 people were mostly ministers of local mainline denominations in a small, postindustrial city in upstate New York. I also interviewed 23 self-identified LGBT Christians. During the course of participant observation and interviews it became clear that the status of LGBT Christians in the mainline was, in their view, epitomized by the debate over same-sex marriage.

In the United States, one common script for sexuality is founded on the presumption that sexuality is a physically predetermined, perhaps genetic, attribute of every individual. Sexuality is naturalized. Like gender, it is constructed not as a matter of personal choice or social relations, but rather, it is an inborn state, independent of and a priori to social relations (Gavanas 2001; Rubin 1984). According to this discourse, we no more choose our sexuality than we chose our genitals. In fact, gender and sexuality are constructed in parallel ways: each is understood as first and foremost a physical fact, dictated to us by our bodies, experienced differently over time but with a sense of continuity. According to this model, gender is completely consonant with biological sex (Rubin 1984). Furthermore, for the heterosexual, sexuality is mapped directly onto attributes of the gender–biological sex construct. Men are aggressive, strong, sexually active and promiscuous. On the other hand, women are nurturing, weaker and more passive. They are less likely to have as many sexual partners as men and inhibit men's sexual drive by demanding monogamy (Gavanas 2001; Lienesch 1993). These gender attributes are directly tied to an evolutionary model of reproductive fitness (Fausto-Sterling 1992).

According to a liberal variation on this discourse, homosexual relations are also natural, occurring between two people of the same gender–sex, and are characterized by egalitarian relations in the couple. Therefore, gender remains consonant with biological sex, and the consensual formula for moral sexuality is emphasized (Seidman 1992). This is the language of Gay Civil Rights (Kitzinger 1987; Spargo 1999; Warner 1999; Weston 1991). Liberal humanism posited a universal subject with universal rights. This abstraction, the generic agent, allowed a society to imagine, as articulated by Meyers that "what is morally significant about people is what they have in common" (1994:23). Maintaining the universal and generic agent, liberal humanism argued that the only difference between a homosexual person and a heterosexual person was sexual object choice (Pharr 1988). According to liberalism, homosexuality is as normal, natural and healthy as heterosexuality. By denying agency in sexuality, gay civil rights activists and the liberal ideology that supports them also deny moral culpability for sexuality.

This logic is in an oppositional relationship to the conservative Christian discourse that constructs heterosexuality as natural while framing homosexuality as either an unfortunate pathology or as a sin for which one is morally culpable (Ankerberg and Weldon 1994; Focus on the Family 2000). Heterosexuality, according to this view, is natural because it maps so completely onto gender constructions that are seen as absolutely tied to biological sex. Homosexuality, therefore, perverts the mission and purpose of gender–sex. It makes men receptive partners, women penetrative partners and denies the importance of reproduction in sexuality. The leadership of the male in the home and the love and nurture of the female are rendered obsolete (Gavanas 2001; Lienesch 1993). The social order is confounded.

Feminist anthropologists have sought to denaturalize the one-to-one correspondence between gender and sex in order to undermine the power inherent in this construction (Butler 1990; Fulkerson 1997; Rich 1980; Rubin 1975, 1984; Vance 1989). Rubin distinguished biological sex from social gender and argued that the "sex/gender system is the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity" (1975:159). Critiquing Levi-Strauss's work on marriage and kinship, Rubin argued that the sexual division of labour that appears to be universal is based not on biology but on a need to insure a "reciprocal state of dependency between the sexes" (1975:178). Discourses that naturalize the two-sex gender system are, therefore, employed to naturalize an obligatory heterosexuality (Rich 1980; Rubin 1975; Vance 1989). Along with Foucault, Rubin

(1984) argues that while sexuality is understood as the naturally occurring libido struggling against social constraints, sexual desires, in fact, are constituted in historical, social practices. She challenges the notion that what is defined as "sexuality" is a natural category of behaviour.

Reiterating Schneider's (1972) critique of kinship studies, Yanagisako and Collier (1987) also pointed out the inextricable connections between kinship and dichotomized gender differences. They rejected the notion that gender differences are cultural elaborations on the biological fact of sex differences and argued instead, following Bourdieu's concept of embodiment, that one's experience of the body is culturally constructed and socially structured from its inception. In other words, there is no pre-social gender or sexuality.

Taking this argument at step further, some scholars question the characterization of anatomical sex as a pre-social, culturally unmediated, biological reality. Judith Butler explicates the multiple ways in which sexual desire, gender and anatomical sex are conflated and constructed as a "metaphysical unity" (1990:22). She argues that naturalizing sexual desire, gender and sex is necessary for maintaining the sexual binary of male and female. Separating gender from sex is not adequate to denaturalize sexual power relations because it leaves the biologically category of sex unchallenged and unproblematized. Arguing along these lines, Fulkerson says, "When gender is opposed to the category of sex, it construes the sexed body as a "given."...As long as subjects are viewed as sexed [male and female] prior to the considerations of power relationships, some notion of gender is operative" (1997:191). It would be more useful, she argues, to recognize that "'sex' as well as gender is something one becomes—or is done to one" (Fulkerson 1997:191). Thus, even the body is a cultural construction and cannot be understood as a primal reality proceeding social and cultural mediation.

Naturalizing discourses, as Yanagisako and Delaney (1995) point out, are power discourses. By critiquing the naturalizing discourses that construct gender, sex and sexuality, feminists are able to challenge the sense that they are inevitable features of the social landscape (Tsing 1995; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). Sexuality, sex and gender, if they are socially constructed, can be put together in a variety of ways, permitting different power relationships between people. Rather than asking to what categories persons belong, the question then becomes what are the relations between categories of persons and how do they reveal power hierarchies? First, I turn to the discourses of liberal Christians in mainline denominations who advocate for same-sex marriage. Through these discourses I begin to examine the means of categorizing people according to sexual orientation and the resulting claim for the power to direct church practices.

Liberal Christians: Naturalizing Homosexuality

The liberal mainline participants in this research employed naturalizing discourses about sexual orientation that claimed that homosexuality was fixed at birth, immutable and at least in part biologically determined. Discourses that construct aspects of human social life as "natural" render them outside of human agency and control (Franklin 1997; Tsing 1995; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). Arguing that homosexuality is biologically determined and a part of the natural order means that an individual cannot help being gay or lesbian and is not required to change. In fact, naturalizing discourses of sexual orientation allow liberal Christians to state that homosexuality is a state ordained by God. Additionally, they argue that God's design is progressively revealed by science and found in nature (Lawrence 1989). Naturalizing homosexuality, therefore, makes a claim on both scientific rationality and the divine purpose of God. Framed by scientific discourses, homosexuality is rendered explainable, functional and unalterable. Therefore, the liberal mainline participants are able to argue that the homosexual is an acceptable human variation, part of God's plan for human sexuality (Thumma 1991). Following liberal principles of equality and justice, therefore, same-sex couples cannot properly be denied access to the rites of marriage (Tronto 1993). In this way, liberal Christians authorize their own positions on the future of church practices and legitimize their claim on the power to direct this future.

The liberal research participants repeatedly claimed that science and their own personal experience indicated that homosexuality was, in the words of one participant, "part of the natural order of creation." As one minister put it,

> My judgement is that [homosexuality] is innate—something we're born with...because we all know that in this society lesbians [and] gays...are ostracized. Why would somebody want to choose to be ostracized? A very strange choice especially when it's as much as 10% of the population maybe more. Why would that large of a population be choosing to be ostracized?

This statement emphasizes the idea that sexual orientation is beyond human agency because it is natural (Franklin 1997; Tsing 1995; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). The participant makes this statement based on his personal judgment which is in keeping with the liberal Chris-

tian reliance on rationality and experience rather than solely on scripture.

When making claims that sexual orientation is natural, the research participants are arguing that one's orientation is formed primarily by genetic and other physical components (Abramson and Pinkerton 1995; Fausto-Sterling 1992). They are not, however, ruling out that social and psychological factors might contribute to the development of sexual orientation (Wieringa 1989). As one participant said, "I'm sure as we go along the science of genetics is going to bear some fruit about how sexuality is related to genetics and how it's related to nurture." This is what Schwalbe (1996) has called a "loose essentialism." In the words of one participant, "I think that there are multiple factors that influence people's sexual orientation. I think they're genetic, I think they're hormonal, they're cultural."

The liberal participants are clear, however, that whatever environmental factors contribute, sexual orientation cannot be prevented or cured. Homosexuality in their view is not pathological, but rather a normal variation of a broader human sexuality. Furthermore, one's sexual orientation, they argue, once fixed is intractable (Franklin 1997; Rubin 1984; Spargo 1999; Warner 1999; Weston 1991). Therefore, they claim it is cruel and even immoral to try to make a lesbian or gay person become heterosexual. Because one's sexual orientation is natural, liberal Christians argue that it is ordained by God (Thumma 1991). As one minister told me, "Homosexuality is genetically determined and I am not willing to say that God is making a mistake."

However, when pressed many of the participants admitted to great uncertainty concerning the causes of homosexuality (Gavanas 2001; Schwalbe 1996; Wieringa 1989). Some participants contradicted themselves in the course of the interview and ultimately admitted that factors determining sexual orientation were unimportant. For example, one participant said, "I think there probably are people for whom it is a choice. I'm certain there are people for whom it isn't a choice. To me it doesn't matter...I think love is love."

As is evident from the quote above, many of the participants acknowledged that sexuality was more slippery than the rigid dichotomy of homosexual and heterosexual. They frequently framed the fluid and unpredictable tendencies of sexual desire in terms of bisexuality. Questions about bisexuality were not on my interview schedule. Despite the fact that only one participant out of the total pool claimed a bisexual identity, several participants in all three groups brought it up spontaneously as they worked through the ramifications of extending marriage to same-sex partners.

According to the mainline liberals, bisexuality is a natural sexual orientation which, like homosexuality and heterosexuality, is fixed at birth. Unlike homosexuality or heterosexuality, however, bisexuality allows the bisexual a choice in the object of sexual desire. The liminality of bisexuality, its place between the homosexual–heterosexual opposition, is understood by the liberal participants as particularly problematic to the conservatives in the Church who wish to preserve marriage as a heterosexual institution.

Bisexuality did indeed trouble the evangelical mainline people who talked to me. The evangelical participants see bisexuality as an example of an unstable, unpredictable sexuality without limits. They also brought up bisexuality spontaneously during interviews. More than one minister said things resembling the following statement,

> There's a fear in the conservative theological community...[they ask], "What's the next step?" If someone is bisexual and they're not monogamous, do three adults in a sexually compatible relationship constitute a family?

The liberal participants, on the other hand, claimed they were not disturbed by the apparent unstable nature of sexuality suggested by bisexuality. Instead, the liberal mainline participants naturalized bisexuality as another category situated between homosexuality and heterosexuality on a continuum of sexual orientation, but just as fixed, innate and natural as the other two (Wieringa 1989). This naturalizing discourse allows them to sharpen the contrast between their liberal values and rationality and the irrational fear of other sexualities they imagine evangelicals to harbour. Since the liberal participants frame the opposition to same-sex marriage as arising from homophobia, they argue that those opposed to same-sex marriage are psychologically uncomfortable with homoeroticism (Kitzinger 1987; Nugent 1997; Pharr 1988; Weeks 1991). Some of the liberal mainline informants believe that bisexuality is particularly problematic to evangelicals because its existence allows one to imagine large numbers of people hiding in heterosexual relationships but who are plagued with same-sex desires. For example, a liberal mainline minister told me,

> If sexuality conforms to the usual statistical bell curve, there's a whole middle of that curve that nobody's talking about....In Kinsey's research, there was a continuum hypothesized...[Bisexuality] is a possibility. In other words,...there are a lot of us up for grabs. And that is disconcerting to deal with. We don't deal with it. It simply is not discussed....It means the possibility that there are an awful lot of people uncomfortable with

their sexuality no matter which way they make their ultimate commitment.

The speaker highlights the rational basis of accepting bisexuals along with lesbian and gay Christians into the "full life of the Church." By implying that evangelicals have an irrational fear of their own sexual desire, he implicitly underscores the propriety of the liberal position in directing the future of church practices.

Despite the tacit acknowledgment of many of the participants that sexual orientation is more fluid than the prominent discourse in the Church allows, many of the mainline liberals choose to purposefully discuss sexual orientation as if it were fixed at birth and immutable over the course of one's life. Constructing sexuality as an innate aspect of a person at birth is a strategy which simplifies the arguments in the debate over the morality of homosexuality, for example:

> The concept that [homosexuality is] not something someone chooses is a very strong playing card whether or not I totally think that it's true. I think there is choice involved for a lot of people, not for everybody, but for some people...But, I wouldn't tell somebody that if I was trying to convince them. [Educating the Church about this] would make the discussion harder.

The liberal mainline participants place homosexuality and bisexuality in the natural order created by God (Thumma 1991). Despite their own uncertainty about the factors determining sexual orientation, they purposefully claim that it is innate and immutable. If, however, they can successfully argue that homosexuality is natural, then it logically follows that God made homosexuality. Since God created homosexuality, the liberal participants argue it follows that homosexual relationships are capable of meeting the Christian criteria for sexual morality. Therefore, they continue, LGBT Christians must be permitted to solemnize their relationships in the Church. Marriage is the rite in Christian practice that transforms ordinary sexual relationships into sacred covenants. Furthermore, because these research participants are liberals they expect society to improve through human intervention based on justice and equality (Kitzinger 1987; Tronto 1993; Weeks 1995; Young 1990). They believe, therefore, that LGBT people should have access not only to the rite of Christian marriage but to secular marriage. In the debate about same-sex marriage, Christian rites and civil rights are often conflated and the distinctions between them are blurred. In a less than fully conscious way, naturalizing homosexuality is a political strategy to facilitate change in the policies of their denominations.

The discourses of the liberal mainline do not exist in a social vacuum but are rather in structural opposition to the evangelical discourses that are concerned with sexuality. Both liberals and evangelicals evoke reason and nature to underscore their interpretations of Christian morality. Both are attempting to make a claim on the power to direct the future practices of the Church.

Evangelicals and the Sexual Order Established at Creation

As the liberal participants illustrate, the naturalizing discourse concerned with the causes of homosexuality is pivotal in the legitimization of same-sex marriage. For the evangelical participants these arguments are points of contestation. Shifting between the languages of science and religion, the evangelical mainline participants naturalize gender and concomitant sexual desire while denaturalizing sexual orientation. This discourse allows them to assign gender ontological status while denying that status to sexual orientation, thereby situating heterosexuality in the creation order established by God (Gavanas 2001). The heterosexual structure of marriage is determined by ontological claims that naturalize a two-sex gender system linked to naturalized expectations of heterosexual desire (Rich 1980; Rubin 1984).

The mainline evangelicals argue that sexual responsiveness and desire are determined by gender (Gavanas 2001; Lienesch 1993). In this regard, they are not unlike some of the liberal and LGBT participants. They, however, construct a much more rigid gender dichotomy and employ it as the basis for a discourse which posits heterosexuality as the only natural and morally acceptable sexual expression. Male and female attributes are imagined by evangelicals as natural, biological characteristics and constructed in complementary opposition to each other. This not only provides the underpinnings for obligatory heterosexuality; it also provides the logic for monogamous, heterosexual marriage (Lienesch 1993; Rich 1980). Men are understood to be sexually aggressive and naturally promiscuous. Women are, on the contrary, understood to be sexually passive and biologically programmed to be nurturing (Gavanas 2001; Lienesch 1993; Rubin 1984). Sex in marriage, therefore, is imagined as the glue that keeps men and women together (Ellison 1993; Graf 1999). It creates a stable family unit. As one evangelical Episcopalian woman told me,

> There are enormous differences between men and women's sexuality. Feminists have spent 30 years ignoring those to the detriment of women. Women are emotionally relational. This accounts for the differences

> between homosexual men and lesbians. Lesbians are relational and are not prone to compulsive, anonymous sex like homosexual men. I am dealing in stereotypes here, but men have a powerful, enormous desire to have sex. Women want that and they desire a long-term relationship. Women have a powerful impulse for marriage and family. Men need a powerful motivation to make a lifelong commitment to women. When marriage is the only legitimate place for sexual expression men are motivated to stick around and raise the kids together.

As evident from the quote above, heterosexual intercourse in marriage is understood as the root of family stability. In American culture, sexual intercourse symbolizes the "enduring, diffuse solidarity" believed to be embedded at the heart of the nuclear family (Schneider 1980:52). The complementarity of gender as it is expressed in sexual intercourse is endowed with multivalent meanings. Heterosexual intercourse in this discourse is the bringing together of two halves to make a whole (Gavanas 2001; Nugent and Gramick 1990). For many of the evangelical Christians I spoke to, the complementarity of gender reflects the wholeness of the image of God. They argue that God created male and female in His image and that heterosexual intercourse in its proper context (marriage) recreates that wholeness (Gavanas 2001). Braiding together naturalizing discourses and scripture, evangelicals authorize their own social power in the claim that not only their theology but also their sexuality is in line with the will of God.

According to the evangelical participants, God intended gender to be the site of meaningful contrast (Ankerberg and Weldon 1994; Focus on the Family 2000). God created sexual intercourse between men and women in marriage to be the arena in which wholeness is made possible (Gavanas 2001). Kath Weston (1991) argues gay and lesbian people challenge the discourse that constructs gender as the site of complementary difference required to make sexual union meaningful. This is clear in the statement made by the research participants. As one UCC minister said,

> The proscription of homosexuality is not just mores or taboos. It is an accurate portrayal of God's design. Gender was created with complementarity. This is self-evidently obvious. It's how things work. Like electrical equipment, you don't put two male ends and two female ends together.

This describes what theologian M. Hellwig characterized as the "classical myth of sexuality" which proposed that "God has created people according to a blueprint which is written in their bodies, in their anatomy; they are made to operate in a certain way, and when they operate in that way, their mission and purpose is fulfilled" (Nugent and Gramick 1990:34). In this logic maleness and femaleness are ontological realities and heterosexuality is God's design for wholeness, a wholeness that reflects the nature of God (Gavanas 2001; Lienesch 1993; Rubin 1984).

Same-sex erotic relationships, according to this discourse, cannot produce wholeness because the two halves are the same. Since there is no difference to generate meaning, the relationship lacks the power to create a "greater totality" both between the lovers and in terms of procreation (Weston 1991:137). Same-sex unions merely replicate the partners and mirror them back to each other in a narcissistic sexuality not unlike masturbation (Rubin 1984; Weston 1991). Because of the disruption to gender's ontological status in the Judeo-Christian worldview, same-sex unions are understood as profoundly asocial and unnatural, thus preserving the unique legitimacy of heterosexual marriage. Or put more simply, one evangelical participant said, "How can two men and two women together be whole?"

Discourses that naturalize a supposed gender complementarity ensure that heterosexuality is constructed as obligatory (Lienesch 1993; Rich 1980). Though heterosexuality is God's design and is evident in creation, it is not unassailable. According to the evangelical participants, heterosexuality is natural but not impenetrable to cultural influences (Gavanas 2001). Evangelicals construct sexual desire as a malleable feature of sexuality. For instance, while listening to *The Gospel Hour* on Christian radio, I once heard a sermon on Romans, chapter 1, a popular text used to condemn homosexuality. The minister argued that homosexual desire begins in one's fantasy life and, if one dwells on it, will inevitably be acted upon. He used the verse which says, "God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper" (Rom.1:28 NAS) to argue that people are vulnerable to the images to which they expose themselves. He claimed if Christians allow themselves to be exposed to images of homosexual acts in pornography they "get hooked on them" and their natural heterosexual desires can be overridden. Sexual desires are in a sense contagious; external forces present in the media and in society can influence anyone. Hence, any media representations of homosexuality as normal are inherently dangerous.

In this discourse, sexual orientation is not innate or immutable. The evangelical mainline Christians I spoke with argued that while God ordained heterosexuality, sexual orientation is not fixed. One minister said explicitly that boys' sexual identities are more fluid than are girls' and that for boys some homosexual experimentation is

normal.[3] Homosexuality may be a developmental stage, but according to this participant, it's not a morally acceptable lifestyle. While all sexual expression outside of heterosexual marriage is considered sinful, sexual orientation is constructed as more fluid and situational than it is among liberal and LGBT Christians. Homosexuality is denaturalized.

Ironically, denaturalizing homosexuality places these arguments in an interesting parallel with queer theorists who support a fluid and contextualized sexuality that is responsive to social conditions (Dorenkamp and Henke 1995; Foucault 1978; Wilchins 1997). In the words of one lay Episcopalian woman,

> There are multiple factors that shape sexual identity. It is not useful to talk about sexual orientation like there are two groups or even three or four. Sexual orientation is not fixed or immutable. You're not just born with it. Rather there is a complex mixture of biology, genetics, socialization and social patterns, actions and habits, and fantasies we form. One formally gay man I know sees things in his family and socialization that led him to be attracted to men. He was born more sensitive and was more vulnerable to social conditioning than his brother who is straight. It was a combination of factors. He realized that he had to take some responsibility for allowing himself to engage in [gay] fantasy. Porn helped condition his sexual response. He had an abusive father so he hungered for father love and father touch. He transferred this to sex with men.

Of course, queer theorists and the evangelicals have different aims when constructing sexuality as fluid. In the evangelical discourse homosexuality is not merely denaturalized but also constructed as unnatural. It is frequently constructed as a pathology similar to compulsive behaviours like alcoholism. One UMC minister told me, "Just because someone has a genetic disposition does not make it moral."

Shifting to the language of religion they claim that homosexual desire is a product of sin. On one level, homosexual desire is caused by the individual's willingness to be habituated to it through pornography as exemplified by the quote above. On a more universal level, homosexual desire and other sinful compulsions are caused by the fall from grace that occurred in the Garden of Eden. The doctrine of original sin posits that because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve, sin entered the world. One Presbyterian minister told me,

> [Saying] "God made me gay or lesbian" is most problematic....People who argue that [homosexuality] is a natural variation don't take the Fall seriously....Humans have Sin. Not sin with a small "s," but Sin with a capital "S." Sin is a condition in which we all live. The whole of creation is impacted.

In contrast with the naturalizing discourse of the liberal mainline, they argue that what occurs naturally is not necessarily God's perfect will for humanity or the world. Because of what some Christians refer to as humanity's "sin nature," what is experienced as natural is suspect. People's natural impulses are only good, they claim, when they are in line with God's commands. God's commands, according to evangelicals, are revealed in scripture. These participants repeatedly returned to the biblical story of creation to define what is both natural and good.

Yanagisako and Delaney (1995) have argued that origin narratives such as the biblical creation story link identities to ontological constructions. In this case, the Genesis account naturalizes the dichotomized gender system. From the beginning, there were two distinct beings, male and female that had distinct and complementary ontological status. A Christian can, therefore, extrapolate God's plan for heterosexuality. Repeatedly, research participants would refer to the order of creation to argue that homosexuality is outside of the will of God. For instance, Presbyterian minister who spoke to me said,

> The more powerful argument supporting heterosexual marriage is from creation. I see in the orders of creation, as described in Genesis and other scriptures, how things ought to be. I see in the orders of creation the fundamental structuring of marriage as one man and one woman. The fact that humans are made in the image of God, both men and women implies, first, that men and women are equally made in the image of God. It also implies the complementary nature of differences. There's intercourse and the complementary nature of male and female bodies. And there's complementary roles, complementary strengths. Feminists want women and men to be exactly the same. But the pattern is set in the orders of creation.

Naturalizing gender and assigning the sexes distinct ontological status, evangelicals postulate an orderly creation established by God (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). In marriage, men and women exist in a complementary relationship and together reflect the wholeness of God's character. Hence, marriage must be preserved for heterosexual couples in order to re-enact the order established by God at creation. Laying claim to the ontological primacy of heterosexuality, evangelicals are clearly playing for the power to make decisions regarding the future practices of the church.

Both liberals and evangelicals in the mainline denominations have a clear image of "the homosexual" seeking inclusion in the Church. Their competing discourses are vying for the power to frame the arguments as well as controlling the representations of LGBT Christians. LGBT Christians are not absent, however, from the conversation and are themselves constructing discourses regarding both their sexuality and access to same-sex marriage.

LGBT Christians Negotiating Sexual Histories

Naturalizing homosexuality is the primary discourse in mainline Christianity that justifies same-sex marriage. Many LGBT people, in fact, experience their sexuality as natural, arising from deep, unconscious drives rooted in innate, physical causes (Rubin 1984; Spargo 1999; Weston 1991). When recounting their "coming out" narratives, gay, lesbian and bisexual people talk about discovering or uncovering their sexual orientations (Gorman 1997; Weston 1991). Yet, the rigid categories delineating sexual orientation are assaulted by the experience that sexuality has a tendency to shift during the course of one's life. Despite the formulaic narratives in which one discovers an essentialized homosexuality, many of the LGBT people I talked to had previous heterosexual experiences and some confessed to the occasional heterosexual attraction.

The LGBT participants naturalize sexual orientation despite their personal sexual experiences. Like their liberal Christian counterparts, this naturalizing discourse allows them to claim that homosexuality is beyond an individual's control (Foucault 1978; Rubin 1984; Spargo 1999; Weston 1991). Therefore, they argue either that homosexuality is ordained by God or, at least, that they are not morally culpable for their sexuality (Davidson 1992; Fulkerson 1997; Thumma 1991). Even as most of the LGBT participants utilize discourses that naturalize sexual orientation, some employ discourses that resist essentialized representations of their sexuality. Moving beyond the discourses characterizing some sexuality as moral, natural or normal, these participants reserve the right to eschew categories (Warner 1999; Wilchins 1997). This discursive strategy is not fully articulated nor is it fully intentional. Yet, it creates an avenue for these LGBT Christians to retain control of their sexual identities and experiences bypassing the logic which normalizes and sanctions some sexualities while vilifying others.

Almost without exception, the LGBT people I spoke with told me their coming out narratives (Gorman 1997; Weston 1991). I was not intending to gather this information and at times had to curtail the detail that people offered me. Weston (1991) talks about the formula structuring most coming out stories which focus on the process of sexual self-discovery. By recording their coming out stories, I inadvertently garnered the sexual histories of most of the LGBT participants. Beyond that, however, many of them offered me detailed recitations of their sexual pasts which I never solicited. These stories were sometimes humorous and sometimes confessional.[4] Whatever motivated the outpouring of this information, as a result of it, I am privy to the sexual histories of many of the LGBT people with whom I spoke.

Categorizing people based on sexual orientation, as their sexual histories illustrate, is a tricky business. Sexual desire and sexual orientation are fluid aspects of individual experience and identity (Rubin 1984; Warner 1999; Wilchins 1997). It was not unusual for the participants' identification with a sexual orientation to shift throughout their lives. At least seven of the 23 LGBT people I spoke with for this research, roughly 30%, had been married or involved in long term relationships with members of the "opposite sex" prior to claiming a gay, lesbian or bisexual identity.[5] It is also true that sexual orientation shifts in the other direction and that other people I knew in the community had at some point in their lives claimed gay or lesbian identities now claim heterosexual identities or are involved in long term heterosexual relationships.

Sexual desire and sexual attraction are as problematic as sexual orientation because they also tend to be unstable and fluid, varying with one's age, physical condition, even the time of day, certainly the time of the month. Finally, sexual desire and one's stated sexual orientation could at times conflict. The people I spoke with report that they can find themselves suddenly and perhaps temporarily attracted to people of the "opposite" sex. Due to such problems some queer theorists have challenged the notion that sexual orientation exists as a natural and stable aspect of personhood beyond the reach of cultural and social construction (Foucault 1978; Sedgwick 1990; Spargo 1999; Warner1993, 1999). However, in the common parlance of the people I spoke with, sexual orientation was understood as an objective reality and a useful tool by which to characterize people.

Identifying oneself as gay, lesbian or bisexual frequently creates a conflict with traditional Christian morality (Comstock 1996; Dynes 1992; Yip 1997). Sexual morality in traditional Christian discourse is linked with a naturalized heterosexuality (Ankerberg and Weldon 1994; Focus on the Family 2000; Gavanas 2001:Nugent and Gramick 1990). Leaving aside all of the competing discourses in American Christianity which dispute this statement, the lesbian and gay participants I spoke to for this

research understood this to be the basic conflict which they must navigate as sexual and spiritual people. They understand that within Christianity a sexuality or gender expression that is deemed unnatural is sinful.

Like their liberal Christian counterparts, most participants argued that sexual orientation is innate. Naturalizing homosexuality allows them to argue that God made them gay or lesbian (Davidson 1992; Fulkerson 1997; Thumma 1991). For instance, one 28-year-old African American man argued that gay and lesbian people were "born that way." He made this claim despite his previous heterosexual experiences and his occasional attraction to certain women. This was important to him because it allowed him to claim that God intended him to be gay and therefore God could not condemn his homosexuality. He said to me, "I say you were born with it...I'm not saying I question God, but...we can't help it. I didn't ask to be born like this." Struggling with a conception of homosexuality as sin, he argued that he could not be held morally responsible for his sexual orientation. This man claimed throughout the interview that God could not condemn homosexuality because He created it. Thumma refers to this line of reasoning among gay evangelical Christians as the "creationist argument" which they use to posit sexual orientation as an immutable attribute assigned by God (1991:341).

Other LGBT participants naturalize homosexuality to argue more positively that it is part of God's design for humanity (Davidson 1992; Fulkerson 1997). As one lesbian told me, "God has created me as I am to serve some purpose. He's not going to send me to hell." A reified concept of nature is frequently conflated with God's will (Tsing 1995; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). For instance, a 37-year-old white man argued, "I think Mother Nature... said, 'Now wait a minute. The world is over-populated.' Homosexuals are on this earth to slow down the population growth a little bit." In this statement he gives homosexuality a positive function which therefore constructs it as potentially good and useful. It is ironic that he adopted this argument since he is the father of two children. In fact 43% of the LGBT participants are parents (Lewin 1990, 1993). Most of them had children from previous heterosexual relationships.[6]

The sexual histories of these participants indicate that sexual orientation is not always consistent with sexual object choice. Naturalizing homosexuality renders the heterosexual experiences of these gay and lesbian people invisible. Furthermore, the line between sexual desires and sexual experience is confused by the fact that sexuality has a tendency to shift during the course of one's life. This confusion is exemplified by what one 33-year-old white man told me,

> I think a lot of people are born with [homosexuality]. I think you can choose it. I think you can choose any [sexual orientation], but I think you have stronger feelings. I think that most true gay people were born that way—to be gay. But, I think they have the right and they can choose to live a heterosexual life if they want to. Not that they're going to be happy or that they're going to be faithful. It's such a funny word—you can choose but then you can't choose.

This participant is struggling with a way to talk about his experience of sexuality as in some sense beyond his control, and yet, not beyond his modification.

The idea that gay, lesbian and bisexual people choose their sexual orientation is problematic to LGBT Christians because it is a discursive strategy used by evangelical Christians to condemn same-sex eroticism (Ankerberg and Weldon 1994; Focus on the Family 2000; Gavanas 2001; Herman 2000). One participant, a conservative Pentecostal, articulates this position. His case highlights the internal divisions of the LGBT community. Despite his gay identity, he refutes the primary liberal discourse that would permit him access to the rituals of the Church and, indeed, to heaven. While he reported that he has always been exclusively homosexual in desire and practice, he rejects the notion that sexual orientation is natural or created by God and accepts the literal interpretation of biblical texts condemning homosexuality. He asserted,

> I don't think you're born gay...that'd be blasphemy. That would make God a hypocrite because God speaks in the Bible and it clearly says in the Bible that men shall not be lovers of themselves [*sic*]. Because it says if men are lovers of themselves you won't be able to get to heaven. That's that. God made men and He made women.
>
> I asked him, "Do you think you're going to hell?"
>
> He replied, "I don't know."

This participant was the only one who definitively argued that homosexuality is unnatural. During the course of the interviews, all but a very small minority of the LGBT people claimed that their homosexuality was inborn and outside of their ability to change. They, therefore, argue that it is natural and link the natural to what God ordained (Franklin 1997; Thumma 1991; Tsing 1995; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995). Discourses such as these construct some orientations as morally acceptable by virtue of their naturalness and consign other sexualities as unnatural and, in Christian discourse, sinful (Warner 1999).

Nonetheless, the way in which categories of sexual orientation restrict people and the fluidity of people's

experience were noted by some of the participants. These LGBT Christians resist the naturalizing discourse of sexual orientation. Several people saw the homosexual–heterosexual binary as too restrictive (Wilchins 1997). In an effort to open up liberating sexual discourses and bypass moral judgments, one self-identified gay man argued that the fluidity of sexual desire should be cultivated. He suggested that intentionally adopting bisexuality would be the most liberating approach, saying,

> Young people right now are considering themselves bisexual, not considering themselves gay or straight. I almost feel that I want to view my life that way also. Because once you put yourself into a category you tend to conform to that category and then you never allow yourself to go in another direction...I think we have to be open and adaptable to all people rather than just categorizing ourselves....I think it's a very healthy way of thinking, much healthier then thinking that you're totally gay or straight....Our sexuality is allowing nature to be nature. It's allowing you to go with the flow, go with the chi of the whole thing.

Unlike the liberal Christian participants who use the category of bisexuality to fix and essentialize unpredictable and shifting sexual desires, some of the gay men who participated in this research adopted a pan-sexuality as part of a discourse embracing and expanding on the fluidity of sexual desires and practices.

Some lesbians also resisted the naturalizing discourse of sexual orientation. They sought to avoid categories altogether and establish the power of their own agency in choosing sexual partners. In this way they bypass entirely the discussion of sinful and acceptable sexualities. One 47-year-old white woman experienced the naturalizing arguments as disempowering. She reserved her claim to choose a lover. When I asked her if she was born lesbian she told me,

> I don't really know. I want to say that this was a conscious choice I made to be with [my partner]. I don't ever remember being in a situation where I felt like I wanted to be with a woman before....So, when somebody makes the comment, "Oh, yes, it's all genetic and you know there's something with their hormones," or whatever, it just makes me angry because I think there are people out there that never had that [feeling] and yet some person crosses their path and it just hits them like a ton of bricks.

LGBT Christians both utilize and resist the discourse naturalizing homosexuality. Many of the lesbian, gay and bisexual Christians I talked to engaged in naturalizing discourse which parallel the liberal mainline participants. This strategy allows them to claim either that their homosexuality is God ordained or, at least, they are not choosing to engage in sin. This discourse clearly links what is deemed natural with what is morally acceptable (Fulkerson 1997; Thumma 1991). Like the liberal participants, naturalizing homosexuality is a discursive strategy by which gay and lesbian Christians can insist on the power to access the full rites of the Church including marriage. However, naturalizing discourses are also restrictive (Spargo 1999; Warner 1999; Wilchins 1997). They delineate what sexualities are acceptable and what is not acceptable. Some of the LGBT Christians I spoke with resisted this aspect of the discourse. Without fully formulating counter-discourses, they argue that sexual desire cannot and should not be neatly separated into rigid categories. By resisting the naturalizing discourse of essentialized sexual orientations, these participants step outside of the discursive logic claiming some orientations as natural and morally acceptable while others are deemed sinful. They, thus, disengage from the power struggle in their churches and instead assert their own discursive agency to reframe the debate.

Conclusion

It must be pointed out that naturalizing discourses "emerge from each person's own experience" (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995:12). Cultural constructions are experienced as "real," and are not simply political strategies used to vie for social power. For most Americans this means that cultural constructions are experienced as biological realities beyond the reach of social alteration. Liberal and evangelical mainline Christians construct gender and sexuality from ontological paradigms that are given in origin narratives and reinforced in daily life. If this is true than we must allow that these constructions of gender and sexuality are, in fact, real. If humans can not experience the body without the mediation of culture then the experience of cultural constructions are the only experiences. Experience, nonetheless, does, sometimes, contradict dominant discourses in culture. As Franklin (1997) points out, experience is unstable and contradictory. Cultural discourses assist people in either ignoring these troublesome experiences or reframing them by using an alternative script (Moore 1995). It is in the gap between culturally constructed experience and the hegemonic discourses which usually contain them that innovative and liberating opportunities arise.

Discourses about sexual orientation provide a set of ideas about sex, desire and gender and they limit those ideas by providing the language to talk about them. They

include patterned and predictable tools such as rhetorics, arguments and representations which, like pencils in a jar, can be brought out for particular jobs. The language provided by discourses does specific work. The naturalizing discourses about sexual orientation work to legitimate or condemn certain sexual desires. In this way they are useful in power struggles and political manoeuvring whether or not the speakers are fully conscious of the way they are using these tools.

Liberal and evangelical discourses require each other. They are structured in opposition to each other and as one set of discourses shifts the other set shifts to match it. Both liberal and evangelical Christians imagine a cohesive, unified LGBT community about which they develop arguments and strategies. These arguments and strategies, of course, have less to do with real LGBT people than with the power relations between liberals and evangelicals.

LGBT Christians are, at the same time, constructing discourses about sex, gender and spirituality. These discourses rely heavily on the hegemonic ones, but are also the site of innovations. Evoking "nature" simplifies the lived experience of sexual desire in order to make of it useful arguments and representations. Such simplification, however, ignores or renders invisible portions of sexual experience to the detriment of LGBT Christians. Refusing to engage in this power struggle, some LGBT Christians imagine different options and with these options reconcile shifting and flexible sexualities with their spirituality.

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Notes

1 Mainline denominations are large, powerful institutions that historically have acted as the arbiters of social values in the United States. They have built their credibility on an educated clergy and are marked by an ecumenical stance toward other denominations and faiths (Roof 1983; Roof and McKinney 1987). These are in contrast to fundamentalist denominations who intentionally distinguish themselves from the mainline. The two perspectives exist in opposition to each other each claiming historical and spiritual authenticity.

2 While I did not interview any transgendered Christians, I use the acronym LGBT, however, to acknowledge the presence of transgendered people in the Church.

3 James Dobson has made similar statements on his radio show and in his magazine.

4 The liberal and evangelical Christians I talked to, on the other hand, did not offer me this kind of information. Some evangelicals, however, made a point of telling me that before they were married they had practiced celibacy and expected other Christians to do the same.

5 Only one woman in the LGBT sample identified herself as bisexual. She is married to a man and her sexual orientation is invisible under daily circumstances. Her case illustrates the ambiguity of categorizing people by sexual orientation.

6 One lesbian couple, however, had two children from alternative insemination. They are part of the so-called "lesbian baby boom" meaning that they purposefully sought out parenthood and are raising their children in an openly lesbian home in which they are both mothers to the children. Two other participants had children with opposite sex partners after they had identified themselves as gay and lesbian. They did not want long term relationships with these other people, but sought only to have children, in their words, "the natural way." See Lewin (1990, 1993).

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Reducing the Damage: Dilemmas of Anti-Trafficking Efforts among Nigerian Prostitutes in Palermo

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Abstract: Over the past 10 years, trafficked Nigerian women have become synonymous with street prostitution in Palermo, Italy. In this article, I attempt to assess a project that offers medical care, free condoms, advice on safe practices and other forms of assistance to Nigerian prostitutes. This assessment reveals the strengths and weaknesses of Italy's innovative anti-trafficking initiatives. The program reduces many of the dangers involved in street prostitution, but debt bondage to traffickers, family obligations and threats of supernatural retribution stymie efforts to separate women from their exploiters and render prosecution of criminals difficult. Those who do complete the rehabilitation program face a difficult integration into Italian society.

Keywords: anti-trafficking, prostitution, Nigerians, Palermo, Italy

Résumé : Au cours des 10 dernières années, il est devenu impossible de parler du trafic des femmes nigérianes sans parler de prostitution dans les rues de Palerme en Italie. Dans cet article, je tente d'évaluer un projet qui propose des soins médicaux, des préservatifs gratuits, des conseils sur les rapports sexuels protégés et d'autres formes de soutiens aux prostituées nigérianes. Cette évaluation révèle les forces et les faiblesses des initiatives innovatrices de l'Italie en matière de lutte contre le trafic. Le programme contribue à réduire les nombreux dangers inhérents à la prostitution de rue; cependant, les liens d'endettement vis-à-vis des trafiquants, les obligations familiales et les menaces de châtiments surnaturels font souvent aboutir à une impasse les tentatives de séparer les femmes de leurs exploiteurs, tout en rendant difficile l'engagement de poursuites judiciaires contre les criminels. Quant à celles qui parviennent à terminer le programme de réhabilitation, elles s'intègrent difficilement dans la société italienne.

Mots-clés : lutte contre le trafic, prostitution, Nigérianes, Palerme, Italie

Introduction

Sicily, long a labour exporter par excellence, has in the course of the past few decades become an immigrant destination (Booth and Cole 1999; Cole 1997). In the 1970s, Tunisian men arrived to toil in the fields and on fishing boats of western Sicily while women from the Philippines, Mauritius and Cape Verde moved to Palermo and other cities to work as maids. With time, people from Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas swelled the foreign population.[1] Amid this diversity of origins, virtually all immigrants in this southern Italian region are incorporated in the lowest tiers of segmented, gendered labour markets, performing the dead-end, dirty and demeaning jobs which Sicilians refuse. In Palermo, the island's capital and largest city, most immigrants work in domestic service, but a very visible and recently arrived minority of foreign women, almost all from Nigeria, sells sex on the street.

Also setting these women apart from other foreigners is their status as trafficked persons. Trafficking denotes the transportation of persons and the use of intimidation, violence and debt bondage to exploit their labour (ICMPD 1999; OSCE 1999). Most Nigerian prostitutes in Palermo are, or have been, beholden to loosely structured, co-national criminal networks.[2] Exploiting corruption and poverty at home and possessing a firm understanding of illicit markets, Nigerian gangs have exported thousands of young women to the booming sex markets of Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and other European Union states. Faced with minimal opportunities at home and lacking the resources to emigrate legally, young women (and in many cases their families) have entered into a pact with traffickers, agreeing to pay for passage and a job in Europe. While most women understand the nature of their future employment abroad, in Europe they encounter unanticipated and brutal exploitation at the hands of their co-national female exploiter, the "madam," and her male associates. To the frustration of those involved in counter-

trafficking efforts, most women remain on the street to repay an enormous debt for fear that traffickers will visit bodily and spiritual harm on them and their families back home. The debt paid, some women flee the sex trade, and some operate as independent prostitutes, while others join forces with former exploiters, becoming madams in their turn.

The presence of Nigerian prostitutes has greatly expanded and altered the market for sex in Palermo. As recently as the late 1980s, street prostitution was scarcely visible in Palermo. In the seedier parts of the old city, a small number of aging career sex workers could be found. Transient native drug addicts, though younger and willing to perform for less, might well carry the HIV virus or other STDs. In the mid 1980s, North Africans arrived, followed by Albanians. The Nigerians arrived in the early 1990s and soon dominated the street trade. By the late 1990s, clients purchased sex quite openly day and night in the old city and in Favorita Park. The Nigerian population, which may have reached over 300 in 1999, declined as the police began in earnest the periodic sweeps and investigations that continue today, when there are an estimated 50-100 women.[3] The continued popularity of Nigerians among clients is a function of cost. Nigerians consistently offer themselves at prices well below those charged by others; in 2004, for example, Nigerians charged about 20-25 Euros per encounter, Italians 50, and transsexuals 100 (about US$120). Recent arrivals from Nigeria are more likely to accede to clients' demands for unprotected sex. Racial stereotypes also figure in the popularity of the Nigerians as Sicilian customers hanker after the supposedly "hot" African woman.

The institutional response, tepid at first, gained momentum as the involvement of criminal interests became evident and as the phenomenon became all-too-visible. The two national police forces, the Carabinieri (part of the Ministry of Defence) and the Polizia dello Stato (part of the Ministry of the Interior) made sweeps, conducted investigations, and in 2001 the Polizia established an office dedicated to foreign criminality and prostitution. A number of projects, affiliated variously with churches, non-governmental organizations, and government initiatives have sought to assist the Nigerian women. Some deal exclusively with trafficking and street prostitution while others incorporate them into a larger agenda. For some, women need to be liberated from the sinful bondage of prostitution, while others object to the coercion and violence inherent in trafficking but uphold a woman's right to sell sex in accordance with Italian law.[4] Some participate in street teams, others run residential homes for women who have left the streets, and still others attempt to generate interest in the subject among the authorities and the public.

This article explores the activities, successes and limitations of one of the better supported anti-trafficking projects in Palermo. Arranging for medical care, offering condoms and advice, and simply being a reliable and non-judgmental presence, project personnel help reduce the many risks faced by street prostitutes. The effort has not, however, succeeded in convincing women to leave their exploiters; debt peonage, networks and threats of spiritual reprisal ensure that virtually all women stay on the streets long enough to pay off traffickers. Those who do enrol in the program once they have regained their freedom experience a difficult adjustment, and not a few continue to work the streets as independent prostitutes, risking deportation. An accounting of the project indicates the strengths and weaknesses of Italy's innovative counter-trafficking initiatives. It also calls into question the distinction common to virtually all anti-trafficking efforts between "forced" prostitution, epitomized by trafficking and equated with a modern form of slavery, and "voluntary" prostitution.[5] The Nigerian women described below, like most sex workers everywhere, whether trafficked or not, enter the trade for a combination of reasons, with material need and family obligation being prominent. Any comprehensive anti-trafficking effort must therefore command significant resources and be grounded in a realistic appraisal of the circumstances of the women involved.

Given the nature of the subject under discussion, a few words are in order regarding this study's methods, sources and limitations. This effort forms part of a broader, collaborative project concerning various forms of "dirty work" performed by immigrant workers in rural and urban Sicily.[6] Conducting research on farm labourers and maids who may reside with their employers and who often lack permits poses formidable challenges, but these difficulties pale in comparison to those confronting the ethnographer hoping to investigate trafficking and street prostitution. We elected to forego attempting to contact active prostitutes, for several reasons. The criminals who control the trade and monitor the women are best avoided; trafficked women have good reason to conceal parts of their stories; finally, respectful of the hard won trust social workers had cultivated with the women, we did not ask to join them on their nightly rounds. We did speak with a handful of former prostitutes. At times they were forthcoming, at others hesitant to go beyond generalities.[7] The descriptions offered in this paper therefore rely heavily on conversations (1998-2004) with those whose work brings them into close contact with prosti-

tutes and trafficking issues; these include immigrants and Sicilians working on street teams, legal consultants, representatives of cultural associations and investigators for the Carabinieri and Polizia. The descriptions offered in this paper therefore are based on insights procured over several years from a variety of perspectives. Finally, a sense of context has been gleaned from published sources on the sex industry and trafficking.[8]

Concepts and Contexts

The Palermo case is best understood in the context of broader trends. Incorporating new markets and technologies, the commercial sex industry has grown exponentially over the past 15 years. The heterosexual men who make up the vast majority of consumers in the West spend billions of dollars annually on erotic dancing, telephone sex, massage parlours, pornography and prostitution (Kempadoo and Doezema 1998; Weitzer 2000). Patterns of law enforcement, population mobility and consumer preference (among other factors) shape regional profiles in this global market.

The recent proliferation of commercial sex in Europe owes much to the presence of foreign women (Brussa 1998; Wijers 1998). Freed from traditional constraints (and protections) by the solvents of economic and social dislocation at home and the promise of employment abroad, women are mobile as never before (Castles and Miller 1998; Phizacklea 2003). This movement is obvious in Italy, where street prostitution is the most common form of commercial sex and where mass immigration dates to the late 1980s (King and Andall 1999). Foreign women, mostly from Nigeria, the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, now account for half of all sex workers and nearly all those who engage in street prostitution, the most visible and dangerous form of sex work (Covre with Paradiso 2000). In the course of the 1990s, whole districts and thoroughfares became open-air sex markets in cities, along trucking routes, and near military bases and tourist enclaves. By the end of the decade journalists offered lurid accounts of foreign women held in captivity, drugged and beaten into a living hell of sexual slavery (e.g., Lombezzi 1998). Police, whose occasional actions had simply scattered prostitutes and their clients in the past, sought traffickers and began deporting prostitutes for unauthorized entry and residence. Advocates of sex workers and scholars confirmed the existence of trafficking and urged police to focus on the exploiters rather than the exploited. Distancing themselves from the sensationalistic accounts of journalists, they noted the variety present in the sector and pointed to the fluidity of trafficker-victim relationships over time and across nationalities (see Ambrosini 2002; Campani 2001; Carchedi et al. 2000; Covre with Paradiso 2000; Leonini 1999). At about the same time similar concerns were being voiced across Europe by scholars and by international organizations (see ICMPD 1999; IOM 1995; OSCE 1999), and by 2002 the European Commission announced an anti-trafficking campaign.

Italy has been at the forefront of such efforts. Under the provisions of Section 18 of the 1998 immigration law, victims of trafficking qualify for a series of supports and services.[9] Once they enrol in a program, they are eligible for a renewable short-term residency permit, enter a rehabilitation program, and may later register with the state employment agency. Section 18 provides two avenues to legal status. In the judicial path, a woman collaborates with the authorities, providing evidence and testimony against her exploiters; she qualifies for police protection in a manner similar to those turning state's evidence against the mafia. Most women, fearing reprisals, pursue the second path of social protection, electing simply to declare themselves victims, renounce the activity of prostitution (a requirement for the judicial option as well) and enter programs run by accredited local associations depending in part or whole on government funding. From 1999 when the program became active until 2002, about 3000 former sex workers, including some 1300 Nigerians alone, enrolled in such programs, with the vast majority opting for the social path (Albano 2002). The Department of Equal Opportunity has also raised public awareness of trafficking; a national hotline, established in 2000, is serviced by dozens of local social protection projects, including one in Palermo.

On the Streets of Palermo

There is certainly much need for such measures in Palermo. According to social workers and police in Palermo and published accounts,[10] once a woman enters into a pact with traffickers, she is handed over to Nigerian male criminals. These "trolleys" furnish a small group of recruits with purchased or forged documents and transport[11] them to Europe, where they deliver them for a reported US$12 000-14 000 each to the co-national madams who have commissioned the shipment. These madams, themselves former prostitutes, take their charge's passport, establish the debt owed (typically US$40 000-50 000), and inform her that prostitution is the means by which she will honour her debt. The madam uses the woman's earnings to pay expenses, takes a share for herself and allots a portion to the woman. She remits much of the money to Nigeria though the exact division of spoils remains a mystery.

According to social workers and former prostitutes, virtually every facet of the trafficked woman's life is dictated by the madam and her associates. The madam receives the new arrival and tells her that she will meet her obligations by earnings derived from street prostitution. She outfits the novice, instructs her in the basics of the business and introduces her to the group of women with whom she will work and live. Fearful or recalcitrant recruits are cajoled, threatened with violence and supernatural harm and beaten. In addition to the now enormous debt, the woman must pay dearly for lodging, sundry expenses, the "joint" or place of work on the sidewalk and whatever fines the madam chooses to levy for bad behaviour. The madam selects the work place in the city itself, and periodically sends one or two women to provincial centers. Drawing on a loose network of colleagues, the madam moves women from city to city every month or so. This gives clients the variety they crave, keeps the women from growing familiar with their surroundings, impedes police investigation, and discourages the inevitable, troublesome attachments cultivated by some clients.

The typical prostitute's life is characterized by danger and degradation punctuated by moments of achievement. Given the premium paid for unprotected sex and the pressure to purchase their freedom, prostitutes always run the risk of STDs, and daily sexual relations with up to a dozen men can cause pain and discomfort. Some clients verbally abuse the women, some assault them while attempting to steal their services or earnings. With little or no previous experience in sex work, the women may be slow to develop the professional stance crucial to managing clients and minimizing risks. Like street prostitutes everywhere, Nigerians in Palermo frequently seek solace or escape in alcohol, drugs and money.[12] At the same time, poor and ambitious young women enjoy having real money pass through their hands and gain satisfaction in sending cash home. The attentions of clients, including presents of jewellery and extra cash, bring material rewards and can enable women, often abused as African "whores," to dominate Italian men through demands and commands.

Working with Prostitutes

Given the realities of the women's lives, anti-trafficking efforts in Palermo face serious challenges. As noted above, in recent years a number of diverse entities have taken up the cause in one way or another. The Project (a pseudonym), established in 2001 and authorized under Section 18, is one of the city's better funded and most comprehensive initiatives. The Project offers daily assistance to prostitutes as well as a program for women who wish to leave the street and their exploiters. The effort is run under the auspices of a nation-wide association concerned with marginalized populations like drug addicts, battered women and AIDS patients. While Project personnel recognize the existence of different forms of sex work among foreigners and Italians and offer assistance to all who request it, their focus is squarely upon Nigerian prostitutes. The Project supports two street teams, each composed of a psychologist, a social worker and a cultural mediator. The mediators, a man and a woman, are both West Africans and long-time residents of the Sicilian capital. In conception and execution the project has benefitted from programs developed by NGOs elsewhere, notably TAMPEP.[13]

Project personnel—who may work on the street or in the office or both—arrange for medical attention and accompany women on routine and emergency visits to the hospital and doctors' offices. They hand out free condoms and air horns, and urge the women to adopt safe practices such as avoiding drunken clients, working in groups, insisting on condom use and the like. In these ways the teams establish the context for another goal, that of "pulling" the women from the streets. Team members describe the rehabilitation program authorized under Section 18 and tell the women about a special office set up for the purpose.

The realities of trafficking and the volatile behaviour of the prostitutes make these tasks extremely difficult. Mediators describe the women as very aggressive, at least initially. They shout, taunt and even strike at their would-be helpers. When it suits them, they speak insistently in Pidgin English, pretending they cannot understand a word the team utters in Italian, English or French. Nor do they hide their suspicions. More than once they have rifled through the project vehicle, searching for surveillance equipment (there was none). The women often put the teams to tests even as they come to depend on them. The female mediator described women who touch and rub up against her, saying they have AIDS. Under these conditions, cultivating trust requires patience and tact. Little by little the women come to appreciate the teams as reliable and non-judgmental sources of help and company. The most outrageous lies cease and a conversation, tentative to be sure, begins. At the hospital, team members learn the real, as opposed to the professional names, of the women but preserve the fiction of the pseudonym by feigning inattention.

In its first three years of operation, the Project managed to convince only a few prostitutes[14] to flee their traffickers. The effort's success instead appears to rest in the

daily concrete assistance it offers and in the behavioural change it effects in women. Team members claim that condom use is very common if not the rule on the street now, and they report an extremely low rate of HIV/AIDS. In these ways, by learning how to identify perils and avoid or minimize them, sex workers gain a measure of control over their situation and secure benefits to their physical and mental well-being. Such lessons can have important long-term effects because experienced workers may in turn instruct new recruits, and because after repayment many women remain in Italy, supplementing their income with independent sex work.

Forms of Control

The same profile of limited success is experienced by anti-trafficking initiatives elsewhere in Palermo and across Italy.[15] Discussions in Palermo and the literature suggest that the Nigerian system, specifically the powerful forms of control employed by traffickers, account for these patterns. Highlighted here are debt peonage and threat of violence, family obligations and supernatural sanctions.

To reiterate, a woman's debt obligation commences when she (or her family) enters into an agreement with a trafficker in Nigeria (called the "sponsor"), pledging to pay for safe passage to Europe from the future earnings of the job she will receive there. The enormous initial debt is augmented by occasional penalties for insubordination or late payment and by inflated deductions for room and board and other expenses. The madam berates unruly women, reminding them of the pact they have entered, and may beat them herself or call in Nigerian male "hitters." For her family back in Nigeria, a woman's failure to uphold the agreement in Italy can result in threats, beatings, and destruction of property. Owing to endemic corruption in Nigeria, families have little chance of resisting the well-funded and well-connected criminal interests involved in trafficking.

Trafficked women do gain more autonomy over time. While the new recruit is kept under close surveillance, the woman who has regularly paid down the debt for a time is granted more freedom. She may send (more) money to her parents and mail letters home with photographs showing her in beautiful clothes posing next to symbols of European wealth, and she may communicate more freely with Italian clients, friends, and social workers. The introduction of the cellular telephone, which enables madams to keep track of women from afar, also has granted the prostitutes unprecedented liberty of movement and communication. Madams in recent years have physically distanced themselves from the women they exploit. In the past, they typically resided with or near the women, demanded frequent instalments of the debt, and generally exercised direct control. Police raids and a series of arrests, starting in the late 1990s, however, have made such hands-on management very risky. Madams now reside far from their stable of women, delegating daily affairs to senior prostitutes or "sisters" while money is transferred electronically or picked up by male couriers. Despite these changes in daily operations, the woman who runs away risks violence to herself and her loved ones in Nigeria. Considering that enrolment in a Section 18 program offers merely the promise of a short-term permit (in all likelihood opening up only the possibility for documented low-wage employment), it is understandable that very few trafficked women flee their traffickers and that those who do enrol in Section 18 programs decline to cooperate with the police. As one prostitute bluntly said to a Project social worker, "I'll leave the street as soon as you offer me as much as I'm making right now."

Family and network cement the trafficking relationship in several ways. Prostitution abroad offers poor and ambitious young women the possibility to provide for themselves and their families in a way they could not if they remained at home. As a prostitute expressed it to a member of the Project, "I'm doing this so my daughter won't have to." Friends and family members often act as recruiters, touting the benefits of work in Europe and even arranging for potential recruits to meet with traffickers ("sponsors"). Given obligations to family, concerns for physical safety, and ambitions to accumulate significant resources, most Nigerians remain on the street long enough to repay the debt (reportedly 1.5-3 years), if not longer.

The role of family and network cannot be understood outside the context of gender discrimination and endemic economic problems in Nigeria. In response to a crisis in the early 1980s brought on by the end of the country's oil boom (and exacerbated by endemic corruption), Nigeria agreed to a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) in 1986. In accepting the loan package, Nigeria adopted a series of neo-liberal measures proposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, including cutting governmental expenditures, privatization, devaluation of the Naira, freezing wages and lifting of price controls. In the eight or so years in which these measures were in effect, unemployment figures rose, social services withered, living standards fell and the numbers of the very poor surged. According to the report commissioned by UNICRI (the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute), from the late 1980s emigration, crime, and trafficking for the purposes of sexual

exploitation have flourished in Edo State, the area from which most trafficked women come (Okojie 2003).[16] Young women in particular have faced tremendous obstacles in this environment. While their brothers remain in school, girls' educations come second to care-taking roles within large, often polygynous households. On the labour market, women's employment and earning potential are constrained by gender discrimination and limited educational credentials. Because women bear primary responsibility for children, they have suffered more than men from the decline in social services and economic opportunity; this is especially the case for the poorer women who are most likely to bear children at a young age. Finally, animism and polytheism glorify male ancestors, bolstering the patriarchal system.

Lack of education and the common view that daughters are servants of family interests have worked to channel girls, especially poorer ones, into prostitution, both at home and abroad, from the late 1980s.[17] The possibility of sex work abroad is common knowledge in Benin City. In a survey of almost 1500 young women there, one-third reporting being approached with offers of a sojourn outside the country, almost half knew someone who had gone abroad for prostitution, and about the same figure agreed that there were positive benefits to be gained by women engaged in trafficking (Okonofua et al. 2004:1321-1322). Parents, who would have repudiated prostitute daughters in the recent past, have come to tolerate it as a welcome source of income in uncertain times. As a former prostitute in Palermo put it, no one in Nigeria "asks questions when you are doing well." Given the reality that the surest way for a poor Nigerian to get to Europe and the riches it represents is through resort to traffickers, the sponsor is viewed as a potential benefactor rather than as a criminal.[18] In itself, material deprivation does not suffice to account for trafficking; after all, most areas in Nigeria are poor but trafficking is centred in Benin City. The explanation lies instead in the powerful conjunction of need, aspiration for the visible material benefits of the trade, criminal expertise, and the networks whose cumulative effect makes sex work in Europe a very real option for young women.

In addition to debt bondage and family obligations, religion acts to keep trafficked women on the streets of Palermo. The contract signed, the sponsor in Nigeria arranges for the woman to swear a sacred oath before a traditional shrine or celebrant in which she pledges, on pain of supernatural retribution, to honour her debt and to keep secret the identities and methods of her traffickers. The ritual involves a woman's bodily substances—pubic hair, nail clippings, even blood—that are retained to ensure compliance. In Italy, madams routinely threaten recalcitrant women (and their families) with a spiritual reprisal. They may remind them of the oath taken at home, and some madams tend shrines in their apartments and conduct rites themselves.

Various terms are used to refer to animistic religious practices common to West Africa. According to published sources, social workers, scholars and police investigators refer to "voodoo," a term also employed by some women. The women themselves tend also refer to the "sacred oath," as do some observers. With regard to the location and execution of the rites, there appears to be some variation, with rites being administered both in Italy and Nigeria by madams and by traditional priests (or individuals claiming such status). According to Prina (2003:26), rites were administered in Italy through the early 1990s but are now first conducted in Nigeria then repeated in Italy. Observers agree that the rites reinforce the subjugation of the women to traffickers. While some Western observers maintain that the women are spellbound by African magic, investigators and scholars have come to appreciate the complexity of the phenomenon. Prina (2003:28) notes that women feel as bound by taking an oath before family and community as they do by any supernatural obligation. According to Van Dijk (2001), rituals conducted in Nigeria, while binding women to a trafficker, also promise to enable their journey; women use "voodoo" to denote later rituals used in Europe with an eye to exploit and scare them.

In Palermo too variation exists in the use of terms and in religious practice. Police and social workers agree that madams routinely make reference to or re-enact the oaths, and that this supernatural threat is an important part of the subjugation of trafficked women. Difference of opinion does exist regarding the nature and efficacy of the rites. The Project's male cultural mediator, in a manner similar to Van Dijk, distinguishes between true and false rites, the former being celebrated by authentic priests with the intent to do good and the latter being used by unscrupulous impersonators to scare young women into compliance. When the mediator assures them that they can face no spiritual harm from specious rites, they protest, saying, "But you're African, you have to believe us!" He attributes this response to ignorance, but it is also conceivable that such utterances are intended to cultivate the image of an all-powerful control from which they are unable to escape. (The strategic role of the claim of total victimhood is taken up below.) Another indication that religion is more complex than imagined by most observers comes from a former prostitute. According to her, women commonly possess amulets and other items

thought to confer benefit or protection, suggesting again an ambiguous relation of the women to religion.

In sum, Nigerian prostitutes struggle with the combined pressures of repaying an enormous debt to violent criminals with powerful transnational connections, family obligations, and fear of religious sanction—all in a foreign country whose language and ways they little understand. These conditions account for the low incidence of women leaving their madams and their reluctance to aid police investigations (even after their debts are discharged). The alternating aggressive and needy behaviour with which they confront street teams likewise stems from these terrible pressures. Under these conditions, Project personnel, while not quite abandoning the hope of assisting women in fleeing their traffickers, realize that the surest benefit they can bring involves the daily contact and medical and other assistance. In 2004, an immigrant cultural mediator described his changing understanding of the Project's role. In the first years, he thought his efforts might well incur the wrath of madams and their associates, but it was a risk he was willing to accept in light of the human tragedy unfolding before him. Now he realizes that the women will not flee their exploiters until the Project can offer substantial resources; in the meantime, traffickers tolerate the Project as its services insure the health (and therefore profitability) of their victims. As another Project worker put it, "our task is to reduce the damage [associated with a phenomenon we cannot control]."

After the Debt

Once she has repaid the debt and is free of systematic exploitation, the Nigerian woman confronts the challenges of getting by with limited competence in Italian, few marketable skills, and a chequered past. (Very few consider returning to Nigeria.) For most, this means low pay and long hours as undocumented house cleaners and care givers to the infirm and elderly. Convinced of the moral imperative and health benefits of a new life, a woman may persevere, holding down several jobs. A religious awakening may also firm her resolve. The church, usually a Protestant denomination, offers an explanation for past errors, a design for a better future, and possibly a supportive community—an important resource for someone who may have lost her place in a family by virtue of retiring from a lucrative business. Or, unaccustomed to the long hours of domestic work and frustrated by low pay, she may return to the street. Through occasional sex work she can meet expenses, purchase the goods to which she has become accustomed, and perhaps send money home to Nigeria. A veteran of the streets, she insists on condom use and monitors her health. Her own master, she follows her own schedule, declines obnoxious clients, and retains her own earnings, although she may well have to render a fee for her place on the sidewalk. If she is more ambitious, she may work full-time or invest her earnings in new recruits, becoming a madam herself.

Because most Nigerians hold expired or forged papers, the quest for legal status looms regardless of the path chosen. Faking domestic employment and taking advantage of the occasional amnesty offered by the Italian government is one option. Rehabilitation programs authorized under Section 18 offer another. As noted above, programs grant trafficking victims a series of protections and possibilities for a future outside of sex work. Of the two ways of entering the program—denouncing the exploiters and aiding a police inquiry or simply reporting the fact of being trafficked and enrolling with an association—most choose the second option, to the consternation of Italian police.[19] Nigerian women, fearing reprisals, favour the social path to the permit and usually enter programs upon or near completion of their debt. For them, Section 18 has become another means to legal status. Once a woman has entered such a program, she is expected to renounce prostitution, complete a rehabilitation program (often including a stay at a residential centre), and undertake job training. Once she has fulfilled these obligations and held a job for a period, her temporary permit may be replaced with a regular one. These encounters bring Project personnel into frequent, often demanding contact with Nigerians.

There exists some variation among Project personnel with regard to the nature of trafficking and the legitimacy of prostitution, of course, but experience on the street and repeated encounters in the office with Nigerians engender recognition of the complexities and ambiguities of the situation. A female Italian social worker, for example, described how she viewed the women as total victims of sexual slavery when she began at the Project. Now she understands that most were not duped into prostitution (though they were surprised by brutality of their exploitation in Italy) and that they regard the Section 18 program as a convenient means to legal status. Like workers at other counter-trafficking efforts in the city, she complains that the women routinely alter the details of their stories, miss appointments, refuse to answer questions about their trafficking experiences, and do not disguise their view of Project personnel as irritating, bureaucratic obstacles standing in the way of a permit. Some continue to engage in sex work, despite having pledged to stop (a requirement for enrolment), occasioning angry calls to the Project by the police.

The relationship between Project personnel and the women is characterized by tension and accommodation, two instances of which are noted here. Nigerian women all offer the same story, that they are misled by offers of a good job in Europe and subsequently coerced into prostitution. With time Project workers come to realize (as research in Nigeria also has shown) that most women choose to enter pacts with traffickers, albeit in the context of widespread gender and class inequalities. The women's nearly identical stories should therefore be viewed more as ritual assertions of innocence than as statements of fact. In other words, the women seek to enhance their eligibility for Section 18 programs by engaging in "ethnic reputation manipulation" (Bovenkerk, Siegal, and Zaitich 2003), implying or claiming to be completely victimized by traffickers wielding awesome powers, including supernatural ones.[20] Secondly, as noted above it is not uncommon for women enrolled in the program to return to the street. Project workers are frustrated by this pattern; by selling sex on the street, the women are breaking their word and exposing themselves to health risks and deportation, should the police catch them. At the same time, they acknowledge that Section 18 programs provide so little in the way of job security and income that such an outcome is all but inevitable. They also appreciate the difficulties the women experience as they attempt to make a living in the low paying and dead-end jobs that are offered in the program and that await the women in the future. Viewing the women as scared, in desperate need, and manipulative by turns, they continue to offer advice and assistance, hoping to reduce the damage once more.

Conclusion

Section 18 certainly represents an important advance over the former practice of deporting foreign prostitutes lacking legal status. As the Palermo case shows, the program treats the women as victims of trafficking rather than as illegal aliens, and offers a range of supports as well as the possibility of legal status. As an anti-trafficking measure, however, Section 18 has yielded modest gains in the judicial arena owing to the preference of Nigerians for the social protection route and their reluctance to testify against their exploiters. For their part, social workers and legal consultants complain that lack of funding hampers the program. Job training and subsidies are crucial to attract participants and to help those enrolled make the difficult adjustments of the first two years. Given its small Nigerian community and the prevalence of informal employment, Palermo would appear an unfavourable location for the integration of graduates of the Section 18 program. Nor are these challenges confined to the Sicilian capital. As studies elsewhere in Italy (e.g., Abbatecola 2002; Maluccelli 2002) suggest, securing and maintaining steady legal employment remains the biggest problems for Section 18 participants. The prospects of Nigerians appear especially dim as they confront a gendered, segmented labour market with few skills and seek to assume a place in a society in which black African women are associated with prostitution.

Furthermore, current conditions in Nigeria do not present much cause for optimism. In a context of thorough-going gender discrimination, the disintegration of civil society, economic uncertainty, and well trodden pathways to Europe, numbers of young women and their families continue to convince themselves that the imagined benefits of a European sojourn outweigh the rumoured risks of entering into a pact with powerful sponsors. Barring a significant economic upsurge in Nigeria together with corresponding opportunities for women, many poor young women will continue to offer themselves up to traffickers. The success of traffickers rests on the disposition of efficient mechanisms for indebting and controlling vulnerable women, the ability to operate with seeming impunity in Nigeria, and a keen understanding of the Italian (and European Union) system. Indeed, in the face of increased police scrutiny and the growth of larger, vertically integrated crime syndicates among Russian and Albanian traffickers, the Nigerian system has remained stable and profitable. Barring a sea change in Nigerian law enforcement and economic conditions, the Italian police will be limited to making business more difficult for traffickers.[21]

The Palermo materials certainly show that criminals direct the long-term sexual exploitation of young co-national victims. While the powerful role of women and the use of supernatural sanctions distinguish Nigerian traffickers, like their Russian and Albanian and other peers they prey on the vulnerability of young women and utilize intimidation, violence, and debt peonage in pursuit of profit. Yet the presence of trafficked women on the streets of Palermo or Rome or any other city involves far more than organized criminality, far more than an aberration from the normal course of events.

The recent, rapid growth of a commercial sex industry of global scope—of which trafficking is but an awful part—is a clear manifestation of the seemingly inexorable push toward the commodification of human relations. The impact of development schemes and spreading capitalist relations has been especially severe on women and girls, as a host of studies attest. For young women in countries characterized by corruption and declining opportunities, stripping, erotic dancing, pornography or prostitution abroad promise money, autonomy and adventure in

exchange for what appears to be a short-term risk. Exploitative family relations and the presence of networks facilitate the entry of women into the sex trade, over time making the practice seem commonplace. Confronted with the high costs and legal obstacles of entry and residence in the European Union (or another destination country), prospective sex workers may turn for assistance to individuals and organizations poised to exploit this vulnerability. As Marjan Wijers has remarked on the basis of over a decade of work on behalf of trafficked women in the Netherlands, trafficked women are not:

> weak, stupid or passive victims. On the contrary, a great many end up in this position because they do not want to accept the limitations of the situation, because they are enterprising, courageous and willing to take initiatives to improve their living conditions and those of their families. But somewhere in the process they get trapped. [1998:77]

The prosecution of criminals is a necessary part of any anti-trafficking effort. But unless such efforts are based on an appreciation of the potent blend of ambition, obligation, coercion, and fear under which trafficked sex workers operate, and until they can command significant resources, like the Project in Palermo they will be confined to limiting the damage done.

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Acknowledgments

This paper would not have been possible without the assistance of many people in Palermo. Ninni Amari, "Bibi," Daniele Costantino, Cettina Di Benedetto, Marianna Di Rosa, Antonio Fioravante, Barbara Giardiello, "J.C.," Rosaria Maida, Farah Mejia, Vittoria Messina, Vincenzo Ognibene, Ilaria Sposito, and Giampiero Valenti provided insights, as did those who prefer to remain anonymous. The project benefited from the support of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and Dowling College. In preparing this essay for publication, the author was the beneficiary of incisive comments offered by two anonymous reviewers and journal editor Winnie Lem.

Notes

1 The number of officially resident foreigners in Sicily was 49 579 in 2002 (Caritas di Roma 2003:493). As of early 2003, officials in Palermo estimated 5000-7000 unregistered foreigners and counted 16 593 registered foreigners, up from 15 288 in 2000.

2 This description is based on conversations in Palermo and on published sources, including Campani (2000); Abbatecola (2002); Transcrime (2002); Okojie (2003); and Prina (2003).

3 These figures are based on estimates given by police and various associations.

4 The 1958 "Merlin Law" abolished state regulated brothels and eliminated the mandatory registration system (Gibson 1993, 1999). The current law permits the private practice of prostitution but forbids solicitation and prostitution in public places; it also criminalizes any person who incites, facilitates or profits from the prostitution of another. While the activity is not illegal, neither is it recognized, leaving prostitutes with no workplace protections. Because soliciting is illegal, police may, at their discretion, level "administrative" sanctions against sex workers. The inclusive definition of aiding and abetting a prostitute essentially criminalizes any relationship with a prostitute, from renting or sharing an apartment to fetching a packet of condoms. In this way the law severely constrains a prostitute's ability to enjoy anything approaching normal social relations (Gibson 1999:214-216).

5 As Jo Doezema (1998) has pointed out, the forced–voluntary prostitution dichotomy implies that only abnormal women would choose to sell sex. The commonsensical categories thus impede the recognition of the sex work as a form of labour deserving rights, dignity and legal protections. This point is very much worth considering as fewer than ten percent of the foreign prostitutes in Italy are trafficked (Covre with Paradiso 2000).

6 The project, conducted with Sally Booth, concerns immigrant workers in rural and urban Sicily, with a focus on greenhouse agriculture, domestic service, and street prostitution. The research has been described in several publications (e.g., Booth and Cole 1999; Cole and Booth In press).

7 Other authors have faced similar problems. Okojie (2003:29), for example, describes how formerly trafficked women repatriated to Nigeria often responded to researchers by demanding money in exchange for information, refusing to provide details of their experiences, and even denying having been involved in trafficking.

8 Anthropologists and other social scientists interested in Europe have displayed little curiosity about the proliferation of commercial sex, most of it quite visible, in their field sites. With few exceptions (e.g., Gülçür and İlkkaracen 2002; Wallman 2001), current information and analysis of the subject comes from international organizations such as TAMPEP (Transnational AIDS/STD Prevention Among Migrant Prostitutes in Europe [see Brussa 1998]) or national ones such as The Committee for the Civil Rights of Prostitutes in Pordenone, Italy. Investigative branches of the Italian police (e.g., DIA 2000, 2003a, 2003b) and studies conducted or commissioned by study centres (e.g., Transcrime 2002) and offices of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute (e.g., Okojie 2003; Prina 2003) describe the organization of trafficking by criminal organizations and efforts at law enforcement.

9 Section 18 and other aspects of the Italian system are described by Albano (2002) and Di Cortemiglia (2003).

10 See note 2.

11 In the early years of the trade women were flown directly from Lagos to Rome. In the wake of the scandal at the Italian Embassy in Lagos, where officials were caught selling visas, traffickers have adopted ever more circuitous air routes into Europe. They have also developed land routes. This middle passage through Africa carries its own perils, including border checks, violence and prostitution (Prina 2003).

12 Examples can be found in O'Connell Davidson (1998), Lever and Dolnick (2000) and O'Neill and Baberet (2000).

13 TAMPEP (Transnational AIDS/STD Prevention among Migrant Prostitutes in Europe) was founded in 1993 by organizations in the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy (Brussa 1998) to address the challenges presented by foreign sex workers. TAMPEP offices monitor the industry, cultivate ties to local health authorities, provide a range of legal, medical, and practical services, and make available information about STDs written in the workers' own languages. TAMPEP has also developed techniques for reaching the target audience. Cultural mediators, for example, are trained professionals who share the ethnic or national background of the target population. Mediators seek to communicate across linguistic and cultural divides, promoting safe sex practices and regular medical attention. Peer educators are practicing sex workers who serve as group leaders, imparting knowledge and influencing behaviour. (For current initiatives, see also www.tampep.com.)

14 Team members gave figures ranging from none to a few while the director claimed a higher figure. He failed to mention that his figure included women who had been transferred as a safety precaution to Palermo from areas in northern Italy.

15 Personnel working at another association in Palermo offering virtually the same services report similar successes and frustrations. Wallman (2001) describes how an effort in Turin has succeeded in helping sex workers gain a measure of control over their lives by identifying and managing risks.

16 According to all sources, Edo State and more specifically Benin City stand at the centre of the trafficking enterprise. According to Okojie (2003), women from the area predominated among the first generation of prostitutes in Italy; over time, these women have become madams, in turn recruiting and controlling other women. Because most hail from the Bini (Edo-speaking) ethnic group, this population is most closely affiliated with the trade. Women from other areas in Nigeria and other ethnic groups locally have also entered the trade; their identity is not so easily noted, however, because they bear forged or purchased documents attesting to Benin City origins and because some claim Edo ethnicity. In sum, the Bini appear to play a dominant role in the trade.

17 Bamgbose (2002) describes prostitution as a thriving business in Nigerian cities and notes that adolescent females predominate; parents, once horrified at the thought of a daughter as prostitute, have come to accept it a means of generating income. Asowa-Omorodion (2000) reports on prostitution in Benin City in the mid-1990s. Okojie (2003) notes that virtually every Bini family in Benin City has someone involved in some facet of trafficking and that the trade is tolerated and even a source of pride. Outside the realm of prostitution per se, exchanging sex for favours is far from unknown in Benin City. Omorodion (1993) reports that female traders routinely engage in extra-marital affairs, at least partly motivated by pursuit of diverse gifts; and Temin et al. (1999) report that teenagers are sexually active and that economic motivations figure prominently in sexual decisions of teenage girls.

18 It is true that some women, particularly in the early 1990s, may have been duped into the trade. But most, especially from the mid 1990s when the reality of the much touted "good job" abroad was known, knew they would be selling sex in Europe; what they could not anticipate was the cruelty of the system.

19 Police in Palermo describe having Nigerian women on the brink of providing testimony only to watch them decline at the last minute. Yet they have succeeded in indicting several madams and their associates (they are currently fugitives), in part on the basis of testimony given by victims of trafficking. In the case of applications for Section 18 protection through the social path, police use their discretionary power, interviewing all applicants in an attempt to elicit information regarding traffickers.

20 With regard to the case of Nigerian prostitutes in the Netherlands, the authors suggest that by promoting a view of the women as completely controlled by rites—"voodooization"—authorities downplayed the manifest economic and social motivations of the women and inadvertently constructed a compelling narrative that women and their advocates could utilize in asylum requests (Bovenkerk, Siegal, and Zaitich 2003:32-33).

21 Despite a 2000 agreement between Italy and Nigeria and despite the recent introduction of anti-trafficking (and anti-prostitution) laws in Edo State, very little headway has been made against trafficking. In Nigeria, no one had been convicted of trafficking as of 2003; and Nigerian women repatriated by Italian authorities routinely disappeared within hours of arrival from the reception center in Lagos, only to seek out their traffickers in an attempt to return to Italy (Okojie 2003).

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Working at Play: BDSM Sexuality in the San Francisco Bay Area

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Abstract: In this article, I argue that BDSM sexuality should be conceptualized as a form of "working at play." Considering two dominant models of sexuality, identity and lifestyle, I argue that BDSM is more fluid and less binary than identity. Moreover, while lifestyle focusses attention on BDSM as consumptive labour, this model does not adequately address the pleasure or sociality BDSM practitioners themselves emphasize. Instead, I argue that "working at play" recognizes the ways that practitioners move between registers of work (productive labour) and play (creative recombination). This analysis situates BDSM (and other sexualities) within the shifting cultural geography of U.S. late-modernity, drawing attention to the ways sexuality blurs boundaries between individual–social, real–pretend and leisure–labour.

Keywords: sexuality, BDSM, pleasure, San Francisco Bay Area, play, work

Résumé : Cet article soutient que la pratique sexuelle du BDSM [bondage, domination/soumission, sadomasochisme] devrait être conçue comme une façon de travailler en jouant. En prenant en compte deux interprétations dominantes de la sexualité, l'identité et le mode de vie, je soutiens que la pratique du BDSM est plus changeante et moins binaire que ne le suppose une conception identitaire de la sexualité. De plus, si le fait de concevoir la sexualité comme un mode de vie focalise l'attention sur le BDSM en tant que travail de consommation, ce modèle n'aborde cependant pas adéquatement les questions du plaisir et de la sociabilité auxquelles les adeptes du BDSM accordent eux-mêmes de l'importance. Je soutiens que penser le BDSM comme une manière de travailler en jouant tient compte des façons dont les adeptes naviguent entre les registres du travail (travail de production) et du jeu (recombinaison créative), travaillant ainsi à l'interface des catégories suivantes : individuel–social, réel–simulé et loisir–travail. Cette analyse situe le BDSM (et d'autres types de sexualité millénaire) dans le cadre de la géographie culturelle changeante des États-Unis en période de modernité avancée.

Mots-Clés: sexualité, BDSM, plaisir, Région de la baie de San Francisco, jeu, travail

Over the last 15 years, cultural anthropologists have paid increased attention to sexuality in both older and newer areas of inquiry. Kinship studies, for example, have been reinvigorated by a new focus on non-normative sexualities (Lewin 1993; Weston 1991). Novel work on intersections of sexuality and new global cultures, activisms, networks and media has been made possible by new theorizations of transnationalism (Altman 2001; Cruz-Malav and Manalansan 2002; Patton and Sánchez-Eppler 2000). Finally, reflexive accounts of the ways anthropologists' own sexual subjectivities form and inform fieldwork practices, knowledge construction and relationships between self and other have complicated understandings of positionality in the field as a whole (Kulick and Willson 1995; Lewin and Leap 1996; Markowitz and Ashkenazi 1999).

One effect of this work has been to problematize the utility of *identity* as a model of sexuality. As scholars in the social sciences and humanities have argued for some time, identity—a stable, fixed and essentialized form of being—can not accurately describe the diversity and fluidity of sexuality across lives, time or place (Sedgwick 1990; Weeks 1977; Weeks 1995). By documenting the tremendous range of sexual practices, roles and "identities" across cultures, the diverse connections made—and not made—between sexual acts and sexual identities and the ways that sexual identities respond to local and global conditions of change, anthropologists have made important contributions to this growing body of research (Blackwood and Wieringa 1999; Kulick 1998; Lancaster 1992). This work has generated an exciting set of questions on identity, sexual subjectivity, activism and desire cross-culturally.

Yet, these rich problematics have not often been (re)applied to the study of sexuality in the U.S. As David Valentine has noted, there is very little anthropological work on sexualities in the non-native U.S. that does not explicitly or implicitly employ the identity categories *homosexual* and *heterosexual* as organizing principles.

"Unintelligible desires"—desires that fall outside hetero/homo logics of identity—have received little scholarly attention (2003:124). This state of affairs is due to several factors. First, the non-native U.S. population was not, until recently, considered a proper object of anthropological attention. Second, much anthropological work on sexuality focusses on the diversity of non-Western sexualities in order to argue that models, labels and taxonomies developed in the West to describe Western sexualities are not applicable to non-Western people or their sexualities. While this is a very important contribution, these studies tend to problematize our theorizations of *non-Western* sexualities without questioning the validity of our assumptions about *Western* sexualities. Finally, in the U.S. sexuality is understood as a dichotomous and stable identity (where one is either homosexual or heterosexual). This model is implicit in much of the anthropology of sexuality because it resonates with the folk model of sexuality in the U.S. The current debates over "gay marriage," for example, demonstrate the continued relevance of a framework that maps sexual dimorphism onto gender complementarity and institutions of heterosexuality.

Nonetheless, sexualities that have proliferated in the past 15-25 years in the urban and suburban pockets of the U.S. resist classification as solely (modernist, binary) *identity.* In this article, I discuss BDSM[1] as a case that challenges these frameworks. "BDSM" is an acronym formed from three term-sets: bondage and discipline (B&D), domination/submission (D/s), and sadomasochism (SM). In this article, I use the terms "SM" and "BDSM" to refer to a diverse community that includes bondage, domination/submission, pain or sensation play, power exchange, leathersex, role-playing and fetish practitioners. I show that, to understand BDSM, we need to move beyond fixed, quasi-essentialist understandings of gender and sexual identity as modes of self-making and self-legibility. We must develop the ethnographic and theoretical tools to think sexuality in ways not confined to the identity frame, to ask: what models or logics describe sexualities in the late-modern U.S.?[2]

Based on ethnographic fieldwork (2001-2003) with the semipublic, pansexual[3] adult, consensual BDSM community in the San Francisco Bay Area and semiformal interviews with these practitioners,[4] I argue that the modernist model of *identity* does not capture the fluidity, proliferation or community-directed aspects of BDSM. Yet, at the same time, *lifestyle*—a model of sexuality as consumption—does not capture the ways that the labour of BDSM practice is also extremely pleasurable and communal. Instead, I read BDSM as a form of "working at play," a way of creatively combining both identity and lifestyle forms of sexuality. The tensions between work–play, act–meaning, lifestyle–identity and real–pretend that animate SM practitioners' desires, practices and sexualities are fully entwined with U.S. capitalism, although not in an irreducible way. Situating BDSM within the temporal, spatial and social-economic shift from modernist capitalism to postmodern or informational capitalism (Castells 1996; Fischer 1998; Harvey 1990), I understand SM sexuality as moving between registers of work (as productive labour) and play (as creative recombination). I theorize "working at play" as an interface between the individual and the social world; it is both an intervention into and an interpretation of the "real" or social worlds. Thinking sexuality as "working at play" captures these tensions and contradictions in potentially useful ways for understanding SM and other millennial sexualities.

Identity Confusions: Proliferation, Subjectivity and the Scene

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick opens her *Epistemology of the Closet* with the statement, "an understanding of virtually any aspect of modern Western culture must be, not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance to the degree that it does not incorporate a critical analysis of modern homo/heterosexual definition" (1990:1). This definition rests on sexual *identity*: a person's bio-sex, gender, gender role, sexual object choice, procreative choice, sexual acts, organs, fantasies, relationships, power and community. "It is a rather amazing fact," she writes, "that, of the very many dimensions along which the genital activity of one person can be differentiated from that of another...precisely one, the gender of the object choice...has remained, as *the* dimension denoted by the now ubiquitous category of 'sexual orientation'" (1990:8; see also Sedgwick 1993:7).

Sexual identity, in Western modernity at least, is a stable, and binary, category that defines the subject as either homosexual or heterosexual. For theorists of sexuality, this idea of identity is also the critical path to subjectivity: the ways that individuals become subjects in relation to regulatory apparati. For Lacan, for example, the subject comes into being through a regulatory ideal of binarily sexed materiality: the sexed body. For Foucault, the subject emerges through a disciplinary mode of identifiable and thus regulatory fixed sexual identity. As Foucault argues, "it is through sex—in fact, an imaginary point determined by the deployment of sexuality—that each individual has to pass in order to have access to his own intelligibility...to the whole of his body...to his identity" (1990:155-156). The process of subjection depends

on the regulation of sex and sexuality: the ways sexed bodies, gender and sexuality (as hetero or homo) fit together into a "matrix" (Butler 1990) or "system" (Rubin 1975) that work as the means of subjectification.

In queer and feminist theory, it is this categorical and regulatory defining of fixed and binary sexual identity that is the prerequisite for subjectivity. Judith Butler defines subjection, noting "indeed it is unclear whether there can ever be an 'I' or a 'we' who has not been submitted, subjected to gender, where gendering is, among other things, the differentiating relations by which speaking subjects come into being" (1993:7). Regulatory norms of gender and sexuality constrain and define the possibilities for subjectivity. These apparati consist of everyday forms of domination, what Foucault calls "discipline" (1995), as well as ever-increasing and invading modes of bio-power (Foucault 1990:135-145), each of which "subjugates and makes subject to" (Foucault 1983:212) through technologies such as identity (other forms of biopower include biomedicine, sociology, population control, health, citizenship, and racialization).

However, some theorists have suggested that sexuality under Western late-modernity (or postmodernism) has changed, that it is no longer a fixed and binary system of sexual difference that makes and marks the subject. Donald Lowe, in *The Body in Late-Capitalist USA*, argues that today we have "sexual *differences without* stable sexual *identities*" (1995:127). He contrasts this new sexual lifestyle to Michel Foucault's "bourgeois assumption of an interiorized sexual identity" (1995:127), arguing that with the "acceleration and expansion of production/consumption and the commodification of social reproduction in late-capitalism, we now have a very different sexuality...the result is a sexual lifestyle" (1995:127). For Lowe, the modernist binary of hetero/homo has been destabilized by the increased segmentation and differentiation of various sexualities, sexual styles and relationship forms. Sexuality has become almost entirely commoditized, a sign of and an impetus to sexualized consumption. In his argument, sexuality as lifestyle promises sexual pleasure through consumption; it is no longer disciplinary and repressive but rather generative (mainly of consumption and further segmentation or differentiation). Linking the proliferation of sexualities to the increased marketing of sexuality-as-position in the market (or positionality as variegated consumer), Lowe argues that as new sexual products, services and technologies proliferate, this results in multiple, fluid, unfixed desires (not identities).

Indeed, the BDSM community seems to reflect these shifts. New sexual identities, communities and technologies *have* proliferated in late-modernity (see Curtis 2004; Hall 2000; Kipnis 2000; Lowe 1995; Singer 1993). Some of these technologies—sex toys, reproductive technologies, sex work, therapeutic sex services, new forms of erotica, sex clubs, phone sex, pornography, internet technologies—have also had a direct impact on SM sexualities. In fact, BDSM has become the example par excellence in a certain new left theorizing about sex-as-commodification. In this argument, BDSM is a paradigmatic late-capitalist sexuality because of its tremendous market appeal, its ever-expanding paraphernalia, its non-reproductive nature and its affinity for the leisure demands of the U.S. (see Brooks 2000; Ehrenreich 1986; Lowe 1995:131). Today, for example, proliferating SM toys (whips, floggers, bondage equipment), clothing, nightclubs, furniture, internet web-pages, online stores, SM pornography (videos, internet, magazines), BDSM guide books (how-to books written by practitioners), personal advertisement web-pages and professional domination services are each important and visible components of the BDSM community.

Formalized classes and workshops are an increasingly important part of the BDSM scene in the Bay Area, and many of these classes focus on training practitioners in necessary skills for particular toys (for example, how to use canes, rope bondage or floggers). In a typical week, a pansexual BDSM practitioner in the San Francisco Bay Area can choose from on average five classes or workshops on techniques, skills, relationship styles and other scene dynamics. As an example, during the week of March 14, 2004 there were seven classes: an introductory BDSM course for couples, two classes on cock and ball torture (CBT), one class on rope bondage, one on non-monogamous relationships, one on tantric SM, and one on "aural sex." This rise of classes, which I explore elsewhere, has shifted SM from peer-based skill-acquisition and networking to organizational or more formal modes of self-creation.[5] At the same time, the explosion of specialized equipment, toys, educational material and spaces, and the increased segmentation of the scene mean that BDSM—a coalitional acronym to begin with—has bred increasingly specialized identities (or roles).

Along with the rise of this more formal, commoditized scene is a proliferation of labels and terms used within SM. The profusion of identity claims in SM destabilizes the primacy of sexual orientation/identity as the ground of sexual subjectivity. In these recombinations, BDSM challenges assumptions about being and positionality that rely on an understanding of sexual orientation as a fixed, stable and binary category. My interviewees identified themselves in very specific, and relational ways: pervert, voyeur, master, masochist, bottom, pain slut, switch, dom(me), voyeur, slave, submissive, pony, butch bottom,

poly perverse, pain fetishist, leatherman, mistress and daddy. For those who identified themselves as tops, there were just plain tops, but also service tops, femme tops, switches with top leanings and dominant tops.[6] Further, these SM orientations are typically modified with sexual orientation (for example, het, dyke, gay, hetero-flexible, bi, genderqueer), relationship style or dynamics (for example, poly[amorous], Master/slave, TPE [total power exchange], married) and interests (for example, flogging, Japanese rope bondage, canes, pony play).

In David Valentine's (2003) analysis of the introductions at an "alternative lifestyles" support group, he argues that his informant's drag, fem and transgender subjectivities challenge a binary gender/sexuality matrix. Similarly, BDSM sexuality troubles a tidy mapping of sexual identity onto clearly sexed and gendered subjects. For example, at the monthly Society of Janus lunch (called a "munch"), held on Saturday afternoon at a tapas restaurant in San Francisco, each attendee stands to introduce themselves to the gathering (usually between 50 and 75 people). This introduction generally takes the form of name, sexual orientation, BDSM orientation, important interests or styles, some autobiographic data and relationship status. It has the pattern of Alcoholics Anonymous meetings: "Hi, I'm Ralph, and I'm a bi poly switch. I just moved here from Ohio, and this is my first munch. [clapping, cheering]"; "I'm Joe. I'm a het, sensual top. I'm teaching next week's QSM class on canes, and I'm still looking for demo models, so come talk to me if you're interested"; "I'm Carla and I'm the treasurer of Janus. I'm a bondage bottom."

This identity proliferation, tied to the proliferation of commodities and techniques, troubles a neat reading of SM sexuality as (modernist) identity. Patrick Califia-Rice's iconic quote is worth reprinting here; Califia-Rice, an author, SM activist and leatherdyke at the time, writes, "if I had a choice between being shipwrecked on a desert island with a vanilla lesbian and a hot male masochist, I'd pick the boy" (Califia-Rice 1994:158). The surprise of this statement is the way Califia-Rice unexpectedly privileges SM desire (sadism) *over* sexual identity (lesbianism), emphasizing BDSM practice or power relationships over the naturalized, sexed body that is at the base of sex-gender-sexuality. Thus, in contrast to the model of modern sexual identity based on dimorphous sexed bodies, complementary gender and binary sexual orientation, BDSM challenges a cleanly differentiated reading of sexuality (although it does not completely subvert it).

Critical to the heterosexual/homosexual binary that organized modernist sexuality identity is the relationship of privilege and power between these terms: the ways heterosexuality functions as a master signifier, deployed yet contested, rigidly enforced yet always incompletely rendered on the bodies of the subjects in question. As Linda Singer notes, following Baudrillard, "regulation works through the installation of a set of binary relations that entail the legalization and normalization of some practices at the same time that others are criminalized" (Singer 1993:42). These deployments rely on an oppositionality—a binary relationship—between heterosexuality and homosexuality. As Valentine argues, the subjects of the support group are marked by "difference *from* heteronormativity" (2003:135; see also Valentine 2002). Valentine's informants articulate desire in ways that challenge the gendered assumptions underlying the hetero/homo binary, combining and recombining gender, sex and sexuality in unexpected ways.

In contrast, although BDSM desires are fluid, open and diffuse, they are not all oppositional to heterosexuality. BDSM practitioners' articulations of desire, while similarly suggesting other organizations of gender and sexuality, do not always offer a non-conformist reading of gender or heterosexuality. For example, Panther, a heterosexual dominant top, told me that for him, BDSM was an identity or orientation. He continued:

> But it depends on which aspect you're talking about...for a lot of people...it's not about whips and chains, it's about control, it's about power exchange. I think there are a lot of people that can relate to the power exchange: losing control, who holds the remote, who holds the checkbook, who chooses the radio station, who's driving, who decides where we're eating, where we are going on vacation.[7]

For Panther, if "whips & chains" are obvious signs of difference from normativity, than holding the checkbook, driving or deciding where to go on vacation are marked (in this logic) by similarity to heteronormativity.

Instead, what differentiates BDSM practitioners is a collective sense of belonging to a "kinky" community of practitioners. It is this non-axial (Sedgwick 1995) relationship between SM and sexual identity, the way Panther's heterosexuality mimics hegemonic heterosexuality, for example, while Califia-Rice's sadism, more than his sexual identity, dictates object choice, that I want to stress. In this way, BDSM works as a collective community, an abbreviation that unites diverse practices, roles and behaviours. And, while at base, BDSM is the adult, consensual exchange of power, pain and pleasure, in practice, the community embraces a wide range of practices, relationship types, roles, desires, fetishes, identities and skills as WIITWD ("what it is that we do"), the most open definition of SM.[8]

BDSM, as an open set of practices, is contrasted to "vanilla": "what it is we don't do." Vanilla, for practitioners, does not have a stable referent; it is what BDSM is defined against, a slippery and variable sense of normativity. Vanilla, for some, is heterosexual, missionary-position sex within marriage. It is sex without toys, costumes or role playing for others. It is almost always mundane: "if all I had was vanilla sex, I would just get so bored!" For some it is sex without power exchange; Estrella, a lesbian femme top, told me that vanilla sex would be the 1970s lesbian-feminist ideal of two womyn lying in bed, holding hands and reading poetry to each other. Here, BDSM is differentiated from "vanilla" sex based on *practices,* not stable identities. In this way, if BDSM is an identity, it is a loose, collective identity based not on a fixed, essentialized binary between heterosexuality and homosexuality, but rather on a fluid assemblage of practices.

BDSM as Practice: The Doing and the Being of BDSM

In her work, Judith Butler argues that gender is a series of acts, doings, which cohere in identity only through a misreading of doing and being. As she states, "gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed" (1990:25); it is the appearance of being, an effect of the ways repeated, stylized acts congeal over time into substance (1990:33). These confusions over being and doing, where identity means being, although it can only ever be a doing, apply to BDSM in an interesting way. For, although BDSM is sometimes thought of as an identity, it is explicitly imagined as an identity based on doings: BDSM is a practice of pleasure.

Jay, for example, a heterosexual switch with top leanings, argues that SM activists fighting against discrimination should not follow the model of sexual orientation, which would argue that BDSM practitioners are a sexual minority deserving of rights based on (immutable) identity. Instead, he understands SM as a sexual activity. He tells me:

> It's very clear that the kind of SM that is common in the community doesn't deserve to be pathologized, but the question is: which way do we take it? Do we take it the route of "we are another sexual orientation, and should therefore be protected under alternative sexual orientation theory"? Or do we say that SM is comparable to oral sex: it's a sexual activity that shouldn't be understood as inherently wrong. I'm more inclined to go with the latter.

Jay feels that, because of the tremendous variation in SM identities and relationship styles, the best political directive is one that emphasizes SM as practice, not identity. Similarly, Lady Thendara, a bisexual top, explains that to her, BDSM is not such a deep part of her personhood that she needs or wants to "come out" as a practitioner:

> I don't feel it's so integral to who I am as a human being that I need to tell my mom about it. I certainly don't want my mom to tell me what she and my dad like to do in the bedroom; I really don't want to know it! I mean, to me it would be horrifying if I told my parents and my dad said, "Me too! I love to tie up your mom!" I'd be like, "Oh dad, I really don't want to think about that"...Being gay is totally different, because if you're in love with someone, you ought be able to tell your parents, your friends, your family, "I love this person." But I can say that about my partner, male or female, without saying what we do.

Her comments on the ways the politics of coming out are very different for SM practitioners than they are for gay men and lesbians suggests that BDSM is more practice than identity, or at least less like identity as it is most often defined.

SM is about doing rather than being; as an obvious example, people who do BDSM are generally called "practitioners" (those who practice SM) or "players," not BDSMuals. In SM there is no overarching word that conveys being-identity (like lesbian, heterosexual, woman); while words like sadomasochist, kinkster, lifestyler or dominant are common, they each convey a specific mode of relating that makes sense within the scene, not a larger, fixed, stable and essential identity.

This scene-specific terminology is a reminder that BDSM is not simply a practice; unlike most devotees of oral sex, for example, BDSM practitioners participate in a community: the scene. The SM scene is a space of belonging, shared attachments and sociality. At most of the semipublic play parties I attended, the "social area" was busier than the play area (the dungeon proper). The space, a sort of lounge, was usually filled with people hovering around the cheese cubes and the M&Ms, drinking water and sodas, sitting on slouchy couches and talking about their lives, jobs, children and relationships. Munches, too, are seen as *social* events: one cannot play at a munch, and scene dress is not usually acceptable. A large part of the pleasure of being an SM practitioner is about belonging to the SM community.

This is especially true for the people I worked with, who had made the SM community in the San Francisco Bay Area home in a variety of ways. As Malc, a heterosexual, mostly dominant man put it, participation in the SM community differentiates between "people who are

identified as BDSM practitioners and people who just do rough sex." Others noted that participation in the scene differentiated "public," "lifestyle," "heavy," "real" or "experienced" SM practitioners or players, from "private," "weekend," "bedroom," "unsafe," or "newbie" players (for an analysis of the ways the gay leather club The Mineshaft similarly forged community and belonging, see Brodsky 1995). Part of this particular binary is the ways SM practitioners have learned to be practitioners through participation in a social, sexual, educational community.

At once deeply personal and deeply communal, identity and practice, BDSM highlights the limitations of thinking sex as only identity, or as a set of stable taxonomies based on sex-gender-sexuality. BDSM sexuality is a polymodal combination of identity, orientation, lifestyle, hobby and practice, based around a community. For example, Estrella told me that for her, BDSM "is definitely an orientation in the same way my sexual orientation is not a sexual choice, it's just who I am, so that makes it an identity. And it's a practice in the sense that I do go to classes and I do take the practice of my craft seriously on the level of activities." At the same time, Estrella notes the ways SM is also a community for her, and the ways that identity and practice merge with community:

> It's similar to the way I grew into my lesbian identity: oh, this is who I am, other people do it, there's a name for it, and there are rules about it. And I can choose to learn those rules, or not, be part of that community or not, follow those rules or not, but yeah, there's a name and now I know what I am.

Estrella's comments reveal the ways that BDSM for her is simultaneously an orientation or identity (like being lesbian), a craft (like a hobby), a practice and a community or social scene. This complex constellation of meanings is typical for BDSM practitioners. Some practitioners experience SM as a stable, life-long identity, but others experience it primarily as a sexual lifestyle, unfixed desire, social scene, hobby, practice or spiritual journey (especially, perhaps, in Northern California).[9]

The proliferation of identity-forms, roles and personae in BDSM communities, and the communitarian nature of SM, makes theorizations of BDSM as an *identity* of limited value. In this, BDSM is not unique; this theoretical limitation holds for many sexualities in late-modernity. In his recent article critiquing the ways much work on gay and lesbian language reifies identity, Don Kulick notes that sexuality-as-identity misses "everything that arguably makes sexuality sexuality—namely fantasy, desire, repression, pleasure, fear and the unconscious" (2000:270). In the remainder of this article, I will rethink SM in light of this urging, reading the specifics of SM sexuality to begin to track the complex ways sexuality—not sexual identity—works on the ground. I will focus on the ways practitioners understand and enact tensions between work–play, leisure–labour and performed–real in BDSM play, developing an analysis of BDSM as "working at play."

Sexuality as Labour, Sexuality as Play

BDSM practitioners spend much of their time, money and energy being practitioners. Almost all of the practitioners I interviewed had invested a tremendous amount of money in their toy collections, wardrobes and, in some cases, play spaces (home dungeons). Estrella, who has a larger-than-average collection because she works as a professional domme, told me:

> I have thousands of dollars worth of toys, and I still don't have everything I want...there are definitely things I'd like to have that I can't afford, like a vacuum bed [or vac sack, a bondage device made from two layers of latex stretched in an 8x4 foot frame], a cage, some of those things I don't have space for. I mean I could theoretically put them on a credit card, but where would I put them? My daughter's room? "Honey, can I store this in here while I'm not using it?" But yeah, all the other toys, I have 15 floggers, and 15 canes, maybe 20 canes, paddles, electrical equipment; I have some big leather [items] like bondage toys, miles of rope, corsets, fetish wear, shoes and all that...I always go to Folsom [street fair, an annual leather/SM street fair in San Francisco] with a budget and a list of things I definitely want.
>
> **MW**: What's your budget?
>
> **Estrella**: For Folsom, at least $300. I've spent as much as $800. But yeah, $300, that's a couple floggers, or a flogger and a couple of toys.

Floggers, especially desirable handcrafted ones, cost between $150-300, depending on their size, number of tails and material or type of leather. Leather or wooden paddles are mid-priced, between $30-150. Other toys are less expensive; one can purchase rattan (to make canes) in bulk at garden supply stores for $1 a foot. Clothing also ranges in price, but leather pants, vests, jackets, corsets and fetish clothing (made of vinyl, latex or rubber) is expensive. Madam S., a store on Folsom Street that specializes in women's fetish clothing, carries latex dresses in a range of colours and styles for between $200 and $1,000. Dark Garden, a corset store, will make a customized leather corset for around $500-$600.[10] A de rigueur black leather jacket can be a gift, scrounged from an area thrift

store or acquired at one of the "lower quality" leather emporiums in the Bay Area, but ideal SM clothes can easily cost several hundred dollars.

Although most practitioners, like Estrella, don't have the money or the space in their apartments or houses for a dungeon room, some did. These practitioners outfitted the room (an extra bedroom or furnished basement) with custom-made bondage and play furniture. Mark, a heterosexual switch and bondage aficionado, for example, appeared to own every available bondage item, and hosted bondage parties at his home to give friends a chance to play with his heavy cages, full leather table, home-made bondage chair, vac sack, custom-sized leather body bag, numerous eyebolts for suspension play and customized horizontal stocks. Investing thousands of dollars in bondage furniture is unusual (and not every practitioner could afford this kind of spending) yet most practitioners had accumulated a large number of toys, clothes, books, videos and other paraphernalia over the years.

In addition to spending much discretionary income on toys, practitioners also devote a tremendous amount of time to SM practice. In a half-joking exchange, Stephanie, a bisexual dominant/sadist tells me she spends 50 hours a week doing SM or SM-related activities. Anthony, her husband, a bisexual dominant, responds "I spend at least forty hours a week doing scene related stuff," and Stephanie laughs, "Oh my God honey...Do you get health benefits with that? You should get a raise. You'll be employee of the month!" Many practitioners spend about 15 hours a week doing SM-related activities: perhaps one munch, one or two play parties or scenes (in public, semi-public or private spaces) and one class, workshop or organizational meeting each week. Dylan, for example, a bisexual/lesbian submissive, estimated eight to 15 hours a week, and then added a few more hours to account for the quantity of pornographic writing she does. Hailstorm, a heterosexual top, estimated three hours a day, every day; while Donald, a straight-ish service top, estimated between 10 and 15 hours a week. I suspect, based on the sheer size and volume of several very active local email discussion lists that my interviewees underestimated the time they allot to reading and responding to email. Mollena, a bisexual, submissive bottom, originally estimated that she spent around 25 hours a month on SM, and, when asked about email (she had already explained that she spent an hour a day on SM-related email lists), laughed and said, "it's got to be ten hours a week. I can't lie" (I suspect this is still a low estimate).

In addition to organized events, practitioners spend time looking at internet pages on SM (stores, personal advertisement sites, online magazines, political groups); following the latest news on SM in the media; reading and watching (and for some, writing and producing) books, magazines and videos on BDSM and going to local BDSM stores. Mark, for example, is developing a bondage website, and spends at least 60 hours a week on that alone. Participants who are officers of various clubs spend time performing their volunteer tasks as well: updating the online calendar of events, collecting money at the door or phoning to arrange classroom space rental. Finally, for many participants, most of their friends and social circle are people involved in the scene, so going to movies, celebrating events or having friends over for dinner is also part of BDSM sociality. Gretchen, for example, estimates that 80% of her friends are in the scene; in this, she is not at all unusual. SM sexuality, then, describes something both inside and outside the bedroom; it is attending classes and workshops, meeting scene friends for a drink, volunteering as membership secretary for an SM organization and planning yearly trips to BDSM conferences or retreats, as well as having SM sex.

The time and energy participants devote to SM is connected to the ways BDSM is understood, by practitioners, to be a form of work or labour. As BDSM has become more mainstream, more organizationally focussed and more middle-class, practitioners work on their SM in self-conscious ways, mobilizing American discourses of self-improvement, actualization and education. Today, SM practitioners learn how to be practitioners by attending a newcomers discussion group, going through an orientation to become a (card-carrying) member of a BDSM organization and taking classes on basic topics (flogging, spanking, aftercare [post-play soothing, dialogue, and processing]). They graduate to more advanced topics (edge play classes [such as rape play], suspension bondage, master/slave relationships), attending play parties and munches as they become more involved and integrated into the scene. Eventually they may become teachers, munch leaders, recognized experts or officers in SM organizations.

This new discipline is organized around working at SM sexuality. Even once they have achieved advanced knowledge some practitioners describe themselves as "journeymen" practitioners, referring to the way they remain an apprentice, always learning more about their craft. Mollena describes her initial foray into BDSM: "I really became really geeky about it: I was on the 'net, I researched everything, I found the books and went out and bought them...I really spent a lot of time and did a lot of personal research and introspection and a lot of writing about it." After finding out about the Society of Janus and The Exiles, Mollena attended an orientation, and started going to classes and munches:

> At the Berkeley munch I met a bunch of other people, and I was invited to my first play party and it sort of blossomed from there. The involvement purely is not enough, to get you really, fully involved; you have to really work at it. It's like a project, you know?

Similarly, Chris, a heterosexual dom, explained that he and his wife "have certain goals for our own growth and development" as practitioners, and that they use their "BDSM relationship as an opportunity for general work" on their relationship. They make explicit plans for progressing along their goals, such as "daily affirmation, daily motivation, exercises that we do," each designed to work on specific SM goals (such as behavioural training) as well as their larger relationship. These are sexual practices organized around labour; the practice of BDSM is a time-consuming, expensive, formalized form of working at sex.

In her (2000) essay on adultery, Laura Kipnis argues that modern marriage is about extracting labour, that marriage-type relationships are about work. Her essay makes explicit the sense that there is something bad about working so hard at sex. For Kipnis, following Marcuse, sexuality should be liberatory; it should be free from labour, work and capitalist regimentation. Lowe too decries the ways that late-capitalism has conscripted sexuality into exchange practices, imagining that before this moment of late-capitalism, sexuality was (safely) located within bonds of alliance and kin, inaccessible to capitalist absorption.[11] In this analysis, the reach of capital has affected sexuality for the worse. Yet, for BDSM practitioners, SM sexuality is about desire, pleasure and play; it is a re/creative practice. It is not the soul-deadening, vampiric labour that Kipnis describes, even as the SM scene becomes ever more formal, disciplined and organized. BDSM is not an empty consumptive lifestyle; it becomes meaningful to practitioners as a community that is about the pleasures of play.

Martin F. Manalansan uses the phrase "play with the world" to describe the ways that diasporic Filipino gay men reorganize social belonging in a racist urban U.S. space. For these men, play is a way of "negotiating the interplay of difference, borders, and hierarchies" (2003:140); it is meant to "confuse, distract and fool the public" (2003:144). "Play" here refers to an everyday mode of performance that negotiates and renegotiates relations between self and other in terms of collective belonging. Manalansan's deployment of play focusses attention on the ways that negotiating this space between the self and the social is also fundamentally about power; play is a way of working with and against racist, sexist, homophobic, classist, anti-immigrant and other forms of social inequality.

While Manalansan understands play as thoroughly imbricated with the workings of the everyday, play is typically understood to refer to a space that is bracketed from the everyday. In his classic analysis of the Balinese cockfight, Clifford Geertz argues that the cockfight, because it is "only a game," allows the activation of kin and village rivalries and status tensions in play form (1973:440). "Deep play," for Geertz, drawing on Bentham, is play with dangerously high stakes, capable of dislocating actors from the social field. The cockfight, then, is an expression and negotiation of social status, safely located in a space of play. Yet expressing status tensions (which could not be directly expressed) in game or play form also has an impact on "real" social structures: "it is this kind of bringing of assorted experiences of everyday life to focus that the cockfight, set aside from life as 'only a game' and reconnected to it as 'more than a game,' accomplishes" (1973:450).

In BDSM, play is a form of collective belonging based on the bracketed activity of SM. In the community, sexual practices, styles and dynamics are referred to as various forms of play. Play refers to any particular BDSM scene/event ("Jon and I played last night"), as well as to general categories of BDSM styles or activities ("My play style is butch bottom," "Sara is really into hot wax play"). Rachel, a bisexual pain fetishist/submissive explains that she calls doing SM "playing," in part because the alternative, "scening," just "isn't a word!" (Although I have heard this usage, "scening" is much less common than "playing"). Rachel continues, "I will use the verb 'play' because that's how I regard what I do. I mean that is my recreation...I'm not really into very many sports, I take my dog out once in a while; what I do to play as a recreational activity is to get beat up." For Rachel, SM is recreation, a leisure activity (for a discussion of gay SM sex as recreational, and not romantic, see Lee 1979).

At the same time, practitioners are quick to assert that, just because it is "play" does not mean it is not "serious." Some are nostalgic for the Old Guard Leathermen days when, instead of "play," SM was considered "work" (as in, "I'll work you over") and whips were "tools" not "toys" (e.g., Magister 1991:98). David Stein writes that the rise of the new SM scene[12] "occurred during the same period that S/M activity came to be almost universally referred to as 'play,' S/M practitioners as 'players,' and the tools we use as 'toys.'" He continues, sarcastically, "the same revolution that decoupled heterosex from procreation and gave us sport-fucking has turned S/M into a sex-optional form of recreation....Less hazardous than football but almost as strenuous, it even has aerobic benefits" (2002:5). As Jezzie, a bisexual slave put it, "I don't

like people trying to convince us that what we're doing is play and fun because we put so much work into it, so much work. It's not easy." When I asked Jezzie, and her husband Anton, a heterosexual master, what they meant by "work," he answered "emotional, intellectual, also just thinking day-to-day, how do you do it?...How does one set up your life so that it's, so that it will work? You know, we do a lot." He went on to describe the kind of "work" he meant: talking, being honest, self-examination, organization, planning and perseverance, even though "there's a lot of times when you just don't feel like putting forth the effort." Hayden, a lesbian masochist/slave tells me, "It's very serious to a lot of people. It's not a game. It's not something to be taken lightly. Hollywood and movies, and even fiction, puts this kind of glow on it, like it's so romantic and it's so fantasy oriented and it's not. It's work."

This emphasis on the ways SM is both work and play—recreation, re-creation and labour—is important. In a roundtable discussion about the word "play," Jeff, a heterosexual dominant top, notes, "for some people it's not about play, it's about a deep spiritual connection." Paul, another heterosexual dominant top responds, "the separation of play and seriousness is something that needs to be notated. Why is that such an obvious distinction?" Here, SM is an example of what Sherry Ortner calls the "serious game." Social life, she argues, is organized and constructed like a *game* because it is social (relational and interactive), because it has given rules, actors and goals and because actors play with skill, intention, wit and knowledge. At the same time, it is a *serious* game because it has extraordinary high stakes, is always about power and inequality, it is intense and it is played in earnest (1996:12-13, this is very similar to Geertz's understanding of "deep play").

Thus, as I have been describing, the time, money and energy practitioners spend on their SM practice is a form of sociality. Combining consumption, community and pleasure, contemporary BDSM sexualities are a form of working at play: a serious game that blurs boundaries between labour and leisure, work and play and real or everyday life and fantasy or scene life. It is to this latter issue that I turn to next, to ask: how does SM play map out relationships between the individual and the social world?

Play, Performance and the Real

In September 2002 I attended a workshop entitled "Role Play: Daddies, Mommies & More." The description of the class, circulated via email, read:

> Childhood spankings aren't supposed to be erotic. No self-respecting Mommy, Auntie or babysitter would ever touch her tiny charge inappropriately while changing a diaper...and a game of ball is not a power exchange. Those were the rules when we were actually children. But consenting adults can make any arrangements they want. This is a class about choosing, exploring and enjoying roles. Anyone can role play. It doesn't matter whether you're male or female, Top or bottom, gay or straight...and you don't have to be a polished actor. Learn to determine the characters and scenarios that arouse and engage you, and how to negotiate and set boundaries with your partner. Even experienced players are sometimes uncomfortable with the idea of scenes built around such taboos as childhood memories.

The class was on "age play": dynamics that play on and against age (e.g., daddy/boi play, incest play, adult babies). As Estrella began the workshop, she said she would be focussing on incest play, because of all the forms of age play it "is the most taboo...it inspires guilt and squicks [to be squicked is to respond with visceral disgust to some form of BDSM play]." Incest age play is a twist on a role that everyone knows: it is a way of perverting, by re-enacting with a difference, one's own experience of being a child. Estrella included a discussion of some of the common forms of age play, some of its risks and concluded with a 20-minute demonstration of incest play.

During the presentation portion of the class, the "brother" and "sister" (adults performing children perhaps eight years old) played with toys on a blanket at the side of the presentation stage. When the demo began, Estrella became the daddy, arriving home. "He" sat on a chair at the centre of the stage, and began speaking to his children, asking them what they had done today and whether they would be nice to their daddy this evening. Daddy coaxed the girl over with the promise of reading her a story. After the daughter sat on Estrella's lap, he began reading to her from a children's book. As the reading progressed, Estrella began adjusting the girl, positioning her more firmly against his crotch. Continuing the reading as the girl squirmed, daddy began rubbing himself against the girl's ass, holding on to her hips. As the audience watched, daddy pushed against the girl; Estrella was talking both to the audience and to his daughter ("daddy likes it when you sit on his lap," "be a good girl for daddy now," "stay still for daddy"). As daddy started touching his daughter between her legs (over her white, cotton panties), he told her she was a good girl, to stop fidgeting and to "give daddy a kiss now" (a big, wet French kiss).

The demonstration was both riveting and disturbing for the audience. The enactment of this form of incest was

uncomfortably "realistic," yet at the same time, of course, the girl and daddy involved are real-life peers: they are friends who both work as professional dominants in the East Bay. The girl, though younger than Estrella, was clearly an adult. Yet, the role play, which included costumes, a setting and specific, culturally familiar personae, worked like any (successful) performance to transport the audience, enabling us to suspend disbelief and experience the interaction as a real exchange of power. The girl was wearing knee socks, a skirt and pony tails; Estrella was wearing suit pants, a tucked-in oxford shirt and had loosened her tie as she sat down in the chair. The toy and blanket spread and the children's book set the scene, and their performance during the demo (the creepy coercion of the daddy, and the squirmy confusion of the girl) established an emotional, physical and relational dynamic familiar enough to be believable.

When I interviewed Estrella later, she told me that she had designed the class to respond to people who "look at age play as light, like SM-lite, because it's thought of as role play, it's thought of as pretend." When I asked her what about age play wasn't "pretend," she differentiated sensation play from role play, and went on to explain that because age play is about children, it is imagined as just fun, not a serious, difficult or challenging form of play:

> Well, if you pick up a stick and hit somebody, there is no way that that's pretend....Even role play that's designed to be pretend is thought of differently than age play. Like boss-secretary, or goddess play, I think people take that more seriously even. And I think it's because what it entails is one person playing the role of a child. And kids are light, right? I mean kids play, kids have fun; there's nothing difficult or challenging or even interesting about what kids do. So I think it's our adult attitudes towards children in general that influence our attitude—you know it's just for fun, it's easy, kinda weird, and so I wanted to give people a perspective that it could be serious stuff....Those roles [e.g. mommy, aunt, babysitter, baby, toddler] that we've all lived through can be very profound and very deep and very real.

Linking "pretend" play (role based) and a general sense of the "lightness" of children, Estrella stresses that age play is, in contrast, very real, profound and serious, even as it is play. This is deep play, serious play, play with very high stakes.

It is in part the fact that the adults in the BDSM community have lived through these life stages themselves, and build on real life experiences, attitudes and cultural dynamics to construct age play scenes, that lends intensity and vérité to these scenes. Estrella is the mother of three teenagers, who live with her and her wife in her home. At the same time, Estrella stresses that she is not using age play as a form of sexual therapy; she is building upon the familiar to construct something new.

> **MW**: Some people have told me that people who have kids wouldn't do age play, just wouldn't touch it . . .
> **Estrella**: Well, obviously they are wrong...people separate things all the time, I don't know why age play would be any different...we are all capable of making detached informed choices about the activities we engage in...There are experiences that are from my being a mother that I probably use in age play, like that feeling of your kid going to sleep and you are stroking their head—that bond, that love, I think I tap into that in my acting that out with somebody. But I've certainly...I mean I wouldn't even think of, there is a line with your kids! It's really separate. I don't know how to say it, but it's separate. I've had plenty of bosses, and never had sex with them, but I can do boss/secretary seduction, easy...I mean, things are separate because they're just separate.

Play here is a transformative, active process of engaging with the world and re-imagining, tweaking or recreating it. Play is recreational (something pleasant, not-work) as well as re-creational (productive of new worlds or relations). As Estrella reminds us, play is not *just* fun; play is a form of labour in which things that are deadly serious (social inequalities, power differentials, structural forms of suffering) are reworked in new ways. Age play is a particularly useful object of analysis in this discussion because it illustrates the connections between sex, play and subjectivity. The child, as a cultural entity, is a not-adult; in modern, U.S. legal terms, the child is not-yet citizen subject, even though the child has been subject to sexualization. Play about the child mobilizes a host of political and social potentialities: it foregrounds the tensions around liberal models of agency and consent as it also launches a critique of the very ground of such subjectification. Toggling between the wanton, polymorphously perverse child, and the modern, disciplined sexed adult/citizen, both bracketed from the everyday and drawing its animating tensions from it, these forms of play exist in the space between.

Further, play is pleasurable because it is an intervention into the social world; it recodes familiar and mundane experiences of power, relationships and intimacy in new ways, in a safe space called "the scene." The freedom to experiment with alternative subjectivities is real, but because the space is bracketed, special and, above all, safe, it is also insulated from the real. As Annalee, a bisexual, genderqueer/pervert commented:

> I like it to feel as if there is a role for me to play so...I think there is less anxiety...even if you're not playing a specific role like "I am the waitress" or "I am the cop," because rarely am I in scenes where there is specifically designed top and bottom [roles], it's just nice to feel like you...don't have to be nervous about people judging your performance because they're kind of looking at you as being within a role. I think that there is just a certain amount of safety in that feeling like stepping into a role that isn't quite you and it's not as dangerous to reveal yourself in that way somehow.

For Annalee, SM sex is safer because it is not quite her; even without a specific role or persona, Annalee's SM sex is bracketed from real life. The safety Annalee points to is one where, because it is *the scene* and not everyday life, she feels freer to experiment with different modes of being. This understanding of the real in play relies on a situation where, as Anne Allison notes (drawing on □i□ek), play is meaningful and motivating even if one does not believe (1994:25). This dynamic creates a kind of alibi through which challenges, critiques and other social reckonings can take place in a veiled or oblique way.

For some practitioners, this emphasis on play as "playacting" is off-putting. Many of my interviewees distinguished the serious play that they did with "fantasy roleplaying." Jezzie explained, "I'm really turned off by fantasy role play...because to me that detracts from the reality of what's going on...you know, I'm not a pirate...it seems like cheating or playing games." When I asked for clarification, Anton explained that it seemed "not as serious. It doesn't feel as genuine to me." Jezzie continued, "if you're pretending that he's a pirate and I'm a captured whatever, then might not the power also be pretend? If he has to pretend to be a pirate in order to have control over me, then the control is pretend." Bailey, a heterosexual bottom, also felt that thinking of SM as a performance diminishes the "reality" of the scene: "I've never been much into role play, you know, 'you're the pirate and I'm the captain.' I am just into down and dirty emotional and sensation exchange with my partners....It all becomes real to me. It's not a fantasy."

This anxiety about the line between just for fun performance and serious, real play draws attention to the fact that for most practitioners, SM is very "real." The majority took great pains to explain that, while they might sometimes enjoy costuming, roles and the like, WIITWD is *not* acting. Rather, they most often described SM as a deep, innate, necessary part of themselves, in many cases the more "real" part of the self. As Hailstorm put it:

> The reality is, that's [SM is] your reality. This [the real world] is the fantasy out here, this is where we put the mask on and go battle the world. This is where you follow the rules. This is a trite fantasy world where you conceal who you are, where you conceal your feelings, where you conceal the truth because you have to get along with people. And the fantasy world, that's the reality because that's where people come out, that's where you see who people are and people see who you are. And you live for that world; you live for those few hours that you play in the evening. That's what drives you if you're a player, if you're a part of the community, that's the serious part of it. Everything else is paying the rent, getting by, but that's where you live. That's where the masks come off. That's where you become yourself and that's why it's important to people to play because that's their reality.

Gretchen, a bisexual bottom/submissive, agreed: "the real me is the life outside of work versus the one that goes to the engineering office and solves complex engineering problems." As Stephanie explains, SM is real, and transformative: it remakes the self:

> One of the things that's enthralling to me is that it is so real. It is so completely, genuinely real to your partner. It is not screwing around...I mean, it's a whole different life afterward...as I always say to them [submissives], you will look at yourself differently in the mirror tomorrow morning when you're shaving. You'll remember what happened at our house last night.

Carrie, a bisexual bottom/submissive, was one of very few practitioners I interviewed who argued that SM was acting, but even for her, it is also—in the same breath—not acting:

> What I'm doing when I'm playing is acting out a role. Even though it feels like it is coming from inside of me, it's still a play, it's still an act. I am an actress playing this role. And so it's not real....But let me tell you, when I do it, it sure feels real then. When I'm deep in the middle of it, there's no acting, it's definitely so intense and it's so good. It just makes me feel so complete.

Play mediates between the external and the internal; it is a way of creatively negotiating, constructing and communicating the gaps between the self and the other/external world.[13] As Teramis, a lesbian slave, explains, SM is "bonding, it's energy exchange, sometimes it's a communion with each other and with something that's greater than us." For her, SM "isn't play." The common understanding of "play" is too "benign and unthreatening," too light, for the kinds of SM she enjoys. At the same time,

just as a performance inside the scene is *real*, so too is play something serious.

In his classic essay, Gregory Bateson argues that the "play frame" carries the understanding that what players are doing is "just for play," not for real. His example of this: "the playful nip denotes the bite, but it does not denote what would be denoted by the bite" (1955:41). Further, the frame, which says on the surface that what happens is just play, also enables what Bateson calls its opposite (but is really, perhaps, its mirror): that what happens in the play frame is *really* much more than play. It is this tension that distinguishes SM sexuality. Bracketed from the real ("just for play") but also reconnected to the real, SM moves between these registers. Here the real is not the Lacanian Real (that which eludes symbolization), but rather the real of power: the ways that regulatory apparati, technologies of discipline, produce subjects and subjectivity in everyday ways. As Patricia Duncan, in her analysis of lesbian SM, argued, play is about the construction and negotiation of identities, power and difference in a space called the scene. As she summarizes, SM practitioners are "very aware of s/m as *play*. Although they recognized the way power differentials are based in reality and in our culture, they also made it very clear to me that power, in their s/m practices, is a dynamic process, exchanged between two or more partners within the parameters of a scene" (1996:102). For the women Duncan interviewed, as well as for my informants, SM is a "site of transformation," a safe space to play with real, structural inequalities in pleasurable ways.

BDSM reflects these gendered inequalities; it is often about polarized roles: top/bottom, dominant/submissive, master/slave. Although many practitioners identify as switches, one's positionality is generally stable for a given scene, relationship or period of life. At the same time, these roles are not fixed to a genital-sex-gender matrix. This fluidity disrupts the heterosexual logic that animates these binaries within the scene as it troubles this logic in "real life" (for a similar argument on the fluidity of identities in power exchange in the U.K., see Langdridge and Butt 2005:71). Reductive or essentialist arguments about body, biology or genitals are almost completely absent from the BDSM scene. The practitioners I spoke with were adamant that there is no essential, generalizable or immutable correspondence between one's body or genitalia, one's gender presentation and one's BDSM practice. Many people in the scene enjoy roles opposite to their "real life" roles: the businessman in bondage; feminized, cross-dressed heterosexual men (called "sissy maids"); female dominants with enormous strap-ons; adults in diapers; lesbian women as butch bois. Further, even when there isn't this sort of visible discord between scene role and historical or social roles, when, for example, heterosexual, white men are dominants, or black women are slaves, scene roles are *performative* (Butler 1993).

By "performance," I do not mean some sort of play-acting, where the real of the world is contrasted with its staged representation. As Lynda Hart argues, "the controversy about whether s/m is 'real' or performed is naive, since we are always already in representation even when we are enacting our seemingly most private fantasies" (1998:91). SM sexuality is performative because it is conditioned by structures of domination, but these structures do not fully constrain the effects of the performance. Following Butler, performance is a "reiterative and citational practice" (1993:2) that leaves open the possibilities of doing it differently. Like butch-femme dynamics in lesbian cultures, polarized roles in pansexual BDSM evoke pieces of dominant sexual organization, but in their own particular, emic forms. They reference larger power differentials, but also create the space within the scene to put those power relations into play: to make them mobile, or mobilize them, in new ways. SM practices and identities dismantle any clean connection between bio-body, gender and sexuality, and this is why I emphasize *play*.

There are other forms of SM play that explicitly work–play with cultural or national boundaries, categories and roles. Some SM practitioners use the phrase "cultural trauma play" to describe this kind of play, which includes race play, Nazi play, rape play, "forced" feminization and interrogation scenes. Yet, even play that at first glance does not explicitly reference the social, works within these kinds of boundaries and tensions. Sensation play (flogging, spanking), blood play (cutting), medical play (catheterization), electrical play (shocking), bondage, sexplay (tit torture), and dominance and submission (Mistress/slave)—the most common categories of BDSM play—are all described as play precisely because they are performances of the self in ways that deploy, recreate or reanimate existent social forms.

The pleasure of this play lies in its depth, in the creation and subsequent transgression of boundaries around what one is and can be, what is safe and what is dangerous and what is set aside and what is reconnected. Play is also disarming; because it is *just play* practitioners can play with dangerous "taboo" topics more explicitly than one can in real life. In some ways, the bracketing function of the SM community provides an alibi to make re-enacting power plays safe. At the same time, these performances produce new bodies, subjects, relations and sexualities. By evoking shared power differentials in potentially new ways, SM sexuality is a community-based

practice of play that works with and against social inequalities in a safe, pleasurable, satisfying and dramatic way.

It is this tangling with self and world, real and pretend in a safe space that animates BDSM play. However, although the bracketing of the SM scene provides an important reassurance, play is always already of the social world. Play, desire, pleasure and indeed sexuality itself are always relational, social and communal; as Lancaster argues, "desire is thus always part of the cultural, economic and ideological world of social relations and social contexts" (1992:270). *Play* captures the ways SM is dramatic, productive and pleasurable, positioned on the border between the internal and the external, the agent and the social world.

In Conclusion: Working at Play

In SM, work and play are not oppositional categories; rather, the scene reflects the ways that line between work and play has been eroded in the shift to late-modern capitalism. In the context of the decline of public play space, the loss of urban jobs and the commodification of black men's expressive culture, Robin Kelley (1997) argues that forms of work–play such as hip-hop, basketball and sex work (for women) are increasingly viable means of attaining both material benefits and pleasure. His analysis of the rise of "play-labour" as a form of work in the inner city is, to be sure, a different nexus of play–labour than that at work for the majority white, middle-class practitioners of BDSM. Yet the kinds of shifts experienced by these players in the Bay Area are not totally unrelated; in SM, as in basketball, play is labour, although not labour for wages. Instead, this form of play–labour is a reconfiguration of the boundaries between work and play in the context of late-modernity.

In this way, I read work as an alibi for play, and play as an alibi for labour. This analysis draws on the way Anne Allison theorizes "play" to describe the space of a Tokyo hostess club. By linking work to play, social to business, the hostess club builds a commitment to business, and indeed produces certain gendered, classed worker subjectivities. In Allison's analysis, because the club is bracketed enough to feel "relaxing," play functions as a sort of alibi for the extension of work into leisure time, but as it does so, it transforms work into something pleasurable, sexual and fun (1994:197). Play here reads social performances as consolidations of social structures, providing a place where participants can enact and reenact social relations and hierarchies in a safe space.

Play stands in, as an alibi, for labour, where labour is both a disciplined way of working at sexuality, and a recreative way of producing and recombining social relations. BDSM is neither just work nor just play; it is the movement between and across these terrains that makes SM pleasurable for practitioners. Thus when David Brooks argues that BDSM is increasingly popular in the U.S. because the "Bobo" (bourgeois bohemian) has confined pleasure to something productive or useful, and contemporary BDSM practitioners (like rock-climbers and adventure travelers), with their blend of self-improvement and consumption, fill the bill, he is not totally off the mark. By couching various pleasures as work on the self, SM can be located within an American tradition of self-development: "the Protestant Work Ethic has been replaced by the Bobo Play Ethic, which is equally demanding. Everything we do must serve the Life Mission, which is cultivation, progress and self-improvement" (2000:200).

This ethic is not entirely new, of course, but what is new at this particular historical moment is that the register of work–play increasingly available in the late-modern U.S. is sex. And as we embrace sex as consumers, labourers, lovers and hedonists, we are also producing new forms of sexual subjectivity. As BDSM demonstrates, this subjectivity reflects the experiential dimensions of informational capitalism: the increased commodification of subjectivity, the technicalization of bodies and relationships and the erosion and reestablishment of boundaries between labour and leisure time. If we accept that, under late-modern capitalism, subjects are produced through consumption practices (rather than identities or production; see Comaroff and Comaroff 2000), this is not the only form of biopower, of subjectification, at work. Rather, we must also remember the crucial function of pleasure, community and play in sexuality, even within registers of labour or work.

BDSM cannot be understood as a modernist, binary sexual identity, *or* a post-modernist, consumerist sexual lifestyle. As Ann Pellegrini, in her (2002) critique of Lowe, argues, contemporary U.S. sexual politics is marked by a mixture of both lifestyle/consumption and identity/discipline discourses of sexuality. Since the relationship between capitalism and sexuality is neither stable nor inflexible, slippage or seepage between conflicting discourses of identity–lifestyle, consumption–production and work–play complicate any clean master-model of sexuality. Thus, while BDSM is a consumptive practice, this is not the only or even primary interface between capitalism and SM sexuality. Rather, the SM scene, as a space of consumption, desire, connection and contradiction, is neither divorced from, nor confined to, the market. BDSM is a form of playful, pleasurable labour.

BDSM's pleasure derives from the ways it moves real power differentials into the flux of play space, and back

again. Through labour, consumption and work, BDSM produces its practitioners as disciplined subjects. In this labour, however, BDSM also carefully constructs spaces of play, creating, if only to blur, boundaries between real and scene, work and play. The pleasure of BDSM play is around these borders and limits; the desire to transgress, to uphold, to violate or to enforce borders is incited by the very borders themselves. BDSM creates a place for this play, and in so doing produces new social relations through its combinant logics.

The proliferation of alternative sexualities and ever-increasing sexual specialization is an essential part of late-modern sexuality in the U.S. The challenge for anthropologists and others is to read these sexualities, sexual identities and sexual communities in all their complexity. The growth of the organized BDSM community reflects the increasing desirability of a disciplined, ordered, formalized, technical and consumptive sexuality, a sexuality one must work at or on to perform. This kind of sexuality is amiable both to late-capitalism and to the subjects of such a regime. Yet, what these labouring subjects produce is not simply more consumption, but also pleasure. When BDSM practitioners play in these ways, they are labouring at play. I understand play, then, to describe a kind of sexuality that is both work and play, that moves ceaselessly between these transfer points. At the same time, the ways such play scenes are structured, bracketed and limited both incites desire and produces these kinds of sexual subjectivities. In BDSM, play works to repackage work as fun/sex and to rework fun as productive/labour. SM play moves back and forth between registers of play and work, enacting a spectacular, bracketed performance that at the very same time works to muddy the logics of our everyday performances of power and inequality. It is this recombination of terms that makes BDSM play an avatar of the new kinds of pleasure and power, consumption and desire that animate late-modern sexuality in the U.S.

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Notes

1 Throughout this article, I use the terms "SM" and "BDSM" interchangeably. "BDSM" is of relatively recent (and many suggest Internet) coinage. The use of SM, S/M, or S&M as a term for the entirety of this community predates BDSM, but, in the semipublic, pansexual community at least, BDSM is fast becoming the inclusive term of choice. Leather, on the other hand, is most often used in gay, and, in some cases, lesbian, SM communities to describe a community oriented around a leather fetish, motorcycles, butch masculinity and, sometimes, SM practices (see Kamel 1995; Rubin 1997).

2 Here I am referring to the temporal, spatial and social-economic shift from modernist capitalism to postmodern or informational capitalism (e.g., Castells 1996; Fischer 1998; Harvey 1990). While some scholars use "postmodern" or "late-capitalist" to describe this culture/economic regime (e.g., Jameson 1992), and although there are critical differences in theory that these terms reference, I am less interested in parsing these differences, and more interested in sketching the general effects on sexuality of what Fischer and Jameson call the "third industrial revolution" (Fischer 1998; Jameson 1992): the technological shift from Fordist production to data technologies, informatics, electronic media, the silicon chip and biotechnology.

3 "Pansexual" is a term used by the SM community to describe organizations, spaces and scenes that are open to, used by, or include people of various sexual and gender orientations. In practice, the "pansexual community" in San Francisco usually means the community of practitioners who join and participate in organizations like Society of Janus and SMOdyssey, take classes and workshops in places like QSM, attend munches, and semipublic play parties, and otherwise participate in the formally organized scene (as I describe it below). In general, the men are, in the majority, heterosexual, the women are bisexual and heterosexual, and there are a fair number of transgendered practitioners and professional dominants of various orientations.

4 I initially located interviewees through an email solicitation. As my research progressed, people I met at events expanded my interviewee network. In total, I interviewed 51 practitioners: 27 men and 24 women (including two transgendered women). Their average age was 41, they were 87% white and most were involved in long-term relationships: 25% were married, and 38% were partnered. Of my female interviewees, 50% were bisexual, 29% were lesbian, and 15% were heterosexual (the others did not identify themselves in these terms). Of my male interviewees, 59% were heterosexual, 26% were bisexual, and 15% were gay. Almost all of my interviewees would be considered middle class, based on education, profession, and income; 26% worked in the computer or tech industry, more than any other category of employment, including "other." I draw on these interviews not for statistical analysis, but rather to use my informants' language and ideas to illustrate key points that developed during the 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork I did in the San Francisco Bay Area.

5 The San Francisco scene as described by leathermen and scholars (e.g. Magister 1991; Mains 1991; Rubin 1991; Rubin 1997; Rubin 1998; Thompson 1991) has changed dramatically, due to gentrification, HIV/AIDS and the rise of the pansexual scene. I explore this dramatic shift from an urban network of gay male bars and motorcycle associations to a suburban, formally organized scene populated primarily by Silicon Valley's many heterosexual, white, computer professionals in more detail elsewhere (Weiss 2005).

6 The word "top" refers to the person on the giving end of any form of BDSM. "Bottom" is the corresponding word for the person on the receiving end. The word "submissive"

refers to the bottom in a more explicitly power-based relationship; "dominant" is the corresponding word for the top. "Switch" describes a person who switches between roles.

7 Power exchange is scene term for relationships built on relations of dominance and submission. The term emphasizes that these relationships are about power (more than sensation or role play, for example), but also that they are an *exchange*: although roles are usually relatively stable, power is understood by practitioners to be mobile and shared between practitioners.

8 Patrick Califia-Rice argues that contemporary SM is less about pain, and more about control: "the basic dynamic of S/M is the power dichotomy, not pain" (1994:162). He continues, "handcuffs, dog collars, whips, kneeling, bondage, tit clamps, hot wax, enemas, penetration, and giving sexual service are all metaphors for the power imbalance" (1994:162). Sociologists Thomas Weinberg and G.W. Levi Kamel agree, noting "at the very core of sadomasochism is not pain but the idea of control—dominance and submission" (1995:19). This understanding is shared by other SM researchers (e.g. Alison, et al. 2001; Langdridge and Butt 2005; Taylor and Ussher 2001:298-300), as well as by practitioners.

9 In their study of SM practitioners in England and Amsterdam, Gary Taylor and Jane Ussher similarly note the tremendous variation in the interpretative frameworks practitioners use to explain their interest in SM. They identify eight common frameworks in their research: SM as dissidence, pleasure, escapism, transcendence, learned behaviour, intra-psychic, pathological and, finally, inexplicable (2001).

10 The customization of BDSM (in terms of customized toys, tools and clothing, as well as customized identities, relationships, roles and personae) is another important interface between BDSM and late-modern economies.

11 Here I want to differentiate between the history of sexuality, which did entail a structural shift from systems of alliance to those of technique/capital (e.g. D'Emilio 1983a; D'Emilio 1983b; Foucault 1990; Rubin 1984) from the assumption that sexuality was somehow freer or more libratory in pre-modern eras.

12 I explore the particular dimensions of the new scene elsewhere, but one of its most salient characteristics is its emphasis on safety. The development of classes and organizations, the rise of "Safe, Sane and Consensual" as a motto (and the safer sex, no drugs or alcohol, fully informed consent rules that go with this motto), the development of negotiation checklists, house rules and agreements one must sign to play in semipublic places and the development of "Dungeon Monitors," certified "lifeguards" who ensure adherence to party rules at play events, are some key examples of this shift (see Weiss 2005).

13 This analysis is indebted to the child psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott's (1971) theorization of play. For Winnicott, playing involves the "potential space" between the me (inner subjective world) and the not-me (external reality). Play is "immensely exciting" and "essentially satisfying" because of the very precariousness of the relationship between internal and external during play (1971:47), not because it is masturbatory, drive-related or instinctual; though play builds to a "climax," it is not erotogenic. Playing is about negotiating this space between external/internal: "we experience life in the area...that is intermediate between the inner reality of the individual and the shared reality of the world that is external to individuals" (1971:64). For Winnicott, play produces and communicates creative relationships between the self and the environment whether the play is with others, with mothers or alone.

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CASCA Keynote Address, Halifax 2003

The Production of Race, Locality, and State: An Anthropology

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Abstract: This paper is an examination of some of the causes and consequences of state-managed processes that make very large numbers of people useless in their own localities. Examples are drawn from the displacement of African American workers in North Carolina by undocumented Central Americans, and the massive layoffs in Newfoundland—the largest in Canadian history—following the commercial extinction of Newfoundland and Labrador's cod fish and the closure of the fishery in 1992. This essay focusses on both the contradictions of citizenship and on the consequences of exporting people for work elsewhere. New ways of analyzing rupture and chaos are suggested, as are some implications for progressive political strategies.

Keywords: migration, citizenship, displacement, race, Newfoundland, U.S. South

Résumé : Cet article examine certaines causes et conséquences des procédés de gestion étatique qui rendent inutile un nombre très élevé d'individus dans leurs propres localités. Des exemples sont tirés du remplacement des travailleurs afro-américains en Caroline du Nord par des travailleurs sans-papiers provenant d'Amérique Centrale et des mises à pied massives à Terre Neuve – les plus importantes dans l'histoire du Canada – à la suite de l'extinction commerciale de la morue à Terre-Neuve ainsi qu'au Labrador et de la fermeture du secteur de la pêche en 1992. Cet article focalise tant sur les contradictions de la citoyenneté que sur les conséquences de l'exportation des personnes dans le but de les faire travailler ailleurs. Il suggère de nouvelles façons d'analyser la rupture et le chaos ainsi que certaines conséquences découlant des stratégies politiques progressistes.

Mots-clés : migration, citoyenneté, remplacement, race, Terre-Neuve, le Sud des États-Unis

Prologue

This article emerges from a confrontation in North Carolina in 2001. The article, which is about Newfoundland as well as North Carolina, is a partial, necessarily unresolved attempt to come terms with that moment, for both its causes and its consequences seem to have very broad implications for an engaged anthropology.

To tell even a brief story of the incident in 2001 I have to start much earlier. For most of 1967-68 I was doing civil rights organizing in Robeson County, North Carolina—on the swampy interior coastal plain, at the border with South Carolina. Robeson was then a particularly nasty place. It was the second richest rural county in the south, by value of agricultural produce shipped from the county, and at the same time one of the 50 poorest counties in the U.S. by average per capita income. A handful of Whites did very well, a substantial number were moderately well-off, and together they were doing whatever they could to keep it that way, against the interests and well-being of the African American and Native American peoples, who together comprised two-thirds of the county population, and who were, for the most part, desperately poor and hard-pressed.

Part of the struggle we were then fighting was for school cafeterias and subsidized lunches, particularly in the rural Black and Indian schools. You could see kids rummaging around in the schoolyard garbage dumpsters in the afternoon looking for food. We involved a writer–photographer from the *Charlotte Observer*, then the most liberal paper in the state, who came down and took a stunning photograph: a young African American boy, about eight, inside a garbage dumpster, with his head and shoulders showing above the rim, leaning out and passing a clearly half-eaten sandwich to a younger boy, who was standing on his tip-toes, reaching up for the sandwich with an angelic smile on his young face. She published this on the front page of the Sunday edition of the paper, where

folks could see it on their way to or from church. It blew the state legislature wide open; we got a lot of important programs from the ruckus it caused.

Thirty-four years later, in 2001, I am still working on issues in Robeson County, if now only episodically. In the previous five years, 8500 mostly African American and Native American women had been put out of work by the passage of the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA), and the ensuing closure of all the textile assembly "cut and stitch" mills that moved "offshore." These mills had been the largest source of employment in the county, from the early 1970s to the mid-1990s. Before the mills were built, agriculture provided most of the work; very quickly after the mills left, poultry and hog packing became the primary employers, but with a completely different labour force. By 2000 county officials were estimating that there were 12 000-14 000 "Mexicans" (as all Spanish-speakers and many other immigrant workers are called) in the county, about three-fourths of them undocumented, and all referred to as "illegal Mexicans" (for a similar instance see Striffler 2005). They were by very far the predominant workforce in the new poultry- and hog-deconstruction plants, and provided almost all of the seasonal agricultural labour. They were hard run both at work and off; most saving money at little more than minimum wage, and doing so by living packed into substandard housing, along with other severe restrictions on consumption expenses.

My current research and engagement in this area focusses on the displacement of African American labour, after they won a modicum of "civil rights," by undocumented immigrant workers with very few rights. A senior official in the county's Department of Social Services and a local teacher both took enough interest in my present research to tell me that there were about 70 "Mexicans" living in a former chicken coop, telling me where it was, and suggesting I go. I went to see it and indeed there were. The next day I went to Fayetteville, where I had an introduction to a very progressive reporter-photographer. I told her the story of the dumpster, and what was won from that photo-story, and asked her to come down and take a picture of the chicken coop. She looked at me quietly for a while, and then just said no. I told her the story of the child in the dumpster again, quite slowly, thinking perhaps she did not understand the importance both of the story and of what she could do. This time, after a pause, she said she would do it if I insisted, but that the way she understood how things work, if she published the story on Sunday, by Monday or Tuesday the *migra* (the Immigration and Naturalization Service Police) would come and deport everyone they could catch. By Friday there would be a new bunch of people in the chicken coop. The folks who are there now need their jobs, she said to me, and stood up to shake my hand to end the discussion.

I left with the realization—still growing, still gnawing at me—that none of the strategies that we used in the 1960s, including demonstrations, disruptions, voting, protests, humiliating power, could be used effectively now in this local context. More: the range of social analyses in which we rooted and refined these strategies for winning a combination of civil, political and employment rights now seem to me too simple to be useful. We could use those analyses then not just because the struggles were different, but because those struggles were situated against a divided elite, and were given their dynamic both by the efforts and hopes of people and by fundamental splits in the organization of domination. With the shift in predominant economic organization from agrarian to industrial capital, it had ceased to make sense to a significant faction of those in power to grind Blacks down so brutally and so directly. In that context a very wide range of strategies would have worked for change, transcending the suffering that a dying agrarian elite was still capable of imposing, and incidentally giving borrowed life to an equally wide range of theories—including an all-too-innocent anthropology—to which the strategies were tied.[1] Now new ways of organizing local and regional processes of domination, rooted in an increasingly direct engagement by the state, along with increasingly trivial or ineffective factional opposition to state policies and practices, is making former political strategies obsolete and our explanatory toolkits increasingly inadequate. Meanwhile appropriation and dispossession once again intensify.

In Robeson County, as elsewhere, when you get ten miles or more away from the interstate highways, African American village neighbourhoods are devastated. The poverty and material decay are worse than in the 1960s, for employment has collapsed. Twenty years or so after African Americans won effective civil rights (in the 1970s in this very out-of-view area) they find out that their civil rights are an obstacle to the kinds of employment that are widely available: as another county official put it, "a coloured person with civil rights is useless—that is not what 'coloured' means." I think of the enormous price people paid to win these rights, in the villages and farms out of the glare of the television cameras, and at that time very far from concerned lawyers, and I think how much more difficult it is to organize not to win rights, but against being replaced because you have rights.

Strategy is changing, necessarily. It is changing because struggle is changing, and more is at stake in these changes than strategy and struggle. Fundamentally new

and different kinds of struggles necessarily shape new kinds of groups, new kinds of differences between groups, and new kinds of vulnerabilities. This crucial point was most forcefully made by Edward Thompson. Writing about the early formation of the working class in the agrarian social turmoil of the late 18th century, he argued that a class does not form and then look around for its "enemies." Rather, people find themselves enmeshed in *unavoidable* struggles, and from these struggles comes their sense of class and, with that, their class relations. In the process of class formation struggle is historically primary (Thompson 1978). Unavoidable collective struggles produce far more than class: his argument has broader implications, although it might not yet be clear what is now emerging. Changing kinds of struggles, we must realize, not only produce new kinds of social difference, but they require us to develop new kinds of theories, new—if temporary—analytical categories or frameworks, and, especially, new kinds of progressive strategies. That is the situation to which this paper speaks.

Calling Anthropology into Question

The life-trajectory of the small community and the distinct people, as we have more or less known them, has come to an end, even though the world is still full of small communities that are becoming more, rather than less, distinctive. The point here is not that we are running out of small communities, or that anything like "globalization" is homogenizing their distinctiveness, nor the trivial issue that anthropology is losing its classical subject (but only to the extent that it relies on its classical concepts). Rather, the processes that have produced and transformed their continuity are changing, as always, but now in fundamental ways. Widespread and intensifying crises of social reproduction are transforming communities beyond analytical recognition. Small, distinct, and seemingly directly observable localities are now very widely organized, reproduced, and fractured—split apart by an unfamiliar logic; a social and historical logic—in ways that our theories can not quite grasp.[2]

Let us start with the symptoms. I find myself continually surprised by widespread and very basic social changes that we have been witnessing: the collapse of the Soviet Union and its client states; the rise to decisive political power and cultural prominence of a wide variety of religious fundamentalisms; the widespread and largely unprotested collapse of recently won civil rights and civil liberties in the U.S. Well beyond these dramatic turns are extraordinary shifts in the rootedness of daily life—factory closings that devastate whole communities, epidemics of AIDS so intense they devastate village farming across wide regions of Africa, and all the butchering, inconclusive wars against civilians in the name of oil, diamonds, land-appropriation, "security," ethnic and religious purity and, just beneath the socially visible surface (save for the victims who can not avoid seeing it), all the international trade and lending agreements that make daily life increasingly unliveable for vast numbers of people. However well we can *describe* the ensuing changes brought about by these events, and it is often quite well, we have been less successful in understanding how and why their consequences unfold the ways they do.[3]

Across a broad range of perspectives, from classical anthropology to Marxism to textual or discourse analysis, to Foucauldian fantasies of power, the theories we use are more than inadequate: they have lost their capacity to surprise us. The worlds we live both in and against may continue to surprise us, but our theories now rarely do—they scarcely suggest any new ways of grasping hold of our world, or new ways to struggle for change. I want to open a discussion that leads toward new ways of understanding and confronting current processes of transformation. We can do this by putting a few current changes in village Newfoundland and village North Carolina under the magnifying glass, in order to help root the theories suggested here both in and against what is actually happening. Anthropology and cultural critique, over the past three decades, turned to textual analysis without seriously addressing how this coincided with the contemporaneous intensifying turn to text by religious fundamentalists. Our theories, per contra, must do more than parallel real-world changes: they must *also* confront these changes.

The Reproduction of Surplus People

Across very wide regions of the world small communities are experiencing a massively destructive encounter with both economic and state-orchestrated pressures. The destructiveness itself is not new. Mike Davis' *Late Victorian Holocausts* (2001) describes the havoc wreaked upon large portions of India, Africa, Asia, and Latin America by a deadly combination of *El Niño* droughts and intensifying colonialism in the late 19th century. He provides an important framework for understanding how the 20th century was founded upon a holocaust of destruction that spread across much of the colonized world. But the destructiveness at the outset of the twentieth century was very different from recent processes. One difference is particularly relevant: a century ago destructiveness was deeply embedded in successful attempts to *use* vast numbers of peoples dispersed across a wide variety of hinterlands as cheap labour, and in the labour-intensive pro-

duction of cheap raw materials and foods. Colonial and imperial expansion was founded upon the production of new kinds of inequalities, and the transformation of prior ones, and simultaneously upon the attempt to *order*—in both senses of that term—and to stabilize these inequalities so that they might continue to be harnessed for as long as they were needed.

Now a different destructiveness is becoming widespread. It is based on dispensing with people who are no longer needed—displacing people for whom there is very little, if any, use in their present locales—especially not at a cost that would come close to reproducing them in anything resembling even their present difficult circumstances. Many of the victims of this process of becoming useless manage to flee their countryside or their country, or fail to manage and die. Their deaths are attributed, superficially, to untreated diseases or famine or war or failed migration or forced dispersion or murder by border guards and vigilantes—all socially constructed and all rooted in the fact that the victims have usually disappeared from public or political view, except as a "problem," even before their deaths. Many more survive or manage than fail or die; that is the calculus of success these days. We are concentrating, however, on the calculus of suffering and hope in the minds of the victims and of their state-sponsored managers. Underlying the calculus of suffering and hope are the processes that make people useless.

Two brief examples will introduce these underlying processes:

1. On the Mexican side of the U.S. border, by 1999, there were approximately 1.5 million workers in *maquiladoras*—export commodity producing factories owned by companies that had relocated to Mexico to take advantage of local conditions. These workers earned about $3 000 a year in US dollar equivalence. Between 1999 and 2003, one-half million—a third—of these jobs were lost as these factories relocated to even lower wage places, such as China or Vietnam, where labour could be bought for under $1 000 a year. These figures are all approximations, but are sufficient to lead us to ask: what sorts of consequences have followed, and are likely still to follow, this massive loss of jobs?[4] Amidst the increased misery, drug-dealing, prostitution, general deterioration of health and well-being, and the rising dangers of daily life, two general aspects of this situation are immediately apparent. First, there is little chance that any significant number of people can go back to what they were doing, or not doing, before they began working at these factories. Second, the Mexican government's responses to this "race to the bottom" of the wage scale will inescapably make Mexico more, rather than less different from the United States; will make rural areas in Mexico more, rather than less different from urban areas in Mexico; and in large numbers of cases, will even make rural areas increasingly different from one another.

The attempt to stem the migration of industry will, as usual, necessarily entail even less attention to social health issues both on and off the job (pollution, job safety), through lowering taxes and corporate costs, with all the consequences for public well-being. Of special significance, there will be a very substantial further deterioration of, and differentiation in, rural well-being far beyond the maquiladora zone, as rural areas are squeezed to supply the everyday consumption needs of urban people with markedly declining real incomes. This sort of squeeze seeks to pump an increased volume of very low-priced goods and labour out of rural areas and often, also—as in wide areas of Mexico—to break staple and subsistence production almost completely, and import food, which provides new revenues to unstably rooted local and regional elites. Either strategy characteristically intensifies locality-specific inequalities, producing both new wealth and widespread destitution. In such situations, localities often turn in on themselves, the poor for relations of sustenance, the local elite as part of consolidating their domination and exploitation against a larger field of forces with somewhat different agendas.[5] This combination of strategies by the poor and by the privileged characteristically intensifies differentiation both within and between localities. Globalization differentiates; it does not homogenize.

2. Michael Wines wrote a full-page article in the *New York Times* (2002) on the social collapse of large rural regions of central Asia in the former Soviet Union. He described a situation with surprising analogies to rural Newfoundland, considering that his focus is communities in the midst of an arid savannah, and Newfoundland's rural economy is ocean-based. The source of this social collapse of the central Asian savannah was an ecological disaster precipitated by the overuse of the water supply to sustain an irrigation agriculture that was immensely profitable for two decades or so, until an almost completely unrestrained overuse (wasting more water than was used), and an utter failure to understand and plan for long-term sustainability, brought the whole system, and the rural communities that depended upon this system, crashing down. Wines ends by quoting the geographer Sarah O'Hara, who summed up and generalized the problem: "We talk about the developing world and the developed world. This is the deteriorating world" (2002:A14).

Similarly, rural Newfoundland has been devastated by the commercial extinction of cod fish in the late 1980s

following two decades of very profitable and very destructive overfishing, with by-catch wastage levels exceeding what was kept.[6] Cod had been the economic foundation of rural Newfoundland since its first colonization by Europeans. This resource-destroying overfishing, which continues now with crab and shrimp, is driven by far more than mindless greed combined with increasingly efficient technology. Nor is any "tragedy of the commons" model analytically useful (Sider 2003a). Underlying this destructiveness in many such instances are the *contradictions of citizenship* in modern capitalist (and socialist) states.

Newfoundland villagers, in this context, are the miners' canary—a particularly fragile and visible manifestation of a very much more widespread and potentially explosive situation, which we can introduce as the problem of citizenship for states that have substantial sectors of their populace becoming useless. Citizenship, in this perspective, is an aspect of social reproduction. Citizenship provides rights and benefits that help people get to tomorrow. When they have no tomorrow, at least in their current locales, when their tomorrows will be, for most, well below even current standards and beneath expectations, the rights and benefits of citizenship come into contradiction with today, and even more with tomorrow.

We can begin to discuss the contradictions of citizenship with a brief delineation of issues of social reproduction. The intensifying demographic, economic and social collapse of rural Newfoundland is a crisis of social reproduction, an intensifying inability of communities simply to continue. Social reproduction is never exact; the point here is not that communities are changing but that the sorts of changes we are witnessing are fundamentally different, and much more disruptive, than those that have occurred in the recent history of these communities. Further, the widespread deterioration in rural well-being that we are witnessing has much deeper causes than the poverty that has increasingly developed following the 1992 closure of the cod fishery. In substantial part this deterioration in well-being is associated with the consequences of outmigration, made all the more intense by new restrictions on access to unemployment insurance. These restrictions were introduced in 1997 and made it extremely difficult for young people—the "new entrants"—and former fishers and fish plant workers to enter or re-enter the labour force without leaving Newfoundland. The exodus of people from Newfoundland (and Mexico, and Central Asia, and...) has consequences that go well beyond all the problems caused by a simple decline in population.

Even though substantial population decline in and of itself ordinarily causes major problems including, in North America, closure or constriction of schools, closure of stores, banks and churches, increasing burdens on those who remain for care of the elderly and infirm, et cetera; the expanding exodus of people who leave the hinterlands to work elsewhere brings significant additional problems, and especially also often a crisis in local social reproduction. It is the need to understand this broad range of problems that emerge when local social reproduction becomes increasingly non-viable for much of the populace that leads us to seek new theoretical tools, more capable of grasping the ruptures, disjunctions, and chaos domination creates and that people must, unavoidably, address.

Displacement and the Citizens of Remnant Places

One crucial cause of current local crises, in Newfoundland and elsewhere, is the shift from exporting locally produced commodities to exporting, as the primary export commodity, human beings in their capacity as workers. The most immediate and most visible problem for small communities when a large proportion of the young adults leave is often a marked decline in the number of children in the community, who are its social and economic future. These consequences are more than obvious; they are unavoidable. Other aspects of the process are not as obvious, and there is much at stake, politically, in avoiding discussion of them. They begin with the economics of the process of exporting people, and there are some substantial surprises as we work our way through the problem. Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack (1973) still provide the best introduction to the issue. I quote them:

> Migration involves the transfer of a valuable economic resource—human labour—from the poor to the rich countries. The workers who migrate may have been unemployed in the country of origin, but this does not alter the fact that the community has invested considerable sums in their upbringing...."If the emigrants were slaves, and raised for the purpose, it would be appropriate to calculate whether it was worthwhile for a poor country to raise slaves for export....The answer would doubtless be "no." But babies are born and youth are raised and educated without regard to [the economic] return on the process..." [Noting that some of the costs are borne by the families and some by the community] whatever the proportions...the total cost of raising a child is a charge on the country's national income. [1973:409, citing Kindleberger 1967:98]

It may not be many peoples' intent to raise children for export, but it is a widespread fact. Children are a labour-intensive product, and most of this labour is provided by families and communities. Grown children, as export goods, are thus the products of what Marxists and

many economists call "petty commodity production." This concept has been used, under one name or another, in a wide range of analyses of rural hinterlands under the assault of "globalized" capital and the state, including apologists for inequality-producing micro loans, World Bank "modernizers," and Marxists still hoping and struggling for social justice.[7] Yet the whole notion of petty commodity production, under any of its names, remains both relatively undeveloped and crucial to understanding the changing dynamics of localities that increasingly specialize in producing young adults for export.

Marxists have two nearly equivalent phrases, "petty commodity production" and "domestic commodity production," that are used to name and describe the production of commodities by local labour, primarily mobilized along lines of kin, household, and locality and using locally available, small-scale tools in the process of production. In the usual analysis of this form of production, it has scarcely any internal dynamics—few, if any, internal contradictions, tensions, or disjunctions that would impel change, movement, or transformation. Change, for places where this is the predominant form of production, ordinarily seems to have external origins. A different and far more volatile view of the internal historical dynamics of petty commodity production emerges, surprisingly, from the one feature of such places that seems an enduring, unchanging feature: the poverty and hardship that characterizes so many lives in these communities so much of the time.

The widespread intense poverty of many, or most, rural producers is so characteristic it is often taken as if it were a fact of nature. But we no longer treat gender or race as if they were formed by essential or "natural" characteristics. Let us see if we can do the same for the people we used to call "peasants" or "semi-proletarians," the rural, small-scale, domestic commodity producers: interrogate their characteristic poverty and immiseration to find its dynamics.[8]

To do this we will be working toward understanding what I will call the contradictions of citizenship. These contradictions appear first, and most intensely, in two contexts: in locales characterized by a substantial export of people to work elsewhere, and in contexts where the production of those kinds of differences that come to be called race is particularly intense. We will look a bit more closely at the logic of exporting people, and here only introduce issues in the production of race.[9]

Rural domestic commodity producers characteristically are forced to sell their commodities below the full social costs of producing these commodities.[10] In very many places the terms of trade have decisively worsened for large numbers of rural producers just since the early 1970s. People whose living comes substantially from selling coffee, cocoa, ground nuts, grains, beans, et cetera are now frequently in serious trouble. With some commodities the problem is the resource—not nearly enough—or a price-breaking market glut; with other commodities it is declining markets or unfavourable changes, particularly for small producers, in the ratio of production cost to selling price. The problem does not stem simply from the small amounts produced in rural small-scale production: if even more hoe-grown Mexican *milpa* corn were sold at the same price as subsidized machine-grown U.S. corn more hoe farmers would die (as they are now dying) from severe impoverishment, or they would be (as they are now being) driven out in even vaster numbers. There are two, often sequential, consequences that follow these deteriorating terms of trade in addition to the usual destruction of the livelihoods of many small-scale producers.

First is a decline in local well-being, which comes from an increasing spread between the social (and not just the direct monetary) costs of producing the goods and the selling price of their commodities.[11] The second consequence, which ordinarily either follows or intensifies after a period of the worsening of the terms of trade, a collapse of the resource, or a collapse in the conditions of production, is to begin exporting people, partly for the remittances they will send or bring back and partly because it ceases to be possible to sustain all the local people with locally available resources for what is loosely called "subsistence" production.[12]

The production of humans for export in some basic ways is not logically different from the production of any other commodity; when you sell a commodity below the cost of production your own continuity is undermined. But humans are so costly to produce, and the gap between costs and returns often so great, that when humans become raised for export the problem of social continuity is dramatically intensified. This intensification is further magnified by the major logical difference between exporting people and exporting other kinds of goods: when people leave the community their departure (depending upon who goes and for how long) often removes the people who make the goods upon which the future of the community depends. In this case, it removes the people who create the next generation of people.[13]

What this entails, I suggest, is that the export of people from a community—despite the remittances sent back, and the enrichment, or stabilization, of a portion of the community through these remittances—means that the community as a whole necessarily becomes increasingly dependent upon the state for its social reproduction. Rural

producers, and the villages or localities in which they live, nowadays usually do not simply reproduce themselves through their own efforts, social relations, income and resources; they are ordinarily necessarily assisted and subsidized (and simultaneously also, of course, undermined) by governments. This brings us, finally, to one of the central issues in the developing involvement of governments with social reproduction: differential citizenship.

Differential Citizenship and the Production of Race

Differential citizenship is a particularly complex phenomenon. The complexities are partly due to the changing way citizenship has been combined with race, both in the United States and Canada, in the history of the 20th century.[14] A brief illustration from my work in rural coastal North Carolina will highlight some relevant dimensions of this issue.

By the mid-1970s, with both court cases and federal pressure, the civil rights victories of the 1960s were finally being institutionalized in the rural South: in employment, including job safety in industry and agriculture and minimum wage protection for farm labourers; in daily life, including housing, municipal services (especially water and sewerage), access to medical care; and in schools that were less segregated and thus (until class and locality replaced colour) more equally funded, staffed and serviced. The issue here, for employers and especially local and state governments, is not just wages, but the rising costs of using workers. An increased attention to health and safety issues drives up labour costs; increased rights to housing, schooling and municipal services drive up the costs of government, particularly of local governments. And they do so at a time when local governments, in their increasing desperation to attract and hold "industry," provide not only a variety of tax breaks but a large variety of rather costly inducements, from infrastructure development (water, sewerage, roads, workforce training) to management inducements (golf courses, cultural centers, high-tech medical facilities, etc.).

In the 1990s, 20 years after civil rights gains became widespread, following the passage of NAFTA, and especially following the 1999 severe decline in the number of maquiladora factories in northern Mexico, there has been a massive influx of Central American workers to Robeson County, as elsewhere in the United States, driven as much, I suggest, by the desire to replace the increasingly costly African Americans as by the increased availability of non-citizen workers.

Several county officials told me, in 2001-2002, that their estimate was that about three-quarters of the "Mexicans" in Robeson County during the summer were undocumented; that is, about 9 000 to 11 000 so-called "illegal Mexicans" (many from Guatemala, Honduras, and Columbia) are working, increasingly for a full year, in just this one county. The point is not simply that they can be worked very hard for little more than the minimum wage, but that they have no protection on the job against, for instance, the increasingly intense use of agricultural chemicals, including insecticides and herbicides that are used with scarcely any safeguards for the workers, or against the likelihood of eventual injury or repetitive stress problems in the chicken and hog-packing industry. The belt in a chicken factory then usually ran about 93 birds an hour; one chicken to cut or clean every 38 seconds. These plants have the highest injury rate of any occupation in the U.S. More: undocumented workers have very low demands on tax-revenue-supported services, being largely denied access to hospital or clinic-based medical care, save for life-threatening situations, and they have diminished access to education, to housing that meets standards, municipal services, et cetera. As a bonus for using undocumented workers, employers can pocket a portion of the social security deductions from their pay and the federal government can pocket the rest, for undocumented workers have, by definition, fake social security numbers.

Agriculture and meat and poultry packing are now the two largest sources of employment in the region, and in both of these occupations African Americans have been almost entirely displaced by largely undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans, produced in vast numbers through a combination of policy-imposed impoverishment in Mexico and Central America and a range of increasingly murderous "border patrol" theatrics: the focussed reality and the more generalized spectacles of rape, death by desert-route dehydration,[15] physical abuse, official and vigilante murder, and so forth, which do not stop people from coming but create thousands of vulnerable, abusable, and highly exploitable "illegal aliens" each month, who as a "bonus" to citizen taxpayers have comparatively low social cost. It is a two stage process: labour migrants, who come to work, are first made illegal and then quickly made vulnerable to totalizing abuse. Government policies and practices, including the impunity granted to local vigilantes, employers, police and landlords produces vast numbers of people who are disposable not just from their jobs but *in* their jobs and daily life.[16] So-called "primitive" or initial accumulation has shifted its main taproot from dispossession to disposability.

The situation in Robeson County is almost—but ultimately not—describable as a transition from "race" to citizenship as the locus of what I would call "harnessable

vulnerability." To a very large extent what we called "race" *was* differential citizenship, and in that sense the transition from one to the other is illusory.

"Race"—and gender as well—was produced by a deep collusion between the state and popular culture. President Roosevelt, for example, was asked several times in the 1930s and 1940s to introduce and support congressional legislation suppressing lynching. He said that he could not, because he had to defer to "southern culture." Southern culture included what have rightly been called "festivals of lynching" (Tolnay and Beck 1995) complete with large crowds of party participants, speeches by local dignitaries and ministers, and victims who were tortured, mutilated, and murdered, all without any punishment of the perpetrators whatsoever. This southern culture, which was so crucial in the production of race and races, was being mediated by southern senators and representatives, who dominated most of the key congressional committees. With one-party politics in the South, and seniority in congress decisive for chairing committees, Roosevelt needed to pay attention to southern demands. The point here is made by his phrasing of that reality, which points to a still-to-be-understood constitutive role of the state in the production of local and regional culture.

With lynching, to continue this example of the production of race, the state's grant of impunity for major crimes committed against African Americans—kidnap, torture, rape, murder, none of which was punished—put the state in partnership with specific elements of popular culture to produce categories of people who, while legally citizens, in fact had almost none of the protections, and very few of the rights, although most of the obligations, of citizenship.

In this perspective, the apparent transition from race to citizenship as the primary way of producing usable difference and inequality is more usefully understood as the state increasingly and directly assuming almost full control over the production of useful vulnerabilities, without having any need to involve, or acknowledge, or produce "culture," and delivering these vulnerabilities as a subsidy to capital. With 9 000 to 11 000 "illegal aliens" in one North Carolina county, and county officials telling me where they worked, where they lived, what churches they attended, et cetera, the adjective "illegal" far more defines what can be done to them than the ordinary definition of the word: criminal actions by people who should be apprehended. We must understand the whole policing of the actual and the interior "borders" to have the production of non-citizen workers as one of its core features.[17] Insofar as many of the same policies and practices of the state intensify the consequences and the vulnerabilities of gender, altogether this implies that the historical moment of culture—the central concept of anthropology—is passing into secondary causal significance, for reasons that are scarcely related to the growing realization among anthropologists that the concept conceals more than it reveals.[18]

Citizenship, like culture, is explicitly both homogeneous (all citizens belong equally within) and simultaneously differentiating. Unlike "culture," and more like the former "custom," it has the force of law and the power of the state behind it.

Differential Citizenship and the Production of Locality

Newfoundlanders, within Newfoundland, are clearly citizens and as citizens have a wide range of very costly entitlements: education, health, unemployment benefits, welfare, mail service, road maintenance and more—with regional tax revenues scarcely meeting these costs. Forcing people out of Newfoundland ruptures these entitlements. Are these entitlements simply replaced elsewhere in Canada? Is it simply a matter of transferring the costs of these entitlements to another province? In some instances the answer is yes, but in general it seems not, or not completely. Many Newfoundlanders go to live in the inexpensive parts of working-class neighbourhoods in far more densely settled places, such as Toronto or Calgary, where economies of scale and particularly of class-differentiated service, especially in education, municipal services, and perhaps also health care, can be substantial. Many others go to places such as the "company towns" of northern construction camps, where there are few services and where the corporation often subsidizes the costs of housing, municipal services, and even sports teams. Suffering from the effects of long-term unemployment or underemployment in Newfoundland, they are often grateful for employment elsewhere, even in difficult jobs in harsh environments, and in places with few municipal services or attractions. A Nova Scotia fish-plant manager said that if he could not get Newfoundlanders he would have to import Mexicans.

More to the point, mainland Canada receives workers that it has not paid the costs of "producing" as healthy, educated adults. The productivity, the profits, and the taxes from their work are materialized and realized outside of Newfoundland; the costs of producing them as workers are largely paid in Newfoundland. Citizenship, only in some respects an either/or categorization, in fundamental ways also positions people within ranges of very significantly differentiated (partially) state-financed and (partially) state-sponsored entitlements. The whole state-sponsored and financed production of differentiated

neighbourhoods in cities, between cities and suburbs, and between regions of provinces or states exemplifies the way class and ethnicity become remapped onto citizenship as differential entitlements. These differential entitlements (particularly to basic "services" such as education and health) are organized in ways that give the state a significant role in both social reproduction and reshaping of difference and inequality. Ethnic and class differences often tend toward clustering in specific localities, for reasons that have to do with a range of factors, from zoning, housing codes, segregation, differential rents and costs based on differential services, access to work, to choice, which facilitates state engagement in the production—and with the increasingly widespread collapse of the welfare state, usually the enhanced reproduction—of unequal difference.

While the Canadian government, through various financial "equalization" schemes, transfer payments, and direct subsidies sends a lot of money to Newfoundland, it is unclear what is the relation between the scale of these subsidies and the scale of the wealth that Newfoundland produces for mainland Canada through oil production on the seas adjacent to the province, through the "sale" of massive quantities of hydro-electricity from Labrador to Quebec at or below the cost of production (which Quebec Hydro then turns around and sells to New York at a very hefty markup), and especially through providing mainland Canada with very large quantities of workers with comparatively quite low social and wage costs. For all the resentful and contemptuous media and parliamentary talk about the many subsidies sent to Newfoundland and the lazy fishers who only work part of the year, Newfoundland remains the poorest province in Canada, and despite so-called "equalization" transfer payments, there is an increasing disparity in income and in well-being between Newfoundland and mainland Canada. It seems far more likely that Newfoundland is actually subsidizing mainland Canada, just as all the "illegal Mexicans" working in the United States represent a subsidy to the United States paid by some of the very poorest regions of Mexico.

The contradictions of citizenship in modern "democratic" states go far beyond shifting or saving the costs of producing adult workers. Capitalist states face two contradictory tasks. On the one hand, states produce and manage a wide range of inequalities, including especially race, gender, and locality, which capital uses intensely in the unequal organization of production, distribution, and consumption. Capital makes class. It intensifies, but it cannot produce, race, gender and locality—and especially the differential citizenship entitlements associated with each. The state-orchestrated production of these inequalities is the state's subsidization of capital, and of that portion of the citizenry who benefit from these practices.

On the other hand, modern "democratic" states are based in a range of citizenship entitlements which make such differentiation difficult to produce—particularly within the entitlement to equal treatment under law. Law is absolutely fundamental to modern "democracies" and to capital, and equally fundamental is the *partially* realistic assumption and practice that both law and regulation will be applied equally to all. Beyond this, there are a range of increasingly costly services and supports, from education to health care to municipal services, where differential access, against the grain of equal protection, is probably the primary cost saving. There is thus a fundamental contradiction between the state's full-scale engagement in the production of inequalities and the state's commitment to the so-called "rule of law." This contradiction is partly concealed, primarily from its beneficiaries, by the pretense of naturalized inequalities—race, gender—and by a fragmentation of state engagements into a multiplicity of supposedly separate strands—education, health, municipal services, subsidies, et cetera. The production of locality will serve to illustrate how fragmentation turns into the kinds of concealment that enable states to produce and reproduce fundamental inequalities amongst its legally equal citizenry.

The production of locality as a powerful form of inequality, with far-reaching and very substantial consequences (Carbonella 2005), has scarcely been given the attention it deserves. Differential social services, differential zoning, differential environmental and medical-care health issues, and differential schooling—each of which gets separate attention—come together to make far more than the obvious. The concept of "ghetto," or more politely "inner city," puts the blame on race, class, geography and, with the predominance of woman-headed households, gender, for what is primarily a product of state. Financing schools substantially through local property taxes, as is almost universally done in the U.S. as a matter of state policy, alone makes the point: if all public schools in a state are financed by local property taxes (above a minimal per-pupil equal state grant), then one law or practice applied to all guarantees a citizenry very significantly differentiated in well-being.

This points to a core contradiction of contemporary states: to have and to fracture its citizenry. This contradiction seems to be increasingly resolved, or only concealed, by subtle and fluid forms of "legally" delineated differential citizenship, with much of the fluidity realized through major variation in enforcement. There now seem to be fewer forms of social differentiation as bipolar and as rigid

as race, and more fluid and shifting state-managed statuses and situations such as we find in large urban neighbourhoods of "illegal aliens," many of whom are permitted to live as citizens, many of whom have more tentative and vulnerable situations, and many who are somewhere in between. A similar fluidity and shifting state-managed range of situations has recently been developing in the former cod-fishing outports of rural Newfoundland.

Spreading Local Ruptures

Until the development of chemical sensors, miners often took caged canaries with them, particularly into the deep shafts. Canaries would die in the presence of odorless, explosive methane gas, just before the gas became explosive. When the canary dies you run. At the outset of this essay I suggested that Newfoundland villagers were the canaries of Canada—and even more broadly, of capitalist so-called democracies. To develop this point we need to look a bit more closely at the social death of Newfoundland fishing villages. There are two major components to this death, one forcing many people to leave, the other creating new and intense inequalities among those who stay.[19]

The cod biomass collapse became undeniable by early 1992, and Canada closed almost all the commercial cod fishery around the coasts of Newfoundland, precipitating the largest mass layoffs in Canadian economic history. As there was little other primary economic activity in most villages, and as it was widely expected that the cod would soon regenerate, Canada developed income replacement schemes that essentially paid fishers and fish plant workers a modest annual salary to sit still and wait for the cod to come back.

The income replacement program that Canada introduced in 1994 was called TAGS (The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy). The government said that TAGS would last for five years, until 1999. It was designed both to pay an income to people who still could not fish, or process fish in factories, and simultaneously to transfer as many people as possible out of the fishery. This was done by seeking to buy up fishing licences—buying people out of the fishery—and by job retraining schemes. Neither was very effective. Between 1994 and 1996, of the 40 000 people receiving TAGS support in Atlantic Canada, 732 were placed in jobs outside the fishery, and 1 492 retired from, or were bought out of, the fishery.

In 1997, when the cod biomass showed no sign of rebuilding, Canada announced it would end the TAGS program a year early, in 1998, and it began to withdraw substantial numbers of entitlements. At the same time (1997), the Unemployment Insurance program was changed in major ways, to force people to go where the jobs were. It did this primarily by drastically increasing the minimum number of weeks, different in each region, to *initially* qualify for unemployment insurance: that is, for those who were just entering the full-time work force. In Newfoundland this was raised from 14 to 26 weeks, far longer than any available employment in the remaining, intensely seasonal, shrimp and crab fishery. If you just finished your education, and were a new entrant into the labour force, you had to leave rural Newfoundland for your first job, or else try to live on episodes of work combined with Social Assistance (welfare) for a substantial part of the year. Unemployment insurance paid fully entitled workers about $15 000 a year; welfare maxed out, for families with several children, at about $8 000—not a liveable income, even in rural Newfoundland.

The most powerful pressure to leave Newfoundland was the organization of "job training" under the new post-1997 Employment Insurance program. If you no longer got TAGS payments and did not qualify for employment insurance, you could avoid the unlivable welfare payments by signing up for job retraining, which paid the same as TAGS for the year or so of training. You did not just volunteer; you had to be accepted by the local "Job Counsellor." Every single job counsellor in rural Newfoundland with whom I spoke said that they would not accept a person for job retraining unless they "signed a paper" saying they would relocate anywhere in Canada that a job was offered. They told me that this was the only way they could make their very costly retraining programs look successful, as there were few jobs in Newfoundland. This forced relocation was denied by every single senior government official in Newfoundland with whom I spoke—one said that it was illegal; another that it was unconstitutional. The job counsellors in the villages said that none of the trainees challenged the enforceability of this requirement. They signed, and they went. One retrainee told his job counsellor that he would leave at three in the morning, because he did not want to see his children sob. That quiet statement about the heartlessness of the process was about as deep and as confrontational as protest was, or was thinkable, by all parties involved.[20]

Beginning in 1998, there was an explosive expansion of the distant-water shrimp and crab fishery. For those few individuals who have a shrimp and crab license, and a boat that now costs upwards of $800 000, it is possible to earn $80 000 to $100 000 a year, and the four or five crew members can earn $30 000 or more each—much more money than almost all cod-fishers ever saw. But the fish plant in the north-eastern village of Catalina, which

had hired about 1 250 people for fifty weeks a year when it processed cod, closed with the moratorium on cod fishing in 1992. When it reopened in 1998 as a shrimp plant, it hired 135 workers back and ran barely 15 weeks a year—some years not making the 14 weeks necessary for the workers to qualify for full unemployment insurance benefits.[21]

More: the 135 former cod plant workers hired back in 1998 all had to have at least 20 years seniority in 1991, when the cod plant closed, to be offered a job in the reopened plant. This means that they were hired in 1971 or before. If they were 17 years old in 1971 (the minimum hiring age), they were born in, or for most of them at least several years before, 1954. In 1998, when the plant started processing shrimp, the youngest worker in the plant was 44, and there were almost no working-class jobs locally available for anyone younger, anyone of child-bearing age, outside of a few minimum wage jobs in nursing homes or retail sales. Most of the people with young children had to leave rural Newfoundland to find work. While village populations declined about 25% from the closure of the cod fishery in 1992 to the 2001 census, in very many places well over half the people of child-bearing age are gone. Schools, churches, grocery stores and banks are closing. Children have few playmates; elderly have little family support and care. Some communities are having trouble collecting enough taxes to keep their street lights on.

Even among those fisher families who are doing extremely well financially there are profound ruptures in the midst of their prosperity—ruptures that go well beyond the devastation of their communities, which their wealth permits many to partially ignore. The really profitable shrimp and crab fisheries are about 200 miles offshore, and many of the boats used are not built to fish that far out in the north Atlantic. They could neither outrun a very fast-rising major storm nor ride it out. The fishery, I was told, was a disaster waiting to happen. Several fishermen, descendants of fishers, told me they were never so afraid in all their lives; their wives, usually the daughters and granddaughters of fishers, said the same. When I asked each if they talked to their spouse about their fears they all said no, never. Down at the base of what and why, there is nothing to say.

The fundamental concepts of anthropology—culture, social structure, social organization, kinship system, et cetera—all presume a continuity and a processual stability in everyday life that is simply not there for a great many people in the world today. These concepts all depend upon today being more or less like both yesterday and tomorrow. We do not yet have an anthropology that is adequate to speak to, or with, lives defined by ruptures.[22] Feminists have argued that narrativity—stories with beginnings, middles and ends, and with a simple linear progression from beginning to end—profoundly misrepresents many women's lives. The problem is broader and even deeper. When fishermen do not talk to their wives about their fears that their boats are potential death-traps, and wives do not talk to their husbands about their same fears, in part because there is now nothing much in the way of viable alternatives to taking these boats that far out to sea, not if you want to stay "home" in village Newfoundland, then in this silence we are witnessing the spreading death of coherence—both the solidity and the speakability of social life. Unspeakable actual and potential ruptures now shape the lives of vast numbers of people.

The ruptures get even deeper, particularly for those who seem to be stuck going nowhere, having almost nothing. At the bottom end of the village income scale, I remember the sight of a gaunt woman in her late 40s or early 50s, on the northern end of the Bonavista Peninsula, far out in the North Atlantic, on a truly cold and windy late October morning in 2000, two years after TAGS ended and there was nothing left but welfare, in an utterly threadbare coat and summer-weight slipper-shoes, spending $30 on Lotto tickets in a small convenience store at the end of a rutted village street. Shortly after this I saw the following advertisement for the state-run lottery (reproduced in Davis 2002):

> If you play *Lotto 6/49*, *Lotto Super 7*, or *Pick 4*, increase your chances..."TAG IT." TAG IT is Atlantic Canada's $100,000 add-on game [note, only Atlantic Canada, where almost all the TAGS payments went]. It's drawn every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and it costs only $1 [more] to play.

The point here is not to ask what sort of people would design a gamble of such poor odds and then write an advertisement in those terms—from a moral height perhaps slightly above green pond slime—and more, would give supervisory approval for it, with everyone involved knowing that lotteries are a tax on the poor for having some hope left within them.[23] The point at the end is to understand how, in the face of such governmental contempt and destructive manipulation of its own citizenry, people may still move forward, and how we might provide some small help for this struggle.

To begin with, what we see in this woman's intense participation in the lottery is that within and against her suffering she has to be crafting a sense of tomorrow—a better tomorrow. We can not know what she desires the money for, should she win. What we can know is that it would have to be spent on material goods and, most likely,

on enhancing her social relations: in sum on joining society more on her own terms, and on triumphing over it—at least temporarily.

This form of gambling is near, or at, the bottom end of non-professional gambling. Unlike the video lottery terminals in bars, or the bingo games in church halls, each of which is embedded in a well-crafted sociability among the participants, lottery tickets are far more isolated, a far more lonely endeavour. Yet even here we can find an attempt to construct, against the pressures and ruptures of impoverishment, a coherent and viable social life. That this attempt leads her to cooperate with the forces that even further rob her of that possibility is only one of the characteristic, multiple contradictions of her situation. It is precisely in these contradictions that we can situate our attempts to intervene—to share our understandings and give our hand to this gaunt woman, and to use our understandings to get our hands on the people who continually put her where she is.

Conclusion: Confrontational Anthropology

The substantial decline of these small communities is neither steady nor "processual," capable of being usefully described as an on-going, continuing process. While this decline has some process-like features, for the people who live in the midst of the problems it is experienced as a series of fundamental ruptures: the fishery ended, fish-plant employment gone, the village grocery store closed, your car up on blocks for the winter, your telephone given up. Social life in much of Newfoundland is now increasingly shaped by profound ruptures between yesterday and today, between today and tomorrow, and most of all by the ruptures one lives with all day, every day.

The ruptures between yesterday and today are not simply definable by the end of the cod fishery, or the closing of schools, stores, and banks, as crucial as are all these events. Out of the social relations of yesterday came changing values about ways of relating to one another, changing ideas about needs and wants, and changing hopes: in sum, came the process that anthropologists, myself included, once called "culture."[24] As income, ways of working, and community collapse, and kin and friends and neighbours leave, people are increasingly unable to meet the demands of their own culture. They find themselves necessarily in a partly antagonistic relationship to their own past or to a romanticized idealization of it, which amounts to the same thing, a distancing from a part of their own identity.[25]

Most subtly of all, and perhaps most powerfully, we can sense the complexities of an impending rupture between hopes and doom with the impoverished woman spending $30 on Lotto tickets: the growing rupture between her hope and her impending, intensifying, doom. This is a particularly revealing rupture, for here we are unavoidably drawn to go beyond the chaotic separations of yesterday from today, today from tomorrow. The space between this woman's hope and her impending doom is a rupture she must live every day, every moment of her life, not something that can be positioned on a time-line. So also, when we think about it, is working on a boat that must fish much too far out to be safe, or having a husband and a son or two on that boat, with the silence within the family naming the sense of an unavoidable, impending, potential rupture. To say that here or there was, is, or will be the break would be to trivialize what is happening, to misunderstand the circumstances within and against which so very many lives are lived.

What can we do? In the face of such crises of local social reproduction what constitutes, or reconstitutes, a partisan anthropology?

I think we have to give up the notion that the core of anthropology—of ethnographic field research—is the immediately observable. We still must look and listen intensely. But I want to problematize, in a different way than usual, what it is that we are looking and listening to and for. We must first put aside, as important but ultimately shallow and simplistic, the self-centred realization that we need to pay more attention to how our own particularity as specific kinds of observers shapes what we see and hear. Of course it does, but if we keep looking for, or listening to, the sorts of things that caught our attention for the past 50 years we will not get very far by adding ourselves and our own peculiarities to the mix.

In recent years I have increasingly emphasized the need to listen for the silences and the incoherence of social life, and to look for the growing ruptures and the rents in the social fabric, with rents implying both tears and appropriation. In these tasks of listening to the silences and looking for the fractures, I have found that classical anthropology is particularly useful—not to describe or explain reality but to describe and explain the organizing illusions of domination.

Anthropology, using concepts such as social organization, social structure, culture, et cetera, (or worse: *a* social structure, *a* culture, etc.) to make field research seem doable, unwittingly incorporated the fantasies of ordered and controlled inequalities embedded in the concepts. So when I am in the field I constantly wonder how and why what I see and hear differs from the classical anthropological models of *a* social structure, expressed in ordinary everyday life and sequential processes, and with people

having, in some unproblematic way, their culture. Fieldwork for me now depends on wondering what classical anthropology would have said about what I am seeing, and how and why what I am seeing and hearing, and not seeing and not hearing, differs from that.

Over the past several decades there has been some excellent work done that puts classical anthropology aside, and focuses on the discordances, ruptures, the chaos in daily life caused by domination and inequality. All I am suggesting here is a different route to understanding, one that takes the basic concepts of mid-20th-century anthropology again more seriously, not as tools to discover what social life is like, and certainly not how it "works" or "functions," but as a guide to power's goals and simultaneously its lies. Classical anthropology, in this perspective, remains at least initially useful in field research to delineate how those who dominate different factions of the state, capital, and local social relations seek to have, or to assume and thus partly create, an ordered framework for governance, control, administration.

The deeply incomplete and uncompletable social ordering that anthropology, like power, assumed was there for all but the "deviants" became the basis for the hegemony of power, in the older sense of the word, which was as much about *must* as about belief, and thus treated "going along" with power as a mixture of unwitting and unwilling compliance. Power, much of the time, was largely indifferent to this distinction in the reasons for compliance, sometimes even openly mocking or further abusing those who willingly complied with its demands or its hints. That is one of the crucial lessons of the "Sambo" myths and of pornography: people are rather more likely to be mocked and humiliated than to be appreciated for complying with the demands of power.

To understand how such power seeks to organize itself and others, from its perspectives and with its methods, I find classical anthropology, with its vision of an ordered and orderly inequality, moving routinely from one day to the next, exceptionally useful for delineating the present and the necessary in people's lives and, as I have sought to show here, *simultaneously the unliveable.*[26]

In the chaos that power routinely causes, in the fractures in people's lives that inequality characteristically imposes, in the social production of the vulnerabilities of race, gender, differential citizenship and class—in all the social order and ordering that makes the world that classical anthropology sought to describe both unliveable and usually unavoidable—we can find the terrain of our new anthropology and our partisanship. The anthropology of "shared culture" was not wrong, and can not be put aside: more to the point it was a deeply unavoidable and, for many, a necessarily and inescapably opposable presence in daily life—as the words "nigger" and "newfie" were both given their force by, and at the same time destroyed, the idea of "shared culture."

It is this from unavoidable opposition that we can begin. Perhaps in it we can find a different sense of struggle, not based on a direct confrontation with power and domination, for such confrontations primarily serve to dignify the enemy, but struggle rooted in a radical, confrontational engagement with the production of fractures in our and each other's daily life. Producing these fractures turns out to be crucial to the continual reproduction of power and inequality. Power necessarily produces inequalities; inequalities necessarily produce chaos. Organizing among and with each other against the production of chaos in our daily lives may shape new and hopefully more effective confrontations with states.

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Acknowledgments

I particularly want to thank Linda Green, Don Kalb and Gavin Smith for editorial and analytical advice, Winnie Lem for her advice and encouragement, and the organizers of the CASCA meeting, including Pauline Barber, Belinda Leach, Lindsay Dubois and Brian Noble for the invitation and the special hospitality. For help with understanding both Newfoundland and the north Atlantic manifestations of that most peculiar institution, capitalism, my special guides were, as usual, Valerie Burton, Rex Clark and Robert Sweeny, with exceptionally useful help from the librarians of the Newfoundland and Labrador Legislative Library, Kimberly Hammond and Carolyn Morgan. August Carbonella's seminal work on the production of locality was crucial. In North Carolina a long goodbye to my dear departed comrade Derek Lowry, who was all heart until his heart stopped, and a warm, appreciative hello to Bruce Jones, Mac Legerton and Ruth Locklear, with special thanks to Tom Clark, United Food and Commercial Workers labour organizer and strategist. At the CASCA conference where an early draft of this article was presented, Hilary Cunningham asked me why I was still a Marxist. The question caught me by surprise, and I did not realize how, in the specific context of the arguments here, the question provided a significant opening. Indirectly but specifically I have sought to address that issue in this new version. Thanks, Hilary.

And a special thanks to my two anonymous reviewers, who were far more than usually helpful.

I owe a major debt of thanks to the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the Professional Staff Congress of City University of New York, and the Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, for a series of small grants that helped to fund this research, and the College of Staten Island for some released time.

Notes

1 On the innocence of American cultural anthropology see, for instance, Adam Kuper (1999); in particular his discussion of how post World War II concepts of diverse cultures, then a characteristic of U.S. schools of anthropology, would be heard in apartheid-dominated South Africa.

2 Crises of social reproduction are notoriously difficult to understand—hence the "transition debates" on the transition from feudalism to capitalism that compelled so much attention from medieval and early modern historians in the last half of the twentieth century. Transitions nowadays are often regarded as rather less epochal. Discussions centre either on industrial organization and strategies of accumulation, such as the rise and decline of fordism and flexible production, or on undefinables and supposed novelties, such as postmodernism and globalization. In the perspective developed here, crises of social reproduction are more rooted than is usually done in the direct involvement of, and contradictions within, states, and thus take on an analytically unfamiliar dynamic.

3 Note, for future development in my current research both on race and on child suicide among native peoples, that the phrase I use here is "daily life," not "everyday life." Daily life is just that—yesterday, today and tomorrow, perhaps with significant continuities, perhaps not. Everyday life presumes the centrality of continuity within which fluctuations are viewed as part of the order, or the ordering, of the everyday. The chaos, fractures and discontinuities poverty and domination characteristically impose on ordinary people makes the concept of a continuous everyday life a way of separating our understandings from their realities.

This is simply to introduce an issue. It is not a critique of the *alltagsgeschicte* (usually translated as everyday life) school of history that has developed in Germany, which has had some important influence in North America. Alltagsgeschichte is framed in different terms (which also call out for close consideration). The French perspective on daily life history, once it passed out of the hands of its masters (Braudel, LeRoy Ladurie, Carlo Ginzburg) mostly became the framework for coffee-table books and dinner-table chatter.

4 I owe this overview of the situation in the maquiladoras to Sra. Marta Ojeda, Executive Director of the Tri-National Coalition for Justice, who presented these figures in a talk given in the University of Arizona Symposium "Resistance on the Border: Globalization, Militarization, Immigration" on December 7, 2002 (with thanks to Professor Linda Green, who provided her notes on this symposium). The *New York Times,* on December 10, 2002, had a long article on the large number of women who have been "ritually" murdered in Juárez, the urban maquiladora zone just across the border from El Paso, in the past three years (see Thompson 2002). Mexican government officials seem to have paid very little attention to this: they were only working women.

5 The literature that both exemplifies and deepens this glancing overview is broad and crucial. To name just a few items that I have found particularly useful, see John Iliffe, *African Poor* (1987); Mahmood Mamdani (1996)—but necessary to use with much caution; Gavin Smith, (1999); George A. Collier with Elizabeth Quaratiello (1999[1994]); Maria L. Lagos (1994); Charles R. Hale (1994); Jeffrey L. Gould (1990, 1998); Steve Striffler (2005) and with special force and clarity, Francisco Scarrano (1996). There is an excellent review of the literature on the production of locality, along with perceptive theoretical insights, in Carbonella 2005. On the relation between the production of locality and local inequality see Sider 1997. Biolsi 2005 has a very fine, brief introduction to sovereignty and differential citizenship, and Brooke Larson (2004) provides a model analysis for the interweaving of citizenship and race in the special circumstances forming Andean liberal democratic states.

6 The best overview of the destruction of the fishery is Michael Harris, *Lament for an Ocean: The Collapse of the Atlantic Cod Fishery.*

7 Professor Don Kalb of Utrecht University and Central European University, Budapest, in a close and perceptive reading of an early draft of the manuscript, noted [and I quote from his remarks in a personal communication, September 26, 2003]:

"The process...is even much larger and more widespread than you infer. The whole of provincial Eastern Europe, in particular spaces in eastern Poland, eastern Slovakia, eastern Hungary, the whole of Romania and Bulgaria except the capital cities and some additional islands of stability, large tracts in the Ukraine and Russia, not to speak of Central Asia and Siberia, suffer from precisely the same process of a radical decline of citizenship, turning locales from commodity producers into the producers of human exports. It is only not understood as such because they never had active democratic citizenship and because the socialist heritage spoils critique and puts a premium on exit. Post-socialism as cultural process is primarily about this dispossession, about the illusions of migration and Westernization, about struggling with your own traditions and the false promises of transition. The process is comparable to what you discover in North Carolina and Newfoundland, to the extent that these people also have had the experience of social rights, which have now been taken from them."

8 A key part of this task entails a critique of the concept of "subsistence production"—along with the way this concept was developed by Chayanov and Meillassoux. That critique was presented in Sider 1989.

9 The preface in Sider 2003b begins the discussion of the production of race, which is my current research project, to be further examined in a forthcoming volume of collected essays.

10 The concept of the social cost of commodities, and the political inequalities tied to the production of these social costs,

is delineated in the preface to Sider 2003b. In brief, and much simplified, the social cost of the commodities produced in a locality includes the cost of socially reproducing the producers—those who make the commodities. Price/cost negotiations thus necessarily include the standard of living the producers can successfully claim, or can be forced to accept. In many rural hinterlands a substantial portion of the population, and particularly women, are far too vulnerable to routine forms of domination to negotiate effectively on their own behalf. Amartya Sen (1981) has conclusively shown that most major famines take their mortal toll from large numbers of people losing the ability to purchase or acquire food, rather than from a large decline in the availability of food. Lagos 1994 has a useful description, more broadly relevant than her Bolivian example, of the vulnerability of rural producers to price manipulations very much against their interests.

11 While it is exceptionally difficult to measure the actual social costs of, and returns to, domestic commodity production, there are useful ways of approximating the situation. We can see if communities are meeting at least their national (or, better, regional) average standards of life expectancy, infant mortality, maternal mortality, and severe maternal birth injury, as well as national standards for child growth curves, education and literacy. If they are significantly below standard, or if they are comparatively declining, it is likely that the full social costs of producing commodities are not being met. It is possible to argue that there are a very large number of additional factors shaping these outcomes—such as the presence or absence of doctors, clean water, cultural or social marginalization, et cetera (Rodgers, Gore and Figueiredo 1995). All this is true, but a lifetime of working with the rural poor, and on the kinds of differentiation that occur among the rural poor, has led me to think that these additional factors are secondary to, and derivative from, structural impoverishment and of relatively small importance compared to processes that continually impoverish villages and villagers. One of the major obstacles to grasping deteriorating situations in rural hinterlands is the appallingly ignorant, but very widespread, practice of measuring rural well being by per-capita income. Rising incomes then supposedly indicate increased well being. They may just as likely indicate increasing commodification of the necessities of daily life, widely associated with increasing deterioration in well-being. The only criteria that make sense are the ones mentioned above, or similar actual measures of life-quality.

12 There is a whole literature, primarily from France, which addresses this issue in ways that muddle the real-world situation of the people in such circumstances. Meillassoux (1981), for example, argues that villagers can sell their labour and their goods so cheaply because they are also subsisting themselves. Partly correct, this perspective fails to closely examine the whole notion of subsistence, which contains the double meaning of self-provisioning and just barely getting by, with a wide and often changing range of meanings to "just barely." As a UN study of rural poverty put it decades ago, if a people's needs are not quite being met, they don't simply die on the spot, but childhood mortality increases, as does susceptibility to disease, and life-expectancy declines. Yet while they die from malnutrition, we could still think that they are "subsisting themselves" from their small and picturesque patches of corn, beans, and squash.

13 Jeffrey Gould (1998) provides an excellent comparative example, particularly in the way he shows how indigenous communities in highland Nicaragua became dependent upon lawyer politicians who were simultaneously defending them from more direct brutality and plundering their lands and resources for personal and state gain.

14 And also, with particular virulence, in Central and South America, where *indio* and *mestizo* combine, in locally specific ways, both false biology and pervasive, life-shaping citizenship entitlements. Innu and Inuit in Canada have suffered very greatly from their lack of rights and protections, neither of which are excusable by the modicum of "sovereignty" they are permitted. Many of the worst outrages imposed upon them have their origin in the ways they are included in, and simultaneously excluded from, the Canadian nation-state. See, for instance, Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski 1994.

15 The majority of border-crossers are forced to use a route that goes through a stretch of truly difficult land—barren, very dry, usually very hot—appropriately named for a right-wing senator and presidential candidate of an earlier generation: Barry Goldwater Park.

16 This is intended to imply a historical development from the concept and the reality of a "reserve army of labour." The main point now seems to be not to have masses of people that one can more or less temporarily set aside, but people one can more or less get rid of.

17 On the concept of "interior borders" see Davis 2000, chapter 7. He uses the terms "second border" for the searches of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and "third border" for the range of extralegal pressures upon both documented and undocumented migrants.

18 Gavin Smith (University of Toronto) insightfully points out that the evidence for the declining significance of culture in the production of inequalities is more suggestive than conclusive. I concur, but emphasize the increasingly direct—unmediated—engagement of states in processes that make, harness and marginalize inequalities. Of special interest in this issue, as he pointed out, is the increasingly widespread use of the term "culture" among academics and the people themselves, at the same time as administratively delineated citizenship becomes increasingly determinative.

19 This is an extremely complex issue, which calls for a historical paper focusing directly on the topic. In brief the issue is this. First, we do not want to romanticize early forms of village social life, saying that the new, more intense inequalities have "spoiled" or destroyed community. There may be some truth to this perspective, but it is beside the point here. The point is that in vast regions of the world a hard-pressed poverty once still left people minimally able to reproduce themselves in their communities, albeit at horrendous cost. Now, however, in vast areas of the world, social reproduction of very substantial numbers of rural people/communities is no longer possible at any cost people are able to pay. Structural adjustment, development, neoliberalism, rapidly shifting processes of accumulation and deeply

subsidized state brutality (a proper part of contemporary imperialism and neocolonialism) have made much countryside unlivable for the poor. That is the new inequality: many can't even stay there to die, but must "urbanize." The outmigration from Europe to the Americas, particularly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was only partly similar.

20 The job counsellor wanted me to know that they too knew their program was heartless.

21 The amount of your unemployment cheque is determined, at first, by your income. But if the plant ran only 11 weeks, your unemployment cheque was only 11/14ths of this amount.

22 Kirk Dombrowski (2001) is excellent on this issue, and on ways of addressing situations where the assumption that there is an ordinary daily life is more misleading than helpful.

23 It is important to remember here that when Pandora—who was "first woman" in Greek mythology, equivalent to Eve—opened her box, letting out all the evils but one, (keep quiet, Freud, there is other work to do) she slammed the lid shut just in time "to keep one evil among men," as the myth goes. That evil, which keeps "men" struggling, was Hope. Graeco-Roman–Judaic so-called "civilization" is founded not just upon intense labour, as per Eve, but upon the critique and the exploitation of hope. Indeed, that is what surplus extraction, the political-economic foundation of all "civilization," entails.

For those who find this language inappropriately strong (Canada being well known, and almost rightly praised for its gentle politesse), I can offer two comments: first that social analysis is, or should be, partisan; second, that if you prefer the illusion of objectivity you can go back to your daily newspaper. I am no longer willing to help maintain the pretenses that have provided both the cloak and the dagger for much so-called "social science."

24 The concluding chapter to Dombrowski 2001 has an exceptionally productive discussion of the ways that the concept of culture spread through the social sciences in the early 20th century, and how this continually reshaped the ways anthropology conceptualized its subjects.

25 The situations Hermann Rebel (1989) refers to in his interesting (if rather too individualist) proposal of "divided selves" in rural Newfoundland is probably more usefully conceptualized along the lines of historically specific ruptures, including pumping people out of communities during the inshore fishery, as discussed in Sider 2003a and the ruptures described here. These ruptures put people in specific antagonistic or romanticized relationships to their own past and their own culture, as opposed to the more generalized and abstract schisms he finds. Dombrowski (2001) provides the most developed study of the complex and changing relationship of people to their own culture. Of special importance is the way he shows how and why there are different kinds of relations to one's own past and one's own culture in the same small community. Carbonella (1992) develops an analysis of how community itself is shaped by people's confrontations with their own past. Both Green (1999) and Bornstein (2002) carry the analysis into state-imposed ruptures that, while forcing a profound break between people and their own history and culture, allow the formation of different kinds of illusions among the people so treated. Smith (1999, esp. Part Two) shows differentiation formed in ruptures as part of resistance to further domination.

26 Foucault took Weberian ideas about the internal coherence of power and expanded them into an analysis of governmentality that depended upon the ability of power to largely create its subjects. A hasty reading might suggest that the issues here are being pressed into a Foucauldian mold. A better fitting mold had been earlier and much more subtly carved by the playwright Jean Genet. Genet understood, better than Foucault, how people must, and do, accept power's dreams for them, and moreover, incorporate these dreams and act within them more or less willingly, and how this is, at the same time, impossible, so that lives and power are shaped simultaneously by desires and their impossibilities. For this more subtle analysis see, for instance, Genet's *The Maids and Deathwatch* (1954, originally *Les Bonnes et Haute Surveillance*), and from the top down, literally, *The Balcony* (1966).

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Article

Indigenous Peoples of the Russian North and Cold War Ideology

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Abstract: During the Soviet period, much of Western scholarship on the smaller indigenous groups of the Russian north and far east—that is Northern Peoples—was shaped by Cold War ideology. In this paper, the ways in which Cold War ideology distorted representations of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples, and some of the consequences of these distortions, are analyzed.

Keywords: Siberian Northern Peoples, Cold War, ideology, Soviet policy, free market

Résumé : Au cours de la période soviétique, la plupart des études occidentales portant sur les petits groupes autochtones russes du Nord et de l'Extrême-Orient – autrement dit, les peuples du Nord – ont été façonnées par l'idéologie de la guerre froide. Cet article analyse les façons dont l'idéologie de la guerre froide a déformé les représentations de la politique soviétique envers les peuples du Nord ainsi que certaines des conséquences de ces déformations.

Mots-clés : peuples du Nord sibérien, guerre froide, idéologie, politique soviétique, économie de marché

During the Soviet period, much of Western scholarship on the smaller indigenous groups of the Russian north and far east—that is, Northern Peoples—was shaped by Cold War ideology. In this paper, we analyze ways in which Cold War ideology distorted representations of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples, and some of the consequences of these distortions.[1]

By "Northern Peoples" we mean the 26 relatively small, indigenous groups of the north and far east of the former U.S.S.R. which were designated as "nationalities" by the Soviet state. Their traditional cultures were based on hunting, fishing, trapping, and reindeer breeding. In the late 1980s, the 26 Northern Peoples ranged in population from approximately 34 000 Nenets to approximately 200 Oroki (International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) 1990). Two larger groups in northern Siberia—the Sakha/Yakut and the Komi, each numbering around 300 000—were not counted among the smaller nationalities.

Most of the Northern Peoples lived in seven Autonomous Regions created by the Soviet state in the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (RSFSR). By the 1960s, in practically all of these regions, Northern Peoples were greatly outnumbered by people from elsewhere in the U.S.S.R., mostly Russians (Armstrong 1978). Generally, the newcomers were transients who lived in urban centres while Northerners lived in rural areas.

Cold War Ideologies

The Cold War (1945-91) can be characterized as a contest between the former Soviet Bloc, led by the U.S.S.R., and the West, led by the U.S., which stopped short of direct U.S.–Soviet armed conflict largely because of the threat of mutual assured destruction posed by nuclear war. This contest involved, among other things, comparisons between various aspects of life in the West and the Soviet Bloc in an effort to marshal political support for capitalism or socialism. Such comparisons were embedded in

particular ideologies. These ideologies attempted to provide answers to fundamental questions about the nature and direction of the West and the Soviet Bloc: why was each side the way it was? Was this good or bad? What should be done about it, if anything? (see Dolbeare and Dolbeare 1971; Eagleton 1991).

Marxism-Leninism, the official ideology of the former U.S.S.R., was based on the view that capitalism involved exploitation of workers by capitalists (Bartels 1999), and that such exploitation had been eliminated in the U.S.S.R. The Soviet state, which owned the major means of production, communication, and exchange, viewed itseld as an instrument of working people's rule, and thus as democratic. It was illegal for individuals to own the major means of production, exchange and communication. Otherwise, exploitation would reappear. Surplus provided by Soviet workers was to be used to insure security of the state and the socialist social order, and to improve Soviet living standards (see Afanasyev et al. 1974; Bartels 1999). Revenues from state-owned enterprises largely supported all social services, including housing, education, daycare, heat, light, medical care, and pensions. As a result, taxes were very low, as were basic living expenses such as the cost of certain food items, rent, utilities, and public transport, including internal air travel. Employment was guaranteed by the state. Soviet socialism was based on the principle, "from each according to their ability, to each according to their work," and was seen as the penultimate stage in an evolutionary progression culminating in a stateless, technologically-advanced communist society based on the principle, "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need" (see Khorzov et al. 1977:393-406).

In contrast, the ideological foundation of Western societies during the Cold War centred on freedom of individuals to publicly express their political views, to worship, to travel, to participate in a multiparty electoral system, and to own property, including the major means of production, communication and exchange. The right to hire waged labour was legally recognized and regulated by states. Liberal democracy, despite obvious social and economic inequalities, was widely seen in the West as the apogee of social, political and economic organization.

Western "middle class" prosperity was sometimes seen as evidence of the superiority of liberal democracy and the "free market." The absence of a multiparty electoral system and restrictions on external travel for most Soviet citizens were also seen as conclusive evidence of the superiority of liberal democracy.

A tenet of Western Cold War ideology was that the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany were varieties of totalitarianism, the worst kind of political-economic organization of industrial society (see Arendt 1968; Schapiro 1972). Evidence for this view was found in reports of millions of victims of Stalinist policies during the 1930s (see Conquest 1969), Soviet military intervention in Hungary in 1956, Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, et cetera. These alleged massive violations of human rights assured many Westerners of the moral superiority of the West over the Soviets and led to another largely tacit Cold War assumption: nothing could be worse than Soviet totalitarianism.

During the Cold War, individuals or groups, consciously or otherwise, sometimes suppressed or played down experience and knowledge which was inconsistent with the ideological orientations characterized above. But this does not imply that ideologically-skewed representations of Soviet and Western societies are immutable and incorrigible. It is possible that heterodox knowledge and experience which contradict ideologically "correct" Cold War views may, especially in hindsight, yield new or different pictures of the major Cold War antagonists.

The major features of Cold War ideology mentioned above provided the context for Soviet and Western representations of the development of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples.

Soviet Policy toward Northern Peoples

Early European contact with indigenous peoples in northern North America paralleled Tsarist contact with indigenous peoples of the Siberian north in so far as both involved repeated attempts at military conquest and promotion of harvesting of furs which mainly benefited non-indigenous businesses and states. After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet state took measures aimed at ending exploitation of indigenous peoples in the Siberian north and far east. Consequently, an interesting facet of the Cold War involved the question of whether the Northern Peoples of the former U.S.S.R. fared better or worse than indigenous peoples in Canada and the U.S.

In 1917, the new Soviet state abolished Tsarist fur taxes for Northerners, attempted to eradicate exploitation of Northerners by private fur traders, and sent emergency supplies to Siberia in the disastrous conditions which followed the Civil War (1918-24).

The initiative in creating policy toward Northern Peoples was taken by ethnographers who, while exiled to Siberia for subversive political activity during Tsarist times, had done research on some of the Northern Peoples. In 1924, Waldemar Bogoras, who had done research while in exile on the Chukchi for the American Museum of Natural History's Jesup Expedition under the direction

of Franz Boas, founded the Committee for the Assistance to the Smaller Peoples of the Lesser Nationalities of the North, usually known as the Committee of the North (Bogoras and Leonov 1930). Other ethnographers on the Committee were E.A. Kreinovich, S. Kertselli, and L.Ya. Sternberg. All had spent considerable time in Siberia as exiles before the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

Early Soviet policies included banning of blood feuds, forced marriage, bride price, polygyny and punishments involving humiliation and torture. Traditional occupations began to be reorganized on a co-operative basis. Soviet institutions such as co-operative trading posts, collective farms, schools—including travelling schools and boarding schools—and people's courts were to provide occupational, educational and political opportunities that were independent of kin connections. According to a 1933 article in *American Anthropologist* by E. Golomshtok, alphabets for some unwritten Northern languages were devised and an Institute of the North was created in Leningrad in 1926 to train teachers, writers, para-veterinarians and political leaders from each Northern group (Golomshtok 1933).

In the mid-1920s, the Committee of the North debated Bogoras' proposal to establish American-style "reservations" to protect Northern cultures from disruption by non-Northern settlers while "improving the overall economic life of the natives and introducing new elements that would ensure painless progress" (Slezkine 1989:274-275). Bogoras' proposal was rejected in favour of the Leninist view that Northern Peoples could, with assistance from the Soviet state, skip the capitalist stage of socio-cultural evolution in a direct transition to socialism. Bogoras and other members of the Committee of the North believed that Northerners could provide food and local knowledge that would allow Soviet workers to access the vast resources of the north (Bogoras and Leonov 1930).

Leninist doctrine on the formation of nations within a socialist society was interpreted by the Committee of the North to mean creating "national unity" among disparate groups of Northerners who shared languages and territories. On the basis of a census of Northern Peoples completed in 1926 (Vakhtin 1992:8), "national territories" for Northern groups were designated. "Culture bases," with meeting halls, clinics, co-operative shops, bath houses, boarding schools and cinemas, were eventually to become "national" capitals for transhumant hunters, fishers and reindeer breeders. With assistance from the new Soviet state, Northern Peoples could, theoretically, "progress from vestigial clan-based social organization to socialist nations, skipping the socio-cultural evolutionary stages of feudalism and capitalism" (Uvachan 1960:222).

Among reindeer-breeding groups, large herds were controlled by the heads of patriarchal families. While patriarchs were customarily obliged to supply meat and reindeer to "poor" relatives, these obligations were not always met. Soviet policy makers believed that "poor" reindeer breeders would support co-operatives formed with reindeer from the herds of "rich" reindeer breeders. In some cases, large herds were forcibly expropriated by Soviet cadres and turned over to co-operatives. Violent opposition to collectivization was sometimes organized by shamans or patriarchs. Among the Khanty of Western Siberia, for example, some shamans and elders participated in violent resistance to the supporters of Soviet power with the assistance of anti-Bolshevik "whites" who had fled to northwestern Siberia after the Civil War had ended in southwestern Russia. Many Khanty supporters of Soviet power were killed. The Soviet state called in the Red Army to suppress this revolt, but it also halted forced collectivization and returned animals to their former owners (Bartels 1983; Taracouzio 1938).

Soviet abolition of forced marriage and bride price, as well as increasing opportunities for waged labour, were popular among Northern women (Forsyth 1992; Slezkine 1994). Effects of these policies were themes of several Soviet novels, including *Lake Emeron* (Khojer *ca.* 1965), and *Alitet Goes to the Hills*, which won the Stalin Prize for Literature in 1946. An English translation of this novel was published in 1952 (Syomushkin 1952).

Stalin and his supporters consolidated power in 1929 with a commitment to "build socialism in one country." Stalinist policy involved purging the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) of "international connections" that could potentially compromise state security, and purging institutions of "nationalistic elements" which posed potential challenges to the increasingly powerful centralized state bureaucracy (Heynen 2000). This resulted in a shift in policy toward Northern Peoples. The Committee of the North was accused of promoting excessive nationalism and dissolved in 1934. Some of its members and some of the Northerners who had participated in its activities lost power and were persecuted (Bartels and Bartels 1995; Grant 1999). The Institute of the North was closed, but some of its policies survived. These included access to a proportion of reserved places for Northern students at certain post-secondary institutions, state provision of food, clothing, and transport from home to school at post-secondary institutions, and access to a proportion of reserved positions for Northerners on local and regional organs of government in certain Northern regions. Also, some of the functions of the Institute of the North were taken over by other institutions. For example, training of

teachers of Northern languages for northern schools was taken over by the Faculty of Peoples of Northern Regions at the Herzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad (Bartels and Bartels 1995; Grant 1999).

Culture bases established by the Committee of the North were not closed, but funding and supplies were reduced.

The Great Patriotic War (1941-45) drew practically all Northern Peoples into Soviet institutions as men were conscripted and women joined the waged work force in increasing numbers, often taking over traditional male occupations. Thousands of Northerners were killed in combat against the Nazis. When we visited the town of Gorky in Western Siberia in 1986, we were told that several thousand men went to war, and only one in 10 returned.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Soviet state carried out a policy of resettlement in most Northern regions. Residents of many small villages were moved to larger centres and many collective farms were combined into larger state farms. While resettlement made it easier for the state to provide services and allowed school children to live at home rather than in boarding schools, it removed many Northern People from areas where traditional occupations could be easily and profitably pursued. While some Northerners supported resettlement, others did not. It seems likely that Northerners in some small settlements had no option but to move as government services were moved to larger centres.

Soviet and Western Accounts of Northern Peoples

Cold War politics affected representations of Northern Peoples. Prior to the Gorbachev regime, Soviet accounts generally contrasted the negative effects of Tsarist policy with the benefits of Soviet policy for Northerners. Armed rebellions by factions within certain Northern groups were not mentioned. Nor was the suppression of the Committee of the North. For example, the following passage is from *The Peoples of Siberia*, published in 1956 by the Soviet Academy of Sciences:

> Thanks to the great attention and care shown by the Soviet government and Communist Party, [Northern Peoples] are gradually overcoming their economic and cultural backwardness and are becoming part of socialist culture. Nevertheless, they still have a long way to go in economic and cultural development. Their profound economic and cultural backwardness, smallness in number and division into small units, inherited from pre-Revolutionary times, have made for a variety of difficulties in further development, even under socialist conditions....These small people, who possess hundreds of years of experience of living under the severe climatic conditions of the North, are unsurpassed hunters and reindeer-breeders, and great experts in local natural conditions. No one knows as well as they how to utilize the natural wealth of the enormous expanses of taiga and tundra by developing hunting and reindeer breeding. It is therefore quite natural that their economic and cultural reconstruction involves specific features of its own. A careful study of these features will permit a quicker sharing of the treasures of Soviet socialist culture with the Siberian people and, in turn, utilization of the tremendous resources of the distant Siberian lands for the benefit of socialist construction of the entire Soviet state. [Potapov and Levin 1964:11-12]

The following passages are from *Peoples of the North and Their Road to Socialism*, by the late Evenk Communist, V.N. Uvachan:

> the northerner's work before the revolution was of poor productivity, it was insufficient to meet even minimal subsistence requirements. So the peoples of the North eked out a poverty-ridden life.
>
> Socialism has radically changed the character of work, it has become the labour of free and equal members of a socialist society. Modern machines came to the assistance of the northerner, his work became productive and necessary for the prosperity of the whole country. His work is just as important for the country as the work of steel-smelters, grain-growers, oilmen or cotton growers.
>
> The toilers of the North, led by the Communist Party, have scored major successes in the development of productive forces and natural resources, in raising the economy and culture of the indigenous peoples. The principal success lies in the fact that the northern peoples have by-passed capitalism on the road from the clan system to socialism and that they are now actively participating in building communism. [1960:208, 222]

In North America, mass media Cold War comparisons between the West and the former Soviet Bloc seldom extended to indigenous peoples, partly because few people in Canada and the U.S. were aware of the existence of Soviet Northern groups whose traditional cultures were similar in some respects to those of certain North American indigenous groups. This changed somewhat after the Canadian author, Farley Mowat, wrote a popular book, *Sibir* (1970), about his experiences in the Soviet North. He suggested that Yakut/Sakha people had the option of pursuing "modern" occupations requiring post-second-

ary education, or pursuing traditional occupations such as reindeer breeding. Since Mowat had written extensively about the Canadian north and Canadian Inuit people (1952), his views carried some weight. The publication of *Sibir* made many Canadians aware that there were counterparts of some Canadian First Nations in the Soviet north.

In 1985, the U.S. government banned Mowat from entering the U.S., ostensibly because of his extreme environmentalism (Mowat 1985). But Mowat may also have been excluded because his positive characterization of the Soviet North was inconsistent with U.S. President Ronald Reagan's 1982 characterization of the former U.S.S.R. as the heart of an "evil empire."

During the 1960s and 1970s, Soviet sources on Northern Peoples were generally distrusted in the West. For example, Terence Armstrong of the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge, wrote,

> the treatment of minorities in general, and primitive minorities in particular, is a subject on which there were solemn pronouncements by Lenin himself, involving fundamental principles of sociology, and these pronouncements later acquired the status of dogma; and—a more practical consideration—there are minority peoples in many countries, and the Soviet Union would like to make a strong appeal to them. The Soviet government thus has a compelling reason for painting a rosy picture, and at the same time no non-Soviet observer has been permitted to study any of the northern peoples since certainly the 1930s, probably earlier. So Soviet publications, constituting the main, virtually the only, source material, are not likely to present much which is unflattering to government policy, and the outsider seeking to determine the truth has no way to check his findings. [1966:57]

On the basis of Soviet publications on Northerners, Armstrong characterized Soviet resource extraction in the north as a form of colonialism that excluded Northerners (1966). He characterized members of the Northern "intelligentsia" as "good Soviet citizens. Their indoctrination in Marxism-Leninism has been thorough, and their views on affairs beyond their personal experience are naïve....Like Soviet citizens who have come to the top in other parts of Soviet society, they owe everything to the regime, and identify themselves with it rather than with whatever national group they may belong to" (1966:77). He claimed that, although there were "many members of the northern peoples filling positions in the local administration, and sitting as representatives in local soviets," there was no "real" political autonomy of Northerners (1966:82). He characterized collectivization of traditional occupations during the 1930s as "the work of missionaries fired by the spirit of the inquisition" (1966:87). Armstrong concluded that Canadian officials who made policy for First Nations had little to learn from Soviet policy toward Northerners except in the field of education.

From Soviet sources, the U.S. anthropologists, Stephen and Ethel Dunn inferred that "all pretense of using the Northern languages as cultural media has now been abandoned" (1963:23). They wrote that "the education of the children of Northern peoples is out of step with the objective requirements of their lives. Their educational level appears to be markedly below the general level in European Russia or even in Central Asia. For this situation past Soviet national and linguistic policy is largely to blame" (1963:26).

The Danish ethnographer, Paul Thoe Nielsen carried out research in Moscow and Leningrad during spring, 1971, on the importance of Northern languages. He predicted that written forms of minor languages such as Nivkh and Koryak would "disappear" (1972-73:229).

One of the few relatively positive views of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples was published in 1965 by the U.S. anthropologist, Charles Hughes. He compared U.S., Soviet, Danish, and Canadian policy toward Inuit/Inupiak peoples of the circumpolar north (Hughes 1965). Hughes raised the question of

> the extent to which there has been success in the Soviet program of encouraging, on the one hand, retention of many aspects of local ethnic identity and affiliation; and, on the other, orientation to a nation-state, to universalistic criteria in economic and political affairs. The problems this poses both in terms of the role shifts and, at a deeper level, of self-image raise important questions for investigations into processes of development, questions which have implications far beyond northeastern Siberia. [1965:47]

Major features of early Soviet policy toward Northerners were described by one of its architects, Waldemar Bogoras, in a paper delivered in New York at the 23rd International Congress of Americanists in 1928, and published (in English) in the conference proceedings by E.J. Brill (Bogoras and Leonov 1930). This article was not referenced by the Dunns, Armstrong, or by Marjorie Balzer, whose bibliography on "Peoples of Siberia" was published in 1982. Nor did these authors reference a 1933 article by Eugene Golomshtok in the *American Anthropologist* which described the work of the Institute of the North. Balzer did, however, reference the work of T.A. Taracouzio (1938), a lawyer who published a valuable collection of

Soviet documents regarding early Soviet policy in the north (Balzer 1982). His work has rarely been cited by other scholars.

A detailed description of the development of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples by the Soviet scholar, S.S. Savoskul, was published in 1978 in the *Polar Record*, the journal of the Scott Polar Research Institute of the University of Cambridge. Savoskul's work is seldom cited by Western scholars.

Ethnographic Accounts of Northern Peoples

While all major Western treatments of anthropological theory and history during the last decades of the Cold War mentioned the pioneering work of Franz Boas, discussion of his connection to Bogoras' participation in the Jesup Expedition was largely absent. For example, Marvin Harris, in his influential book, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* (1968), did not mention the Jesup Expedition at all. Some might argue that this omission occurred because the Jesup Expedition was irrelevant to anthropological theory. But in our opinion, the Jesup Expedition was informed by Boas' view that "the geographical conditions [of the North Pacific rim] favor migration along the coastline, and exchange of culture. Have such migrations, has such exchange of culture, taken place?" (Boas 1974:108-109). Harris's failure to mention the ethnographic work of Bogoras in *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* seems unwarranted and was, perhaps, a product of Cold War ideology.

While the U.S. historian of anthropology, George Stocking (1968) wrote of Boas' supervision of the Jesup Expedition for the American Museum of Natural History, Boas' connection to Bogoras, and Bogoras' pivotal role in the Expedition were not mentioned. Nor did Stocking mention that Boas wrote Bogoras' obituary in the *American Anthropologist* (1937).

A major work on the Nivkhi (Gilyak) by L. Shternberg, produced by the Jesup Expedition, lay unpublished in the American Museum of Natural History from 1927-28 to 1999 when it was finally published under the editorship of Bruce Grant (1999). Shternberg, like Bogoras, had carried out ethnographic research while he was in exile during Tsarist times. He was a Bolshevik and a proponent of the socio-cultural evolutionary views put forward by Lewis Henry Morgan and elaborated by Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (1972). After the Bolshevik Revolution, Shternberg became a member of the Committee of the North. Grant (1999) suggests that Shternberg's manuscript was not published in the first place because of budget restraints at the American Museum of Natural History during the 1930s depression. Later, the Cold War "did little to permit the international scholarship that had given the Jesup Expedition its original verve" (Grant 1999:xxiv).

The classic ethnographic works on Northern groups that were produced by the participants in the Jesup Expedition and published by the American Museum of Natural History—that is, Bogoras' *The Chukchee* (1904–09), and Waldemar Jochelson's *The Koryak* (1905–08) and *The Yukaghir and the Yukaghirized Tungus* (1910–26)—were seldom mentioned during the Cold War in works by Western scholars. A notable exception was *Circumpolar Peoples: An Anthropological Perspective* by Nelson Graburn and Stephen Strong (1973). They characterized Bogoras as a "neglected founder of anthropology, a man who worked for long periods both in the field and in the university, and who turned his scientific work to practical account in the political struggle in the development of the peoples of the North" (1973:57). Graburn and Strong characterized Bogoras' ethnography of the Chukchi as "one of the most complete conducted by one man on a people; for example, he [Bogoras] records such details as the Chukchi way of dividing and naming star constellations, their division of the color spectrum, and their large vocabulary of names differentiating reindeer by color pattern and by age and sex" (1973:57).[2]

A short entry by Lawrence Krader on Bogoras, Jochelson, and Shternberg appeared in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (Krader 1968). Krader, who died in 1998, was Director of the Institute for Ethnology at the Free University of Berlin.

Not surprisingly, introductory anthropology textbooks that were widely used in Canada and the United States during the 1970s and 1980s omitted all references to Soviet Northern Peoples (see Alland, Jr. 1980; Ember and Ember 1973 and 1977; Keesing 1976). Marvin Harris' popular introductory text, however, referred to genocidal attacks during the 19th century and earlier on indigenous peoples in Siberia by "state-level societies" (1987:221-222). Harris also wrote, "the Siberian shamans...signaled the arrival of the possessing spirit by secretly shaking the walls of a darkened tent" (1987:267). Harris implied that all Siberian shamans were charlatans. This is consistent with his advocacy of cultural materialism. But Harris did not reference the Jesup materials or other ethnographic sources to support this claim.

In light of Cold War biases in most published sources on Soviet Northern Peoples, we decided to try to ask Northern People themselves about their lives (Bartels and Bartels 1995:9-10). During our first research trip to Leningrad (September 1981 to April 1982), we were able

to interview students and faculty from most Northern groups at the Herzen Pedagogical Institute's Faculty of Peoples of Northern Regions. Interviews were conducted with the assistance of an interpreter, and focused, among other things, on the educational and occupational opportunities open to Northerners. This issue was clearly relevant to Western and Soviet Cold War claims regarding Northern Peoples. We concluded that educational and occupational opportunities for Northerners had greatly expanded since the 1930s (Bartels and Bartels 1986).

One of our aims during our second research trip to the former U.S.S.R. in 1986 was to see for ourselves the extent to which both traditional occupations and educational and occupational opportunities in the larger society were open to Northerners. This question was also relevant to Soviet and Western Cold War claims regarding Northern Peoples. A brief trip to northwestern Siberia in 1986 convinced us that Northern People in that region could still choose to pursue traditional occupations, although these were in some cases threatened by industrial development. As well, many Northern People chose to pursue non-traditional occupations.

After a 56-hour train ride from Moscow to Labitnangi, we were taken on a one and one-half hour boat ride across the Ob River to the town of Salekhard by a Russian woman member of the Salekhard Soviet who taught English at a vocational school, and by two men, one Russian and one Nenets, who were Deputies in the District Soviet. Our hosts, all members of the CPSU, told us about education programs for Northern students and answered our questions about Soviet policy toward Northerners. Our hosts did not hesitate to mention problems such as pollution of the Ob by industrial development. After visiting schools in Salekhard, we were to travel by hydrofoil to Muzhi, and then to smaller communities on a small medical vessel. One of the Russian teachers of English had not known of these plans, but accepted at once when the Nenets Deputy asked her to join us and to act as an interpreter.

The medical vessel took us into an area inhabited mainly by Khanty people, and we were able to visit a Khanty fishing brigade that was working on the Ob. The brigade was headed by a middle-aged Khant woman. We stopped at the villages of Gorky and Pitliar to tour schools. In a school gym, several Khanty women were at work repairing fishing nets. Most of the men from these villages were away with the reindeer herds, taking the animals to summer grazing areas. We were told that individuals could own a small number of reindeer, and that these animals could be cared for along with herds owned by state or collective farms.

It seemed that Khanty households in the villages that we saw were to some degree self-sufficient, living off bush resources such as fish and reindeer meat. Alongside some dwellings were greenhouses that were covered with clear plastic sheeting.

Soviet Northern Peoples and the End of the Cold War

In the late 1980s and immediately after the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., criticism of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples by Western academics and by some Soviet scholars reached a crescendo. Few if any positive features of Soviet policy were mentioned. An exception was *The Revolution in the North, Soviet Ethnography and Nationality Policy* (1985), by the Swedish ethnologist, Kerstin Eidlitz Kuoljok, which related Soviet ethnography to the development of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples. Kuoljok's book received little attention from Western scholars. A more typical and influential work was *A History of Siberia* (1992) by the British historian, James Forsyth. He condemned the Soviet state for criminalizing "age old practices" of clan vengeance, blood money, bride price, and arranged marriage between minors, "irrespective of the wishes of the people themselves" (1992:244). Yuri Slezkine, who had emigrated to the U.S. from the Soviet Union, claimed that the Soviet state tried to make the "backwardness" of Northern Peoples "illegal" because in 1928, a "chapter" on "Crimes That Constitute Survivals of Tribalism" was added to the Criminal Code of the Russian Republic. "Highest on the list were various forms of blood feud and those aspects of family organization that the legislators considered based on inequality, particularly bridewealth and polygamy" (Slezkine 1994:226). Slezkine (1994) characterized Northerners' responses to Soviet policy as implacably hostile and quoted Soviet publications of the early 1930s which described Northerners' refusal to support culture bases, refusal to give up shamanism, and refusal to send their children to boarding schools. Roger Moody and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) characterized Soviet policy as follows: "Although some Soviet ethnologists in the Committee of the North tried benevolently to save tribal cultures, government policies were clear and uncompromising: shamanism was to be ruthlessly suppressed, young "Eskimos" inducted into boarding schools, and indigenous languages to be "liquidated" (an official term)" (1988:70). Moody did not cite sources for these claims.

Cold War characterizations of Soviet policy toward Northerners as exclusively coercive sometimes involved serious inconsistencies. For example, while Forsyth

claimed that Soviet policy was imposed irrespective of "the wishes of the people themselves" (see above), he also wrote that Northern women generally welcomed Soviet abolition of bride-price, polygamy, the levirate, arranged marriages, birthing and menstrual huts, and exclusion of women from clan councils (1992:287):

> The generally subordinate position of women...militated against their participation in soviet meetings as speakers and voters. From 1929, therefore, the Soviet authorities organized women's meetings and propaganda, and it was the assertion by these means of women's rights to a voice in clan soviets that set native women on the path to "equality of rights." This, in turn, created among native women in Siberia an important body of support for the Soviet systems, and led to the active participation of women in political life. As a result, by 1931 about one quarter of all deputies of soviets in the autonomous republics of Siberian were women. [Forsyth 1992:287]

A similar inconsistency was present in the work of Slezkine. After claiming that Northern People were implacably hostile to Soviet policy (see above), he wrote, "most [Northern] women used the new [Soviet] policies and new politicians to improve their position within their communities, not to subvert these communities" (1994:235-236). Slezkine tacitly equated strong support for Soviet policies with "subversion," suggesting that most Northern women did not provide the strong support for which Soviet policy makers had hoped. At the same time, he characterized the Northern women who accepted Soviet policies as those who "could not support themselves but did not like their [male] protectors, wanted to remarry but were not prepared to part with their children, or decided to return home but were not welcome" (1994:235-236). Soviet policies offered new alternatives to many Northern women in these categories.

The former U.S.S.R. was not the only place where state attempts to promote women's rights came into conflict with patriarchal aspects of traditional cultures. For example, Roger M. Keesing discussed state attempts in Guinea-Bissau during the early 1970s to overcome subordination of women among the Balante (1976). In Canada, there was extensive discussion among academics and politicians of the 1985 amendment to the Indian Act which allowed First Nations women who married non-Indians to retain First Nations Status (for example, see Cairns 2000; Weaver 1993). We believe that Cold War ideology played a role in preventing comparison of attempts by the Soviet state to promote rights of Northern women with similar attempts in Guinea-Bissau, Canada and elsewhere.

While Soviet efforts to produce educational materials in Northern languages languished during the 1950s and 1960s, the IWGIA's claim that the Soviet state attempted to "liquidate" Northern languages, and Nielsen's prediction that written forms of minor Northern languages would disappear (see above), did not take into account the efforts of Northern educators to revive or expand Northern language education programs during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Some of the primers and other elementary school texts in Northern languages published during this period are referenced in the appendix. As well, teachers' manuals on Koryak grammar and on Chukchi grammar were published in Russian during this period (Emelyanova 1987; Nyomuisova 1988; Zhukova 1987; see also RSFSR Institute of National Schools 1988). During our last research trip to the U.S.S.R. in late 1989, we were asked by some Northern educators to bring books in Northern languages to Canada because they could not be preserved in deteriorating Soviet facilities. Institutions which produced books in Northern languages were subject to vacillating policies and uncertain funding under Gorbachev's *perestroika.*

In 1989, several Northern educators told us that the resettlements of the 1950s and 1960s had discouraged young Northerners, particularly women, from choosing to pursue traditional occupations that would have removed them from the amenities available in larger settlements. They said that boarding school education had distanced young Northerners from their languages and traditional occupations, and that resource development had sometimes disrupted hunting, fishing and reindeer breeding. As well, alcoholism and relatively early mortality were seen as serious problems for Northern Peoples. These criticisms were also mounted by Soviet ethnographers (for example, see Pika and Prokhorov 1989) and by Western critics. For example, in the Preface to a report on *Native Peoples of the Russian Far North,* by the Soviet linguist, Nikolai Vakhtin, Alan Phillips, Executive Director of the Minority Rights Group International, wrote:

> The basis of the "Northern minorities" way of life is land and water and the animals and fish that live there. Yet the government of the U.S.S.R. did not respect either the people or the land, seeing it only as an area ripe for exploitation and settlement. Massive industrial projects have destroyed the forests, poisoned the waterways and skies. The native people who lived with their harsh environment for centuries, had to dismantle their traditional habitats and move into arbitrarily designated government settlements. These policies carried out over a period of 40 years, need to be reconsidered and reversed if native peoples are to survive. [1992:5]

We encountered four themes that were prominent during the final years of the U.S.S.R. in discussions among political leaders of Northern Peoples and academics regarding possible ways to preserve or revive their traditional cultures, and to secure control of traditional lands and resources: (1) revival of the Leninist policies of the Committee of the North which was to involve significant devolution of political power by the Soviet state to Northern-dominated local governments in native regions; (2) adoption of Western institutions such as "Indian reservations" (Sokolovsky 1990) and "nature preserves" in which traditional Northern occupations were expected to thrive; (3) moral and legal appeals for redress for past and ongoing suppression of Northern cultures and despoliation of traditional lands and resources by more powerful non-Northern groups and states (see Anderson 2002; Bartels and Bartels 2003); and, (4) adoption of the Western-style "free market."

The possibility of a revival of the Leninist policies of the Committee of the North (no. 1 above) disappeared with the dissolution of the U.S.S.R. and the outlawing of the CPSU in the early 1990s.

As noted above, the Committee of the North debated adoption of American-style "Indian reservations" for Northerners. Some Soviet academics and Northerners with whom we spoke in 1989 were aware of this debate, but seemed to believe that American Indian reservations had improved since the 1920s, and could serve as a model for Northerners (no. 2 above). They seemed to be unaware of discussion of problems by North American academics, First Nations leaders and others, about life on reservations in the United States and on Indian reserves in Canada.

Post-Soviet attempts to establish nature reserves on Northerners' traditional lands (no. 2 above) have apparently been fraught with difficulties (see below).

Interestingly, few Northern political activists with whom we spoke in 1989 discussed wholesale adoption of Western-style democracy. They realized that in northern regions, Northerners were outnumbered by non-Northerners. Without some sort of guarantee of Northern Peoples' political hegemony by a strong centralized state, non-Northern majorities would gain control of northern regions through democratic elections.

Some Northerners hoped to base claims for redress for suppression of Northern cultures and for despoliation of traditional lands on the concept of aboriginal rights, as in Canada (no. 3 above). But in the Soviet context, this was problematic. In Canada and in the U.S., First Nations Peoples and Native-Americans are widely acknowledged as descendants of aboriginal groups. While Northern Peoples were descended from aboriginal groups in the north and far east of Russia, members of larger groups—for example, Russians and Ukrainians—were descended from the earliest-known inhabitants of other regions of the U.S.S.R. If redress for Northerners was to include exclusion of Russians and Ukrainians from "aboriginal" Northern regions, as some Northern political activists proposed, then Russian and Ukrainian governments could, in turn, exclude Northerners from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, et cetera. Cold War ideology may have led some Western and Soviet academics and some Northern political activists to focus exclusively on using the North American concept of aboriginal rights to gain redress for Northerners irrespective of the problem mentioned above. It should be noted, however, that some Northern and non-Northern Soviet academics—most of whom lived in Moscow or Leningrad—seemed to hope in 1989 that loss of educational and occupational opportunities in the larger society would force Northerners back into traditional occupations, and that this would preserve their traditional cultures. This went beyond allowing Northerners themselves to choose between traditional and "modern" occupations (see Bartels and Bartels 1995).

Discussion of the adoption of Western institutions such as the "free market" (no. 4 above) in order to deal with problems of Northern Peoples involved a belief that the activities of privately-owned corporations would not disrupt the traditional cultures, lands, and resources of Northerners in the ways that it had disrupted indigenous cultures elsewhere. This belief can be explained, in part, by Soviet restrictions on external travel which greatly limited Northerners' familiarity with indigenous cultures outside the U.S.S.R.

In the late 1980s, some Northerners were invited by the Canadian federal government to visit certain indigenous groups in Canada. In 1989, we heard some of the Northerners' impressions of their visit. One man, a Nivkh ethnographer, was favourably impressed after meeting women chiefs on some reserves. He was, however, unfavourably impressed at the number of young girls giving birth. "Children having children," he remarked. An Evenk woman who had spent many years working on production of school textbooks in Northern languages was impressed by syllabic word-processing programs at an Inuit school. Another woman was impressed by an oil rig that she saw in the Canadian north whose operation required few workers. Use of such rigs in the Soviet north, she believed, would mean fewer non-Northern workers who could disrupt the lives of Northerners. We do not know whether these Northerners were made aware by their Canadian hosts of chronic problems such as high

rates of alcoholism, unemployment, incarceration, family violence, substance abuse or the racism endured by First Nations peoples in Canada. Our impression was that some of the Northern visitors were overwhelmed by the relative material prosperity that they saw in selected indigenous communities in Canada.

A Khant political activist who was a member of the Supreme Soviet who had not yet visited Canada said to us in 1989 that he had heard that Canadian indigenous people were doing very well. He wanted to know if that was true. We said that Canadian indigenous people had the highest rates of unemployment, incarceration, substance abuse, family violence, et cetera, in Canada. He was disappointed to hear that. He was hoping, we believe, that relations between Canadian First Nations and the Canadian state could provide a model for Northerners to emulate in the midst of the turmoil of perestroika.

Some Russians and Northerners told us in 1989 that introduction of the "free market" would be a very good thing for the Soviet Union. Others were more skeptical. One of the optimists was a Northern woman who made traditional necklaces from glass beads, feathers and reindeer antler. She told us that she planned to export her crafts for hard currency[3] and expected to be successful. Some Northern political activists told us that they looked forward to exporting reindeer meat for hard currency. None of the people who spoke to us about the expected benefits of the "free market" seemed to understand what it was or how it might work.

Northern Peoples after the Cold War

Although we were aware in 1989 of some of the negative aspects of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples, we feared that introduction of the "free market" would prove to be much worse than anything that had happened to them during the Soviet period with the exception of the Great Patriotic War. Despite problems of Soviet policy, most Northerners had the choice of pursuing traditional occupations or pursuing educational and occupational opportunities in the larger society. We feared that this range of choices would diminish with the introduction of the "free market." We also feared that introduction of the "free market" would exacerbate threats to Northerners' traditional lands and resources and erode the benefits that most Soviet citizens enjoyed such as state-subsidized food, housing, transport, daycare, health care, guaranteed jobs, et cetera.

Unfortunately, our fears regarding the negative impact of the "free market" on Northerners were realized. For example, according to a 1996 document released by the Russian Federation Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North and Far East:

> Our native lands are being annexed and barbarically destroyed by rapacious petroleum and natural gas, coal, gold and non-ferrous mining interests without any form of just compensation.
>
> ...the transition to a market economy is characterized by a total break down of traditional economic activity and way of life, an uncontrolled growth of unemployment, impoverishment, life threatening levels of crime and alcoholism. [1996]

According to a report entitled, "Indigenous Reindeer herders under siege by oil industry," released in 1997 by the Institute for Ecology and Action Anthropology:

> Many Khanty fear legal confrontation with the oil industry. Even Khanty intellectuals doubt the legal validity of [agreements between oil companies and the Khanty] and they assume that in court they would be seen merely as voluntary self-commitments by the companies. In today's Russia there are no legal safeguards for the Khanty's land rights or usufruct rights. Due to the fact that Russia's budget depends largely on oil and gas exports it seems rather unlikely that an act could be pushed through that limits the power of the industry. [1997]

In a 1998 *National Geographic* article, Fen Montaigne wrote that Nenets "migratory traditions and clan allegiances were stronger than a Moscow-imposed ideology. As many elders predicted, Nenets traditions outlived those of Marx and Lenin" (1998:131). He continued, "Today, two-thirds of the reindeer are privately owned, and demand for venison has plummeted because it's too expensive to get it to market without state price supports [which existed in the Soviet period]. The herds are growing, and there are now more than 175,000 reindeer on the Yamal [Peninsula], which, some ecologists say, has enough lichens and other plants to support 120,000 at most" (1998:131).

In the *Guardian Weekly* of August 22-28, 2002, Paul Brown wrote:

> Ironically, the freedom that the end of communism might have brought to enable [the Evenks] to return to their centuries-old way of life brought further disaster. As the collective farms were privatized, the reindeer were sold or swapped for vodka supplies with newly arrived oil prospectors who needed fresh meat. Almost no domesticated reindeer remain....
>
> Oil men say that Evenks, desperate for drink, were prepared to swap once-prized reindeer for vodka; the Evenks claim the oil men shot some of their reindeer herds from helicopters. Both versions of events are likely. [2002:3]

According to a Cultural Survival document of February, 2003, entitled, "Illegal Logging Threatens Survival of Russia's Indigenous Udege":

> The Udege live in the Khabarovsk Krai and the Primorsky Krai in the eastern part of Siberia. Their traditional subsistence economy is based on fishing, hunting and gathering. But the advent of various "development" projects in the region has led to restrictions on their freedom to hunt and fish. The Udege's methods of hunting and gathering food were sustainable long before the word was even required, reflecting their understanding of the need for stewardship of the species they depend on for their food. But clear-cuts in their forests have resulted in the extinction or disappearance of many species. As the numbers of elk and boar decline, so do the Siberian tigers. With no game left in the forest, the Udege are experiencing enormous pressure on their traditional ways of life. [2003]

The following editorial comments appeared in the *Barents Observer*:

> *Sami People without jobs in Murmansk Oblast*
> Two out of three Sami workers are without jobs in Murmasnk Oblast. Vice President of the Organisation for the Sami People at the Kola Peninsula, Lyubov Vatonina, explains the high unemployment rate with discriminating policies from the authorities and the major employers. [2004]
>
> *Murmansk Sami population opposes plans for oil pipeline*
> At a conference on petroleum activities in the Russian North, taking place in Apatity (Murmansk Obl.), representatives of the Murmansk Sami population have express[ed] opposition to the plans for a Western Siberian- Murmansk oil pipeline. The representatives, Larisa Avdeeva and Marina Matskevich, say the plans threaten to ruin local ecology and deprive the Sami people of their reindeer herds. [2003]

While some traditional territories of Northern groups have been designated as nature reserves, legal and practical protection of these territories from resource exploitation by privately owned corporations remains problematic. Oleksandr Byelyakov writes:

> Current trends in land privatization threaten what few land rights Russian indigenous peoples have.
>
> Russia's indigenous peoples are responding to this threat by asserting their legal rights and taking an active role in managing their traditional lands. For example, due to pressure from RAIPON [Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North], the Russian government passed a federal law last year guaranteeing Russian indigenous peoples the right to create protected Territories of Traditional Nature Use (TTPs). "While TTPs are an encouraging development on paper, the reality is that it is very difficult to implement such laws," said Sibyl Diver, exchange coordinator at [the U.S. organization] Pacific Environment, "especially when corporate interests are competing for the same land and resource base." [2002; also, see Anderson 2002]

There are cases where Northerners have established successful enterprises in post-Soviet times. David Anderson writes:

> In Taimyr, after a period of uncertainty following the inauguration of the new governor, there is tangible evidence for strategic purchases of meat and fish with the aim of supporting the local, native economy. The speaker of the Taimyr Duma and the Governor speak in unison of generously funded programmes to rebuild native villages using in some cases imported windpower technologies or pre-fabricated houses from Scandinavia and Canada. One of the first acts of the newly elected Gasprom Duma was to devote a line item to support the activities of the Taimyr Association of Sparse Native Peoples for the first time since its foundation ten years ago. All of these programmes are flashy, expensive, and not terribly well thought out. However they do stand out after almost fifteen years of stagnation and even starvation within rural villages at the end of the Soviet period and the beginning of the period of reform. [2002:108][4]

Nevertheless, corporate resource extraction which threatens the traditional lands and occupations of Northern Peoples seems to be the norm in much of northern and far eastern Siberia (see Shalamova 2002).

In light of the problems mentioned above, it is not surprising that, according to the U.S. anthropologist, John P. Ziker, the Dolgans, a Northern group numbering about 6000, now view the last decades of Soviet power as a "golden age" (2002:83).

The failure of many Western academics and Soviet intellectuals to anticipate the disastrous effects mentioned above was perhaps partly a product of the Cold War ideological doctrine that Western economic superiority arose from the dynamism of what former U.S. President Ronald Reagan called "the magic of the market." Other effects of Cold War ideology included the near exclusion of Jesup Expedition materials on Siberian Northern Peoples from Western anthropological literature, and the appearance of serious inconsistencies in some Western academic accounts of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples.

The Cold War supposedly ended more than a decade ago. Is it now possible to carry out a re-examination of Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples that is shorn of the more obvious distortions of Cold War ideology?

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Notes

1 Research for this paper was supported by grants and stipends from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, and the former U.S.S.R. Ministry of Education. Parts of this paper are based on a conference paper entitled, "Anthropological Research on Siberian Northern Peoples during and after the Cold War," by Dennis Bartels and Alice L. Bartels, presented at the Conference of the Society for Socialist Studies, Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities, May-June, 2003, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

2 The relevance of the Jesup Siberian materials to Soviet policy toward Northern Peoples is discussed in Bartels and Bartels (1995).

3 "Hard" currencies such as the Canadian dollar can be freely exchanged for other currencies. During the Soviet period, the exchange rate of the ruble was state-controlled. Currencies whose exchange rates are state-controlled are characterized as "soft currencies."

4 We do not know what funding sources were referred to here.

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Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Franck Michel, *Désirs d'Ailleurs. Essai d'anthropologie du voyage,* Québec : Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2004, 366 pages.

Recenseure : *Jacinthe Brisson*
Université Laval

S'il est un livre que tout voyageur averti devrait consulter avant même de préparer son itinéraire, c'est bien celui de l'anthropologue et historien Franck Michel, *Désirs d'Ailleurs.* À travers ces pages, l'auteur fait référence au voyage en tant que concept évoquant l'exotisme, la liberté et le dépaysement. De manière plus pragmatique, il affirme qu'il s'agit de l'ensemble des déplacements entrepris dans le but d'explorer, de connaître ou de se rendre dans de nouveaux lieux. Mais au-delà de ces définitions élémentaires, qu'est-ce que le voyage? Et surtout, pourquoi voyage-t-on? Voilà ce à quoi tente de répondre l'auteur. Tout en abordant la notion de changement social et en adoptant une perspective critique, cet essai discute des effets encore trop souvent pervers entraînés par l'accroissement des contacts entre le Nord et le Sud et invite le lecteur à «repenser» l'acte même du voyage.

D'entrée de jeu, Michel s'applique à démontrer que le voyage répond, principalement pour les Occidentaux que nous sommes, à un «désir d'ailleurs», émanant lui-même «d'un besoin malsain, qui est celui d'aller constater ailleurs que l'on n'est pas si mal chez soi» (p. 45). Résultant d'abord et avant tout d'un «ras-le-bol de l'ici» (p. 39), le voyage est aussi une manière de défier la banalité du quotidien (p. 19), de miner la solitude et de réaliser ses fantasmes (p. 97). De même, en dépit du fait que le tourisme soit généralement associé au temps libre, à l'oisiveté et à la quête de soi, l'auteur s'insurge contre le nombre sans cesse grandissant de touristes consommant leur itinéraire à la manière d'un plat de frites réchauffé, c'est-à-dire rapidement, sans prendre le temps d'y goûter et de le savourer (p. 22). Ce faisant, ces voyageurs apparaissent comme de véritables «hommes d'affaires du tourisme», se donnant comme mission de devenir des collectionneurs de sites et de monuments : il importe pour eux de rentabiliser à la fois leur temps et leur argent. Ces mêmes touristes sont d'avis que rencontrer un chameau s'avère moins perturbant qu'établir un contact humain, particulièrement dans la mesure où le premier ne contribue, en aucun cas, à remettre en cause leur identité... (p. 57).

Comme le démontre Michel, le tourisme est devenu une véritable industrie qui, pour survivre, a besoin à la fois du Nord et du Sud. Bien que 90 % des profits qu'il génère retombent dans les coffres des pays occidentaux (p. 43), il demeure toutefois indispensable pour la survie de nombreuses sociétés, pour qui il devient une fantastique et incontestable manne pour l'image et l'économie des pays du Sud (p. 43). Pour ces derniers, il devient souvent «l'ultime espoir de sortir de la misère, le dernier rempart pour contenir les ravages d'une modernisation effrénée» (p. 273). Répondant aux désirs d'exotisme, d'évasion et de dépaysement des Occidentaux, l'industrie touristique apparaît alors comme une forme d'impérialisme culturel, tout comme un phénomène civilisationnel hors du commun.

Le voyage reposerait donc sur des rapports de domination et d'autorité. Il s'agit en réalité d'une véritable conquête du Sud par le Nord, constituant par le fait même la «dernière corde de l'arc colonial» (p. 51) voire, son «dernier avatar» (p. 325). Selon Michel, la manière dont est actuellement «pensé» le tourisme ne peut faire autrement qu'exacerber les inégalités sociales, en plus de contribuer à l'intensification des clivages entre riches et pauvres. Cherchant à satisfaire les besoins des voyageurs, l'industrie touristique néglige en effet de s'attarder aux conséquences des actes et passages des touristes (p. 319). Puisque le tourisme résulte d'une confrontation entre deux cultures, entre la modernité et la tradition, l'auteur soutient que c'est en fait une forme de violence participant à la destruction des identités et ayant pour conséquence de mener à l'occidentalisation du monde. Après avoir «goûté» à des emplois offerts dans l'industrie touristique et hôtelière, nombre de paysans, riziculteurs ou éleveurs ne délaissent et ne dénigrent-ils pas leurs occupations traditionnelles pour une soif nouvelle de modernité? (p. 118) Faisant notamment référence «aux Papous en baskets et en jeans [qui] toisent ceux dont l'abdomen reste barré d'un étui pénien» (p. 180), il affirme donc que, tout en causant l'assujettissement des populations, le tourisme contribue à la transformation des structures sociales dans lesquelles elles s'insèrent (p. 180).

De même, la violence émanant du tourisme a pour effet de donner lieu à une certaine profanation des pratiques cultu-

relles. À cet effet, Michel évoque notamment le cas des Torojas célébrant leurs rites funéraires en présence de touristes qui, sans trop comprendre le caractère «sacré» de la cérémonie, observent, photographient et filment ce qui se déroule sous leurs yeux (p. 108). À Haïti, il en va de même pour la «touristification» des cérémonies vaudous qui, plutôt que de prendre place dans de petits hameaux, se déroulent désormais sous le regard ébahi des touristes dans une quelconque salle du Hilton (p. 102). Enfin, il signale qu'une telle destruction affecte également les lieux : maints temples de foi abandonnés, notamment en Chine, ont été ouverts à nouveau à des fins touristiques (p. 91), tandis que le mont Wudang, montagne sacrée des Tibétains, a été un «objet» convoité par l'UNESCO qui, désirant le rendre accessible à tous et en assurer la rentabilité économique, y a construit un téléphérique (p. 233).

Dans un autre ordre d'idées, ce désir d'ailleurs et d'aventure du touriste se trouve aussi assouvi par de multiples séjours tout aussi «originaux» qu'indicateurs de la souffrance de l'Autre. Michel fait notamment mention d'un circuit nommé : «Yémen avec enlèvements presque garantis», d'un autre visant à marcher sur les traces encore chaudes de cibles des bombardements des forces de l'OTAN ou encore, proposant la visite des camps de réfugiés kosovars, celle de Tchernobyl ou de *maquiladoras* à la frontière mexicaine, promettant en outre des rencontres avec des immigrants clandestins. Le touriste, rappelle-t-il, cherche à s'exposer à la misère du monde et éprouve un attrait particulier pour les destinations à risque (p. 299). En ce sens, il aurait recours à la souffrance de l'Autre pour assoiffer ses propres désirs et envies.

Comment croire, après de tels exemples, que le tourisme est une activité pacificatrice? Bien qu'il bouleverse les structures et les modes de vie, il n'en demeure pas moins un fait social dont les conséquences ne sont pas que dévastatrices. Malgré l'envahissement du Nord qui, par ses pratiques, besoins et intérêts, contrôle et assujettit les populations du Sud, l'auteur ne crie pas à l'échec pour autant. Bien que le jour où il sera possible de parler de «démocratisation du voyage sans guillemets» est encore loin (p. 44), il souligne que l'exotisme recherché par les touristes donne parfois lieu à la réapparition de marqueurs identitaires auparavant délaissés, contribuant à la revalorisation des peuples méprisés (p. 248). Le touriste, plus que jamais, cherche à visiter le passé et la tradition (p. 44), d'où son engouement pour la folklorisation et la commercialisation des cultures (p. 246). Aussi, il se laisse aisément séduire lorsque, à peine descendu d'un bateau à moteur, il est accueilli par des Indiens qui, quelques instants auparavant, avaient troqué leurs jeans pour leurs traditionnelles parures à plumes (p. 246). Dans les faits, mentionne Michel, nombre de villages vivent à l'heure du tourisme (même si tout a l'apparence d'un véritable «théâtre») et il serait erroné de croire que ce phénomène conduit indubitablement leurs habitants vers la mort (p. 252).

L'acte du voyage doit-il pour autant s'estomper? Adoptant un ton nuancé, et reprenant l'idée de Léa (1988), l'auteur soutient que dans la mesure où des stratégies permettant de respecter et consolider les identités des Autochtones seraient mises de l'avant, le tourisme et le touriste seraient à même de devenir des facteurs de modernisation appropriés pour les pays du Sud (p. 170). Voyager peut faire office de quête pour comprendre le monde et accepter sa pluralité. Si visiteur et visité parvenaient à se rencontrer véritablement, le voyage pourrait constituer une chance inouïe pour un enrichissement mutuel. En ce sens et avec lucidité, l'auteur en appelle à la nécessité de penser une manière de découvrir le monde sans adopter des comportements empreints d'ethnocentrisme (p. 16), ce qui contribuerait à amoindrir les clivages entre, d'un côté, les voyageurs fortunés et héritiers des aristocrates «oisifs» et, de l'autre, «tous ces damnés de la terre et du reste, ces empêchés de circuler où bon leur semble» (p. 15). Paraphrasant Marc Augé, il affirme aussi qu'au moment présent, il n'est pas vain de comparer le tourisme à une guerre, et l'appareil photo à une arme (p. 138). Toutefois, le jour où l'acte du voyage sera démocratisé et où il ne constituera plus une exploitation du Sud par le Nord, il offrira des perspectives «innovantes et peut-être salutaires pour une "autre" mondialisation» (p. 18).

La principale force de ce livre réside sans contredit dans la richesse, la lucidité et la franchise des réflexions proposées par l'auteur. Sans toutefois avoir opté pour un ton trop dogmatique, Michel a le mérite d'avoir le courage de ses opinions, voire, le courage de dénoncer des pratiques auxquelles nous-mêmes, en tant qu'anthropologues, nous nous livrons trop souvent. Avec perspicacité, humour et parfois même avec cynisme, il met en exergue les enjeux encourus par ce qui est devenu, au fil du temps, une véritable industrie «mondialisée». Les démonstrations offertes au lecteur quant à la manière dont les rencontres avec l'Autre affectent le quotidien des individus et leurs pratiques sociales sont explicites et illustrent de manière convaincante la nécessité de revoir notre manière de découvrir et lire le monde. À l'heure où plusieurs anthropologues s'intéressent à des sujets comme celui de la construction identitaire dans un monde globalisé et sans frontière, ses propos sont d'une pertinence incontestable et l'objectif qu'il poursuit est largement atteint. Bien que l'on n'embrasse pas cet ouvrage pour ses apports théoriques nouveaux, il se fonde sur un corpus littéraire fort approprié et démontre la préoccupation de l'auteur pour cerner en profondeur le sujet étudié. De ce fait, malgré la redondance des propos et sa structure parfois arbitraire, ce livre stimulant, bien écrit et accessible constitue un ouvrage fondamental pour amorcer une étude dans le domaine de l'anthropologie du tourisme. Enfin, par les réflexions qu'il suscite et les constats qui s'en dégagent, il s'agit d'un ouvrage qui nous interpelle non pas uniquement en tant qu'anthropologues, mais aussi en tant que voyageurs.

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Michael Taussig, *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a Limpieza in Colombia*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, 222 pages.

Reviewer: *Clara Sacchetti*
York University

The recent capture of the leaders of Colombia's two most notorious guerrilla organizations, reported decreases in the country's homicide rates, and a well-televised ceremony in 2003 depicting the surrender of arms by a group of paramilitaries may lead one to believe that Colombia is finally at peace. And it may lead one to believe that the 2005 paperback edition of Michael Taussig's *Law in a Lawless Land* is unnecessary. Nothing could be further from the truth. For Taussig's book highlights how a culture of terror is deeply embedded in people's everyday lives. Taussig argues that Colombia's culture of terror is based upon the constant production of fear, uncertainty, and ambivalence. This is so much the case that one never really knows who next will be murdered, tortured, intimidated, or run-out-of-town. Unsurprisingly, this culture of terror is operationalized by the existence of paramilitaries who are "soldiers who are not really soldiers but more like ghosts flitting between the visible and invisible, between the regular army and the criminal underworld of killers and torturers."

Colombia's culture of terror is not new. *Law in a Lawless Land* describes its intensification—one that surprises even Taussig, who has been investigating it for over three decades. Taussig is shocked by the now brazen nature of killing and its acceptance by "many honest and honourable citizens." The culture of terror, once marked by anonymous killing, is now carried out in broad daylight, a public spectacle for all to see. To try to understand this situation Taussig has written a diary about his two-week stay in 2001 in a town under paramilitary control. His diary details his most recent fieldwork experiences, their connections to past experiences, their relation to the quotidian nature of Colombia's culture of terror, and their linkages to the long-term existence of the paramilitaries.

Taussig fleshes out the links between Colombia's current culture of terror and the recent history of paramilitaries (aka "the paras"). The paras, initially formed in the 1930s as a private police force by Conservative party supporters, were created to deal with cattle-rustling. They were later deployed to destroy the rising popularity of Marxian notions of social justice and the establishment of left-leaning guerilla organizations. By systematically murdering Liberal officials, Liberal supporters, trade union leaders and priests, the paras were able to instill fear and uncertainty into the hearts and minds of many Columbians. Fear and uncertainty were exacerbated by the participation of the local police and the National Army in the "Liberal ethnocide"—a situation that blurred the usual lines between legitimate State force and illegitimate paramilitary force.

Despite the consolidation of Conservative Party power, the blurred lines between legal and illegal force continued as paramilitaries were deployed time and time again. In the 1960s they were deployed to help landowners evict peasants from their farming lands; in the 1970s they were deployed to quell rebellious peasant and Indian movements; in the 1980s they were deployed by drug cartels as protection against aggressive left-leaning guerillas; and in the 1990s they were deployed to track down and murder guerilla sympathizers. In the new millennium, paramilitaries have been charged with the task of "cleansing" towns and cities of the *delincuentes*, the undesirables. The undesirables are not, however, simply lefty-guerillas, insurgents or rebels. They are, rather, thugs, gang members, prostitutes, beggars, the mad and other relatively defenceless individuals. They are the victims in Taussig's never ending stories of people shot at open-air markets, knifed in pool halls, gunned down in the streets and murdered at bus stops.

Clearly, the cleansing, or what is called the *limpieza*, has linkages to the past. It also differs from the past, however, because it is supported by both the rich and the poor. This is partly explained by the ambivalent meaning of limpieza which refers to the heinous practice of slaughtering undesirables at the same time that it refers to the traditional practice of spiritual healing. Such healing "not only neutralizes deadly force," writes Taussig, "but enhances a sense of self in place and time." This double meaning helps explain the very public nature of limpieza and its general acceptance. It also helps explain the simultaneous fear and embracement of the paramilitaries who are, recall, charged with the job of cleansing Colombian society.

There are other ambivalences, uncertainties and double meanings as well. Taussig highlights how the continuous circulation of rumour, as opposed to fact, feeds Colombia's culture of terror. He frequently hears rumours about who, where, and when the paramilitaries plan to attack; about the immoral character of youth gangs who reign in the dangerous barrios on the edges of town; about guerillas and police officers. Even more, he explores the ambivalent line between the law and the lawless. Taussig tells us, for example, about a "lawful" handling of the murder of a *vicioso*—a "worthless druggie." He is shocked by the callous disregard for human life by police, lawyers, and state officials who think it acceptable to dump a vicioso's corpse at the local cemetery without regard for due process. This is the moment that Taussig begins to fully comprehend the "real meaning of violence" in Colombia, a meaning that reminds him of Nietzsche's famous words on the matter:

> Nietzsche suggests that criminals become hardened by observing that they and the police use the same methods, except with the police, the methods are worse because the police excuse their actions in the name of justice. What sort of methods? "Spying, duping, bribing, setting traps," says Nietzsche, "the whole intricate and wily skills of the policeman and the prosecutor, as well as the most thorough robbery, violence, slander, imprisonment, torture, and murder, carried out without even having emotion as an excuse."...Nietzsche helps me understand how the vio-

> lence of law is not only a question of guns, handcuffs, and gaols, but, far worse, what gives that violence its edge and its lip-smacking satisfaction is deceit in the service of justice...[I]s it so surprising that the paras and the police are virtually the same? (p. 47-49)

The ambivalent or uncertain lines between the law and the lawless, between fact and rumour, between legitimate and illegitimate force, help us to better understand the deep-going nature of Colombia's culture of terror. Taussig's diary teaches us about terror from the perspective of the people who deal with it on a daily basis. In this sense, his diary opens up a world for us that goes beyond the impersonal nature of statistics, journalistic articles, and international reports. But Taussig's work does more than explain Colombia's culture of terror from the ground up. Indeed, to grasp its pervasiveness Taussig, following Walter Benjamin, looks at the everyday world in relation to past events and its manifestations in the present. This is a departure from the usual form of writing history according to which the past is treated as a series of cause and effect moments that have already happened. It is also a departure from those histories that treat the past as that which will soon be superseded by something better. The past cannot simply index the progress of the future. Taussig's work casts doubt on the idea that the capture of Colombia's guerilla leaders, a decrease in homicide states, and the surrender of guns, signals the beginning of peace and prosperity. Instead, his diary reveals the extent to which a long-standing culture of terror, based as it is on fear, uncertainty, and ambivalence, continues to reproduce itself. His diary recalls Walter Benjamin's famous "Angel of History" who sees the connections between past catastrophes and its continuation in the present. Taussig is this Angel (however masculinist!) who understands that we should not see the past in relation to the promised future. The Angel teaches us that there can be no change in Colombia without first attending to pervasiveness of fear, uncertainty, and ambivalence. For without seriously understanding this culture of terror, there can be no real progress, there can be no real peace, no real prosperity, and no real hope for Colombia. In this respect, *Law in a Lawless Land* is a brave and heart-wrenching attempt to make Angels of us all.

Andrew Apter, *The Pan-African Nation: Oil and the Spectacle of Culture in Nigeria,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, 296 pages.

Reviewer: *Michael D. Levin*
University of Toronto

> *Nigerian attacks cause oil prices to spike* The *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), February 21, 2006
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> *Shell appeals Nigerian fine for polluting delta* The *Globe and Mail* (Toronto), February 27, 2006

Oil, the state, democracy, justice. An intellectual and realpolitik game of the moment is to find (define) the dots and the causal arrows that connect these words. The real world on-the-ground consequences version of the game involves resistance, sabotage, hostages and more. It is also a game of metaphors and other literary devices. "Black gold" is perhaps the most clichéd.

The fungible quality of oil, its slipperiness as a commodity is a mimetic duplication of its slipperiness as a material. The whole process of retrieving oil and making it useful is closeted in technology; labour is sophisticated and highly specialized, transportation and refining are processes that require both physical force and mediating equipment. About the only time we might touch oil is when we get a bit of gasoline on our hands at a self-serve pump. That it fouls the lands of the people who live near its wells is the most direct example of the injustices oil creates. The complexity of mineral rights and the legalities of ownership, access, lease conditions, royalties and environmental laws and regulations does not obscure the immediate environmental damage in particularly vulnerable ecosystems such as the Niger River delta in Nigeria. The nexus of the state as owner of the resources and protector of its citizens and the environment has been a fulcrum of temptation for the politicians, military officers and civil servants charged with mediating and managing the international and local financial and political forces that hover around a commodity, so easily convertible to wealth. In his case study of Nigeria, Apter concludes that money has lost its status as a signifier, a symbol of value, in the sense of what is good, and the state its credibility as an arbiter of justice.

The final section of the book "La mise en abîme" (the story within the story) is two chapters, which deal with two sequences of events at the nadir of Nigerian history, the annulled election of June 12, 1993 and its aftermath, and the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995 after a sham trial before a military tribunal. In the "Politics of Illusion" (ch. 7) Apter devotes 10 pages to 419[1] scams, a leitmotif of the politics of illusion in Nigeria. (Reader, you know what this is. You have received e-mails with too-good-to-be- true offers of easy money, usually in exchange for assisting in the transfer of vast sums from dormant bank accounts.) The 419 scam, of course, plays on the dialogical relationship of the greed of the mark (Goffman 1952) and a self-referential negative stereotype, projected by the con artist, of Nigerians and Nigeria, as a people and a nation, who regard state money or money in a bank as wealth seeking an owner. Money is perhaps the sign of all signs, epitomizing value and so much else, and very often so much less.

The 419 scam is the theme for the Apter's brilliant dissection of the politics of Ibrahim Babangida, the military president, nicknamed "Maradona" after the deft Argentinian footballer, in an ironic salute to his rapid and subtle Machiavellian political manoeuvering. Babangida left politics ignominiously in a chaotic failed transition to elected government. General Sani Abacha staged a coup and became President and Commander-in-Chief. He imprisoned Chief Moshood Abiola, arguably one of the most popular national figures in Nigeria

and very possibly the winner of the June 1993 election. The bumbling harshness and tragic crises of Abacha's regime is the topic of the next to the last chapter. This regime was the most blatantly and ostentatiously corrupt in its management and exploitation of the economy of any regime since Independence.[2] It brought down on Nigeria international disdain for its corruption and brutality and at home it generated underground political opposition. Popular campaigns to boycott Shell Oil caught the attention of the media. The conflict between the state and the oil companies and the Ogoni people, whose leadership described them as an indigenous people whose lands were despoiled and whose economic and civil rights violated, culminated in the travesty of the Ogoni Nine (including Saro-Wiwa) executions. The 419 scam offers the illusion of money at the centre of the picture, but its image recedes into infinity, forever-out-of-reach, just as the hope for justice in an oil state seems always elusive.

As the newspaper headlines at the top of this review show, Nigeria has been pulled from the periphery of our Western world to the front page. But it is not the demographically predominant place of Nigeria in sub-Saharan Africa, its historical and geographical place on the Niger, or its dominant political and military role in the African Union that brings it to notice but stories about oil, communal violence and Muslim–women's issues.

What is today Nigeria finally became a colony in 1914 with the unification of protectorates and territories. This definition of the territory of the state took place after years of pacification of various states, kingdoms and stateless peoples. Nigeria became independent from Britain October 1, 1960.

Apter takes up the story in 1977—seven years after the end of the civil war (or the failed Biafran war for independence), when it became the pan-African nation of his title as the host of FESTAC 77, the second Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, and extends his analysis of oil and the spectacle of culture to the political crisis of the 1990s. His version of the Nigerian story is told against the background of the oil boom and bust phenomena of the Nigerian economy. Oil extraction began in the mid-1950s and lent a material base to the initial optimism of independence (1960) to the over confidence of Biafran secession, and to the next burst of hope with the rise of oil prices (1973). As oil prices declined in the following decades the decline of the Nigerian economy was described as "oil bust." The indexical sign of the exchange rate marks this dramatic reversal of fortune: at the time of FESTAC, in 1977, one Naira equaled U.S. $1.68 and today one Naira equals 0.77 cents. This is a decline in value of 220%.

FESTAC 77 brought performers, artists and writers, from all parts of Nigeria and most states in Africa, including North Africa, to Lagos and Kaduna, for theatrical performances, exhibitions and readings and seminars. Political and diplomatic dignitaries dominated the often exclusive audiences and the Nigerian political elite had important ceremonial roles at rituals of the events. FESTAC's precursor, the First Festival of Negro Arts, was held in Dakar, Senegal in 1966. Theatres, other arts facilities and housing were built in Lagos and Kaduna specifically for the festival and were intended to be a legacy for the local community. FESTAC Village in Lagos was lauded as the model of modern housing for Africa. The public relations spin said "an uninitiated person might mistake the Festival Village for any homogeneous community in any Black or African nation [*sic*]" (cited, p. 50). The local debates are a familiar genre that surround any of this type of international event, staged as a controlled spectacle, like world fairs, the Olympics, the World Cup, et cetera. There has been no third FESTAC.

But it is this FESTAC, the second Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, that is the spectacle of culture that Apter puts at the centre of his phenomenology of the oil boom and his analysis of the post-colony. His analysis of two central FESTAC spectacles—the Regatta in Lagos harbour and the Durbar at Kaduna—rests on the connection between the colonial, the precolonial and the postcolonial, as "the elaborate celebration of Nigerian heritage through its earliest icons and symbols [that]...became a unifying expression of the Nigerian people [and produces]...a national culture from regional materials and projecting it throughout the black and African world...a dazzling spectacle and a great success" (p. 123). He concludes this chapter commenting on the cultural commodification of the Regatta, its detachment from its traditional base, and its tranformation into an object of national value as it was "decolonized...converting the European legacy of its history into a singularly African spectacle" (p. 166). The (re)enactment of the Durbar is "the nationalization of the colonial tradition by the postcolonial state" (p. 199). I am not sure if these chapters are guides to the invention of national "traditions" and common rituals, surely an element of nation-building, which in turn is surely a legitimate state project for Nigeria, or they are critiques revealing, once again, the inauthenticity of nationalism. Clearly, however, Nigeria is a place where the naturalization of the state is a process, phenomenological or political, analytically revealed or idealistically–cynically intended, which is far from complete.

Apter's central problematic is the link of oil to culture and politics. The three previously published papers (the chapter on the Durbar and the two on 1990s politics in the final section) supported by five original chapters that make up this book are an important contribution to exposing the phenomenology and semiotics of the Nigerian post-colony. Whether Apter's theoretical interpretation of the oil economy, of cultural appropriation and spectacularizing in the national festivals, of international commodity finance and exchange rates, and his use of metaphors linking black gold to black culture fully succeed I leave to the reader.

A comment on production: this is the second University of Chicago Press book I have reviewed recently which could have used editorial attention. Both text and visuals, crucial to a book on performance of culture, are less than first rate.

Notes

1 "Advance fee fraud" is the formal name for the scam. "419" refers to the number of the law criminalizing such activity. Readers may want to consult www.scamorama.com for more details of this and other web scams. Contemporary irony (from the web): "Festac Town, a district of Lagos where the scammers ply their schemes."

2 The connections between and reiterations of colonial corruption and postcolonial corruption deserve extensive and thoughtful comparison, much beyond a book review.

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Madeleine Ferrieres, *Sacred Cow, Mad Cow: A History of Food Fears,* Translated by J. Gladding, New York: Columbia University Press, 2006, 399 pages.

Reviewer: *Penny Van Esterik*
York University

Historian Madeleine Ferrieres' book provides evidence for the roots of some of our contemporary concerns about food. Part of a series on *Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History,* this is a scholarly book with much to offer anthropology and food studies. With an introduction, conclusion, index and 16 chapters, the author takes us through the Middle Ages to the early years of the 20th century by way of markets, slaughterhouses, gardens and kitchens of Europe, primarily France.

In the early chapters, we learn about presentism and prejudices about the past, including assumptions about the "good old days" when food was plentiful, and there were no problems with harmful food. Fear of food scarcity has been replaced by a fear about food quality. Ferrieres complicates this model with the argument that perception of food risk existed in the past and included both concerns about the quantity and regularity of food supplies and the healthiness of foods.

Considering the depth and historical detail that Ferrieres pulls from archival sources in each chapter, this review can only highlight a few observations that may shed light on contemporary food fears. We learn of the complexity of forbidden meats, and the question, "couldn't our flesh become like the flesh we absorbed?" (p. 20), and of efforts to regulate bread, meat and fish between 1200 and 1500, including laws requiring animals for slaughter to walk through the city gate, to guarantee that meat that was sold at market came from butchered animals rather than those that had died. Evidence for the intersection of medical and culinary writing can be seen in the importance of the senses of taste and smell for detecting harmful foods.

Ferrieres later links the Columbian exchange to the omnivore's dilemma. Torn between the necessity of finding new food substances and the danger of ingesting toxic substances (p. 87), missionaries in the New World complained, "They have neither bread, nor wine, nor salt" (p. 83), and Europeans struggled to fit foods from the Americas into their food systems. What the Indians could eat without risk was not necessarily safe for others (p. 91).

Familiar foods were equated with healthy foods, and perception of food risk increases with every new food that disrupts the food repertoire (p. 86). Europeans expected the food of the other to be contaminated, and consumed it with mistrust. The book addresses some familiar questions, such as why potatoes were considered poisonous and feared as a food that transmitted disease. Although the rich wanted the poor to eat potatoes, "the poor, too, have taste buds" (p. 110).

By the mid-16th century, Europeans were eating less meat and more bread (p. 111). But Ferrieres goes much deeper into the hierarchies of bread than the white bread—brown bread opposition. In 1669, a conference on bread was held in Paris. Until 1760, the king held a social contract with cities to remain faithful and be provisioned in return. Thus, it became the job of police to control bread quality (p. 120). We also learn of the dangers of beer, considered less healthy than wine (p. 127).

Several sections explore the "silent fears" of the rural peasants of Europe as they experienced gangrene from the ergot fungus on rye. In times of food shortages, more rye grains causing ergotism went into the flour. Peasants "sift their grain in the years when it is not expensive, but in years of shortage, they are careful about wasting ergotized grain" (p. 139). But like tobacco that gave pleasure, Ferrieres raises the possibility that the "drowsiness and dreams" of the early symptoms of ergotism may well have been welcome to the underfed peasantry. In addition, peasants knew how to lessen the risks of consuming the diseased rye. Ferrieres also documents the debates about whether disease was caused by bad air or bad food. Deaths in 1706 in Paris were attributed to the introduction of new items such as tobacco or chocolate or to "an unknown poison" (p. 156). Regardless of the cause, the poor always die first, due to the inadequate material conditions of their lives. Some observers blamed the deaths on the working-class diet.

Urban myths targeted pastries that could be stuffed with human meat, or finely chopped cat. Could the urban consumer distinguish cat stew from rabbit stew? (p. 164). Absentee landlords in the cities of France arranged for the delivery of fresh vegetables, eggs, butter and cheese from their rural holdings. Both rural and urban knew the value of the short food circuit (p. 167). Small farmers sold their best foods and kept the poorest foods for home consumption. Pigs were killed for sale in urban markets; villagers ate fresh meat on festive occasions when it was shared reciprocally, and made do with salted meat the rest of the time (p. 169).

Cattle, kept by young children in collective pastures, were also considered to be sources of contagion and disease among

humans (p. 173). Hungarian cattle walked the longest circuit to market, travelling across the Ottoman and Germanic Empires, spreading the "plague of the steppes" throughout Europe. The author documents both practical and superstitious attempts to control these outbreaks, noting that "the invisible was always close to the occult" (p. 180). Shifts in attitudes towards animals in the 1700s permitted the slaughter of sick animals with guns. Once again, peasants calculated the acceptable risk of selling and eating diseased meat. Dishes were designed to minimize risk by the use of purifying techniques based on salt, vinegar and fire.

The book documents the regulatory role of public authorities, noting their first act was to consult experts on animal and human health. They judged the nourishing parts of animals—muscle and milk—as fit to eat, but banned tripe and innards, the former a staple of the poor (p. 220). Officials stressed the need for individual responsibility in deciding whether or not to consume the available meat, or abstain; suspect meat was distributed to the poor (p. 225).

One chapter examines the dangers of domestic alchemy, and documents how the use of metals such as copper, zinc, lead and pewter affected food and health. Raw moist fruit was also blamed for digestive disorders, while preserves were considered better than fresh (p. 233). Public hygiene monitored by the state focussed attention on air and environment, while municipalities were responsible for food safety, including monitoring slaughterhouses (p. 259). In Ferrieres' words: "For a long time, everywhere, the belly and the entrails of the city, before becoming a literary metaphor, were warm, pulsating realities" (p. 261). Around the same period (1735), pellagra was identified and linked to the lack of niacin in the diets of the poor.

The science of nutrition permitted the development of the "food as fuel" model of the calorie (1864). From this point on, the holistic understanding of food gives way to the analysis of elements and nutrients, stripping food of its primary association with pleasure. Concern for adulteration continues, and becomes more difficult to trace with the development of processed foods where different foods are combined.

Later chapters shed light on the development of milk as a superfood, threatened by tuberculosis in cows and its potential transfer to humans. The last chapter takes us further afield to Chicago where shopkeepers become consumer advisers to women who were expected to protect their families' food supply from the privacy of their kitchens, trusting in labels and the advertising claims of brands like Heintz and Armour (p. 305).

The book concludes with the observation that the media plays an important role now in publicizing food fears. Food fears link to the fear of food shortages, the circuit from producer to consumer (the shorter the better) and value of food around the axis of gustatory pleasure, conviviality or health (p. 327-328)

Anthropologists in particular need books like this to appreciate the historicity in the rise and fall of food fears, but we also have the potential and the responsibility to broaden the range of examples in time and space and to explore contexts and meanings in more detail. Many of our food fears and our reactions to food scares may well be lodged in this European history. But the food fears of our neighbours are doubtlessly lodged in other histories.

Pnina Werbner, *Imagined Diasporas among Manchester Muslims,* Oxford: James Currey, 2002, 306 pages.

Reviewer: *Patricia L. Kelly Spurles*
Mount Allison University

This is a sophisticated and well-documented contribution to the literature on diaspora and identity. The title reference to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* suggests Werbner's argument that diasporic communities are constructed or "imagined" through performances by different constituencies (older men, women, young men) in distinct spaces (community meetings, processions, dinners, pageants and fundraisers) that constitute the public sphere, "a series of interconnected spaces in which the pleasures and predicaments of diaspora are debated and celebrated" (p. 15). Drawing on extensive fieldwork among Manchester (U.K.) residents (i.e., Mancunians) of Pakistani background in the 1980s and 1990s, Werbner shows how community is defined by a shared sense of "moral co-responsibility" that is expressed as financial and political engagement with the homeland, and which consists of aesthetic performances in which community members emphasize one or several aspects of their multiple identities as Mancunians, British, Pakistanis, South Asians, Blacks and Muslims.

Composite, "hybrid" identities are not fixed; rather, they are dynamic as individuals participate in different arenas. For instance, despite competition among different political factions as older men support and participate in community centre meetings and elections, through the recasting of contemporary power struggles in religious idiom, they recreate a traditional social order in which they are predominant and superior to young men, whose attempts at presenting their own public events (emphasizing cricket and youth culture) are disparaged by the male elders. Successes by women at organizing public events that present an alternative, less male-dominated ordering of society, are marked by their emphasis on an aesthetic that joins both South Asian ideas of fun (such as contemporary South Asian fashion and film) and traditional religious forms (Quranic recitation and songs of praise to the Prophet).

This discussion of performance and identity is situated within the broader context of Werbner's desire to understand the dynamics of British Pakistanis' support for an Iranian condemnation of author Salman Rushdie. "The publication of *The Satanic Verses*," she writes, "was a conjunctural moment in which citizenship and faith were both tested and revalued, an

exceptional moment of disruption and crisis which compelled Muslims, [non-Muslim] intellectuals and [non-Muslim] policymakers to reflect consciously about what these terms meant" (p. 107). While non-Muslims emphasized freedom of speech and were outraged that British Muslims repeated demands for Rushdie's death, Muslims, in Britain as elsewhere, considered the novel an assault on the dignity of the Prophet. Werbner writes: "The libels against the Prophet and his family are voiced or perpetrated in the novel by fictional characters who are cunning traitors and are part of a whole series of dramatic ordeals that the Prophet undergoes. These move the action forward and underlie the narrative structure of the book and its moral message: the way in which character is tested and shaped by ordeals of treachery and betrayal" (p. 116). For British Muslims, the affair was interpreted as institutionalized racism in which Islam and Muslims were denied the legal protection from blasphemy afforded to the state religion. Werbner considers why the novel was rejected by the community it ostensibly aimed to portray: the religious idioms repeated throughout the work evoked, for Muslim readers but not for non-Muslims, an Islamic aesthetic that was utterly incompatible with the plot in which sacred and profane are repeatedly and emphatically mixed. She notes, "The offence felt by Muslim secular readers...points to the fact that aesthetic canons can persist long after faith has lapsed" (p. 116).

Werbner's familiarity with classic and contemporary sources in anthropology, Islamic studies, and critical theory is evident throughout, as she deftly summarizes a broad array of work with which she enters into dialogue. Her theoretical contribution is original and weighty, and many of the chapters easily stand alone as fine essays. On the other hand, the book would have benefited from greater editorial care. Several very lengthy passages that relate speeches given at community meetings could be substantially shortened. As well, and this is a minor but jarring note in such a carefully written volume, the name of a significant player in community politics appears in several different Latinized spellings throughout the volume. Overall, this is a dense but very worthwhile read for graduate students and scholars whose work engages concepts of identity and diaspora.

Monique Skidmore, *Karaoke Fascism: Burma and the Politics of Fear*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, 264 pages.

Reviewer: *Nicola Tannenbaum*
Lehigh University

Skidmore did difficult fieldwork in Burma during 1996, a period of increasing turmoil as students and others openly demonstrated against the current regime. Her research was, ostensibly, to "understand the idioms of emotional and psychological distress used by various Burmese communities, and to explore the role of religion and medicine in conceptualizing and mediating such distress and as pathways for action" (p. 8). Rather than focussing directly on these topics, Skidmore directs our attention to the all encompassing fear that Burmese have to deal with on a day to day basis and the consequences this has for individual Burmese as well as for Burmese society. Researching fear is not easy, as Skidmore asks, "How does one research fear when doing so produces the very emotion in question, both in the research and the informants?" (p. x), something she explores most completely in her third chapter.

To get to this exploration, Skidmore first provides a brief introduction to Burmese history and a sketch of the resistance activities in Rangoon in September 1996. These activities are juxtaposed with places of refuge that Burmese Buddhism provides, both physically and spiritually. The third chapter then explores the fear that Skidmore faced and the Burmese continue to face. Here Skidmore argues that her experience of fear and her understanding and analysis of her embodied fear allows her to "intuit the experience of Burmese people whom I have come to know. In so doing, I argue that emotional knowledge arising from similar (never identical) circumstances can be important, in this case, necessary, for an analysis of fear in everyday life" (p. 35). These three chapters are compelling but difficult reading. After finishing part of a chapter I would have to put the book down because of the overwhelming awfulness of the situation that I was reading about.

In the next four chapters, the focus shifts to the contexts that the Burmese must interact in and the role of the government and its military in defining these contexts. Skidmore discusses the way the military define spaces and the thin veneers of modernity and conformity as well as the tensions created by the juxtaposition of modernity, fascism and terror. These chapters also include accounts of how people deal with the situations created by propaganda and the continuing inability to trust people because of informers and the consequent self-censorship that this entails. For her analysis, Skidmore draws on scholars of modernity and fascism, particularly Benjamin and the Frankfurt School (p. 84). I found these chapters equally difficult to read but more because of the analyses than the content. In the end, I was not convinced that drawing parallels between the situation in Burma and high modernity in Paris and Nazi Germany provided any enlightenment about the Burmese generals and their behaviour or the situation that the Burmese people face. A more meaningful comparison would have been to place the Burmese situation in its Southeast Asian context of political violence with discussions of similarities and differences with Cambodia under Pol Pot and Indonesia in the aftermath of Sukarno's defeat in 1965, the annexation of East Timor, or, more recently, the end of the Suharto period.

The last three chapters return to more ethnographic accounts of life in the resettlement shanty towns that resulted when urban residential areas were condemned for new modern hotels and department stores. The displaced people were forced to resettle in these new communities without services,

schools, or reliable transportation to urban employment. Here, too, she provides compelling accounts of the difficulties these people faced in making their livings—of women forced into commercial sex work and the increase in domestic violence associated with difficult economic conditions, unstable family structures and alcoholism. Throughout Skidmore wrestles with the problem that, if the conditions are so horrifying, why don't people revolt? There is no one answer: people who are living hand to mouth cannot see beyond the next meal; the effectiveness of the regime's repression; and the fact that most people have grown up with this regime.

More problematically, she argues that Buddhism, because of its emphasis on how this world is inherently full of suffering and that meditation is the path to escape this suffering, and associated millennial movements, provides alternative spaces to wait out the end of the current regime (see ch. 9). This harks back to the orientalist view that glosses Asians as more religious than we are and that Buddhism's otherworldly perspective explains peoples' lack of concern about worldly problems. One consequence is that Skidmore is reduced to talking about witch doctors (p. 202) and wizards (p. 203-206). This distancing from Burmese perspectives parallels her analysis of the Burmese regime in high modernist terms. Ultimately we learn little about how Burmese construct their own lives or the frameworks which they use to interpret and explain their lives.

Burma is a difficult, if not impossible, place to do fieldwork; Skidmore's fieldwork and discussions were severely constrained by government restrictions. Her initial interest in how people coped with distress is inherently political, given the Burmese government's role in causing that distress. This makes it almost impossible to explore distress without exposing her informants to considerable emotional and physical risks. The limitations on her movements meant that her research and analyses are limited to parts of Rangoon and Mandalay and to the people who felt comfortable and safe enough to interact with her. These limits should have made Skidmore more cautious in her generalizations about Burmese adaptations to living with fear and the role of religious practices in this. Nonetheless, I do not know how one does anthropology in a war zone and still investigates topics are that relevant to understanding the ways people construct their lives and selves in such dangerous spaces. *Karaoke Fascism* is Skidmore's valiant attempt at an answer to this.

Satish Kedia and John van Willigen, eds., *Applied Anthropology: Domains of Application,* Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2005, 370 pages.

Reviewer: *Wayne Warry*
McMaster University

This is a very good collection and one that is wholly American in substance and content. In nine discreet chapters individual contributors review common fields of applied anthropological work: health and medicine; nutritional anthropology; anthropology applied to the aged; development; displacement and resettlement; agriculture; environmental anthropology; business and industry, and anthropology applied to education. These applied areas are referred to as sub-disciplines of Applied Anthropology or alternatively as Domains of Application, a term first introduced by van Willigen is his earlier *Applied Anthropology* and revisited here. The book is in essence a collection of applied anthropological area studies which are framed by a clear and cogent introduction and summary written by the editors. Kedia and van Willigen have wisely chosen to have contributors speak to common issues and themes. As a result, individual readings commonly, but not uniformly, address the historical context and development of various styles of anthropology, relevant theory, typical settings and roles associated with application and appropriate methodologies.

The concept of domain is useful, and one I have always found relevant in teaching Applied Anthropology at the undergraduate and graduate levels. As originally conceived by van Willigen, "the domain of application consists of two major components: the methodology of application, which maps the relationship between information, policy, and action; and the context of application, which includes the knowledge relevant to a particular problem area and work setting" (1986: 9). I have always taken the concept to suggest that domains are an expanded "field" of the applied anthropologist; settings where the researcher, advocate or administrator must learn local context and culture, as well as the language, ideologies or policies that must be accounted for in trying to devise appropriate and beneficial interventions. In this more narrow sense, a domain of application might actually be a rural village, an urban hospital, specific industry or urban environment.

Kedia and van Willigen state that domains of application exist "where knowledge, methodologies, and theories relevant to a particular setting for applied work are employed to connect research, policy and action" (p. 2). But as used in this text the term is synonymous with larger sub-disciplinary interests, such as medical or educational anthropology, or with specific methodologies, such as Social Impact Assessment or Evaluation research. The authors themselves note that the concept can be either broad or narrow and their listing of various domains is indeed diverse. At times the reader can become confused about how the domain and sub discipline interconnect and shape each other—we might just as easily speak of domains within domains. Interestingly, given the subtitle, there is no entry for domain listed in the Index, and no coherent argument presented about the concept throughout the book. Having said that, the individual contributions coherently describe the theories and methods applied anthropologists use to address various social and cultural problems. With the exception of Rhoades' description of agricultural anthropology, and McGuire's review of maritime anthropology, the significance of policy in setting the parameters for research, advo-

cacy and action is less fully articulated or analyzed by the authors.

With the exception of Nancy Greenman, a consultant in educational anthropology and ethnographic evaluation, all the contributors are university-based applied anthropologists. As a result, despite references to practicing anthropologists in the introduction and conclusion, the work of practicing anthropologists in non-academic research is rarely addressed in the book. This, as the authors note, is a distinctive quality of applied anthropology—non-academic anthropologists, for a variety of reasons, write less for peer reviewed publication and so their work remains poorly documented (p. 350). Having noted that omission, the individual contributions are all of high quality and document both the history and contemporary challenges of applied anthropologists working in different areas. The book is written in straightforward and accessible language and manages to articulate many of the challenges of applied anthropologists who are engaged in advocacy, intervention design and community-based work.

The links between sub-disciplinary history, theory and action are particularly clear throughout. The authors manage to address the complex interweaving of applied and basic research within the discipline. For example, Thomas McGuire's review of "The Domain of the Environment" is founded on a description of Julian Steward's early cultural ecological studies, documents the later ecosystems approach of Roy Rappaport, and the eventual shift to the "new ecology" approaches of the 1980s. McGuire then briefly reviews political economy and political ecology approaches before turning to contemporary issues that are illustrated within the domain of maritime anthropology, environmental mapping and counter mapping. The three entries by Whiteford and Bennet on health and medicine, by Himmelgreen and Crooks on nutritional anthropology, and by Harmon on applied anthropology and the aged, together comprise a complementary and comprehensive review of applied medical anthropology which includes cultural, ecological and biological approaches to health and illness. The attention to disciplinary history, theory and research methodology is sustained throughout these and other contributions.

The conclusion, "Emerging Trends in Applied Anthropology," reviews many of the current pressures and tensions within the discipline that will inevitably transform the way anthropologists are trained and work. Chief among these are the increasing movement toward interdisciplinary training and research and the growth in collaborative and participatory relationships with research "subjects." The need for applied anthropology to assume a greater role in public discourse, and the continuing and uneasy relationship between applied and basic research are also briefly addressed.

In sum, this anthology attempts a broad historical and contemporary survey of what is an increasingly diverse discipline of applied anthropology. The book provides an excellent review of the central areas of work and research for applied anthropologists in North America. I can easily see it being a valuable resource to senior undergraduate and graduate seminars in applied anthropology. But the book, and presumably its market, is American in orientation. Thus even where case studies speak to issues of great importance to Canadians, such as McGuire's brief case study concerning the depletion of the Cod stocks, only passing reference is made to the work of Canadian researchers, in this case to Feld and Neis, sociologists at Memorial University. The work of applied anthropologists such as Raoul Anderson is ignored. Perhaps my Canadian hypersensitivity is at play here, but the work of Canadian anthropologists on many issues pertinent to the topics in this book—development and resettlement, medical research, Indigenous rights and so forth—is ignored. Although Canadian students would undoubtedly benefit from the excellent reviews of these significant applied anthropological domains, they will have to turn to Ervin's *Applied Anthropology* (2005) for content on the role of applied and practicing anthropologists in Canada.

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Henry Radecki, *The History of the Polish Community in St. Catharines,* St. Catharines, Ontario: Project History, 2002, 252 pages.

Reviewer: *Cynthia Gabriel*
University of Michigan

More primary source than high theory, Henry Radecki's *The History of the Polish Community in St. Catharines* is richly detailed, meticulously researched and chock-full of statistics and stories. In his introduction, Radecki sets forth a list of local audiences who are sure to be pleased to read a book that treats their history so lovingly, including high school students learning about local history. And surely anyone who is interested either in the Polish experience in North America or in local histories per se will find this book enchanting.

What this book delivers best is a descriptive history of the astonishing variety of Polish organizations that have existed—many of which continue to exist—in St. Catharines. He covers more than 30 organizations, ranging from an adult theatre troupe to communist-leaning workers' unions. Reading through 115 pages of in-depth portrayals of socio-cultural organizations (many with military-sounding names like "The Club," "Alliance 3," "Branch 418," "Commune 6"), I marvelled at the self-conscious way that Polish settlers to St. Catharines harnessed and maintained their cultural cohesiveness. These organizations obviously contributed and continue to contribute to positive identity-making, in addition to fulfilling other goals, such as helping new immigrants become homeowners.

As an anthropologist, I longed for more ethnographic details of Polish-Canadian lives of the past and especially from the present. More useful than a list of past presidents of each club, to my mind, would be knowledge of how this unique community history manifests itself in the identities and activities of Polish-Canadians today. What do the successes of this community in maintaining their cultural identity, so well documented here, have to offer other newly arriving immigrants to Canada? Tantalizing statistics, such as the fact that the Maria Konophnicka Polish School maintains high enrolment of young people in Polish language classes, beg for quotations from current students. Radecki theorizes that these young people "want to resist the Internet monoculture and identify more closely with a specific group of people," yet the voices of those who could say what the Polish language means in St. Catharines today are absent.

For local residents and scholars of Polish immigration, this book is a gem. It gathers together primary source material and relevant census statistics in one place that would otherwise take years to ferret out. Anthropologists should be inspired to continue what Radecki calls "The Project." In a time when we are all struggling to think beyond the Cold War duality of "capitalism versus communism," the experiences of Polish immigrants who lived this clash of values (sometimes experiencing the clash in the Old and New Worlds), seems valuable. More ethnography of diasporic groups in Canada can only enhance our understanding of and facilitation of positive immigration experiences. So where Radecki leaves off, let ethnography begin.

Art and Museum Review / Compte rendu d'exposition

Evolving Planet: Constructing the Culture of Science at Chicago's Field Museum

Reviewer: *M.A. Lelièvre*
University of Chicago

The recent resurgence of the debate in the United States and northern Québec between evolutionists and creationists reminds us that there is still disagreement on *who* or *what* is the prime mover of life on Earth. I propose to explore a specific site of production for evolutionary discourse—that of the public museum. Long understood as instruments in the creation of nations and citizens, museums are sites for the creation of culture. With *Evolving Planet,* the Field Museum reinforces a particular culture of modern, Western science as the only epistemology for understanding life on Earth.

In early March 2006, the Field Museum in Chicago opened its newly renovated permanent exhibit on evolution entitled *Evolving Planet.* Planning for the $17 million exhibit began in 2001 when in-house evaluations revealed that *Life Over Time,* the exhibit that *Evolving Planet* replaces, was failing to communicate the message that all life on Earth is connected through the cumulative processes of evolution (Tubutis 2005: 18). In preparing for the renovations, the Museum had several objectives, which included reporting recent advances in evolutionary theory, highlighting its fossil collections and providing a context for Sue, the recently acquired *Tyrannosaurus rex* that resides in the Stanley Field Hall on the ground floor. The Field Museum tells the story of evolution through the tried-and-true walk-through-time design, unlike some institutions that present evolution more thematically—for example, the recent *Darwin* exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History (see also Rufolo, 1999). But not to be restricted by the geologic time-scale, *Evolving Planet* divides the journey into six colour-coded phases that cross-cut and combine some geologic divisions.

If, as L.P. Hartley claims, the past is a foreign country, then the geologic past presented in *Evolving Planet* is a different world. Indeed, we might more readily identify the volcanic terrain and 50°C temperatures of the Precambrian eon with Mars than with the ancient history of Earth. When presenting the Earth's deep history, one challenge for museum professionals is to make its foreignness familiar to visitors. With *Evolving Planet,* the Field Museum takes this challenge one step further in attempting to allow visitors to experience the unexperienceable. Through a combination of fossil specimens, digital animations, artistic illustrations, three-dimensional models and video presentations, *Evolving Planet* creates spaces in which visitors are meant, not only to observe, but also to experience 4.5 billion years of life on planet Earth.

Walking into the first phase, which is devoted to the Precambrian, it becomes clear that *Evolving Planet* will be a multisensory experience. The Precambrian is cast in the orange-red of Paleozoic lava. Visitors see an illustration of, what appears to be, a typical landscape for this eon—a sea of indeterminate liquid punctuated by steaming volcanoes. Sinusoidal light effects cast shimmering ripples on the exhibit walls. We hear the ambient sounds of harsh winds, presumably whipping down through the scattered landforms. The accompanying text panel warns visitors that the atmospheric cocktail of carbon dioxide, nitrogen and water vapour would have made the Precambrian air unbreathable. Yet the artistic interpretation of the landscape implies a human perspective. We, the visitors, could be standing atop a distant volcano taking in the literally breathtaking view of the Precambrian ooze.

The "you-are-here" provocations continue with other audio-visual features of *Evolving Planet.* Each phase has its own particular colour scheme and soundscape, allowing visitors to sense sights, sounds and even some of the textures that have been extinct for millennia. Visitors entering the Cambrian period, for example, face three large screens that display the digital animation of a sea teeming with awe-inspiring life (photo 1). Sunlight streams through the shallow waters in which seemingly alien, pastel-coloured creatures swim, scurry, crawl and float before our eyes as if we were snorklers hovering just below the surface. As visitors hike through the Carboniferous coal forest, we encounter three-dimensional constructions of towering trees and uncomfortably large ferns and insects (photo 2). A low, lawn mower-like hum drones in the background evoking an eerie feeling of very large wings flapping very rapidly toward our ears.

Photo 1: Eric Manabat © The Field Museum

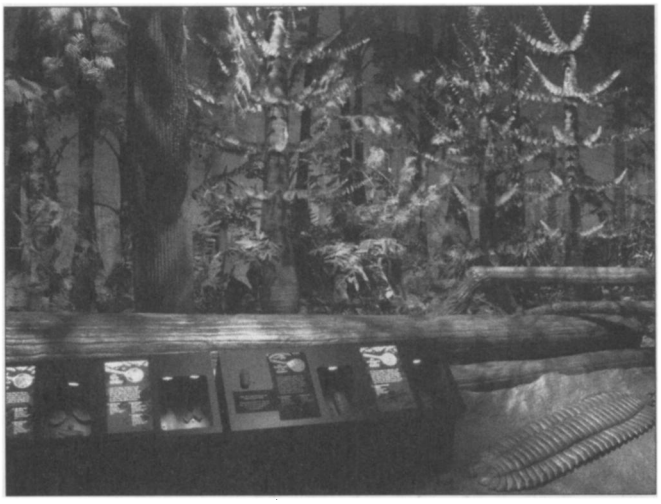
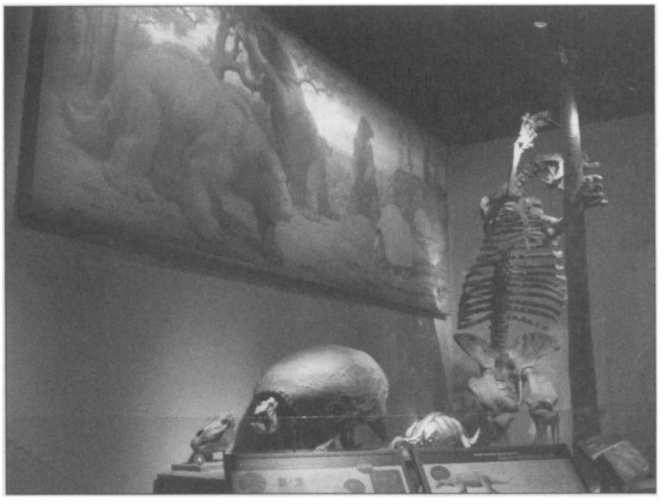


Photo 2: Eric Manabat © The Field Museum

These sensory stimulations work through *Evolving Planet* to put into perspective the spatial and temporal scale of life's evolution. Humans appear quite insignificant when compared to the reconstructed skeleton of a giant sloth (photo 3) and the impressive variety of dinosaurs (photo 4) featured in *Evolving Planet.* These specimens are remarkable not only for their scale but also for the details that have been preserved of their ancient lives. The impressions of *Orodus greggi*'s scales, for example, almost glisten in the massive fossil that dominates one wall of the Silurian/Devonian phase (photo 5). While *Evolving Planet's* walk-through-time design may seem staid for a twenty-first century exhibit on evolution, it works to convey the vast temporal depth of life on Earth. Visitors walk through most of our planet's history, including five mass extinctions before encountering our hominid ancestors. Human presence represents only 0.2% of the 4.5 billion years of organic life on Earth—a figure that only reinforces the destructive power of our relatively brief existence.



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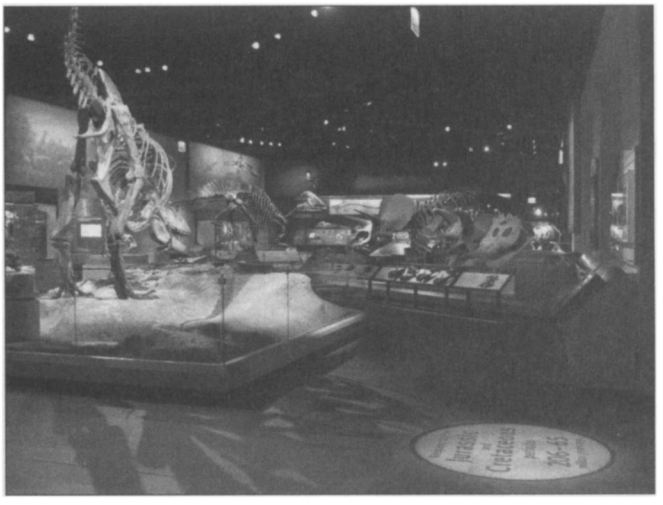

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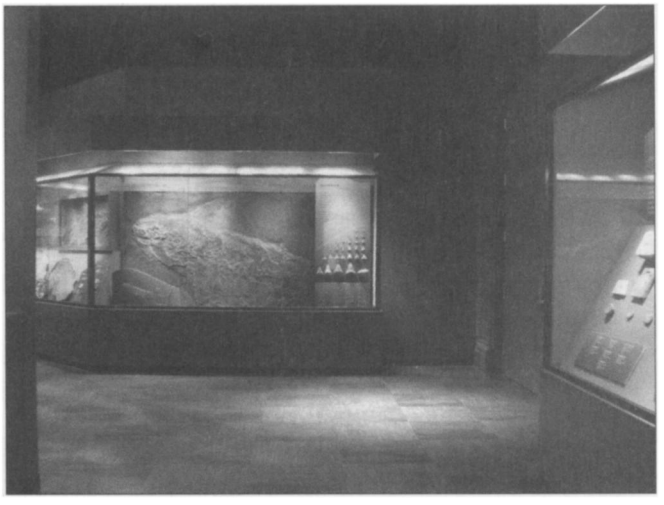

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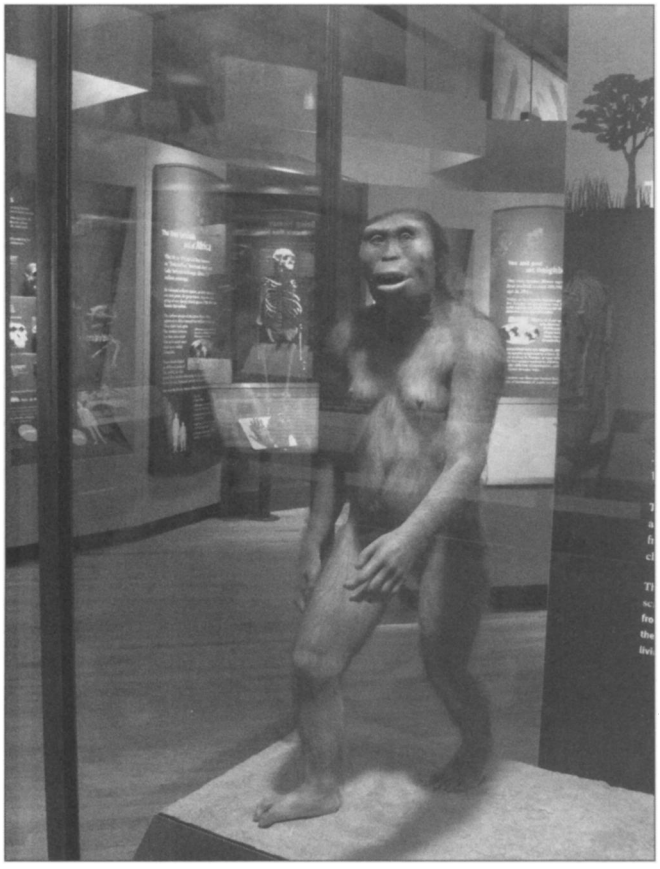

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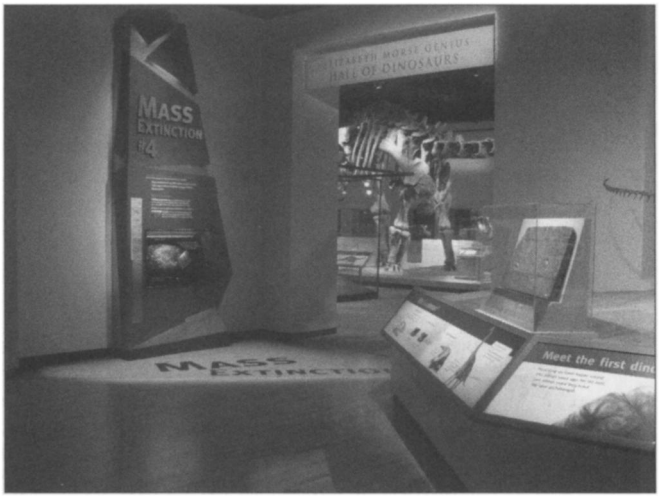

Photo 7: Eric Manabat © The Field Museum

Consequently, *Evolving Planet* offers comparatively little, but proportionally accurate, attention to the human role in evolution. Breaking with traditional museological interpretations of evolution, the Field chose to remove the hominid room from the end of the *Life Over Time* exhibit, with all of the connotations of superiority that that ultimate position implies. Instead, *Evolving Planet* greets the first hominids about three quarters of the way into its walk-through-time, somewhere in the middle of the Tertiary period. The hominid specimens are showcased in one room, the highlights of which include a specially commissioned model of Lucy by Elisabeth Daynes (photo 6). Lucy stands frozen in mid-stride as she walks across the Cenozoic mud that immortalized her footprints. Although encased in glass, visitors are able to touch casts of her hands, feet and cranium, adding a further experience to *Evolving Planet*'s sensory palette.

As impressive as the hominid room is, it appears almost as a tangent in *Evolving Planet's* narrative. There is little demonstration of *Homo sapiens*' primate roots. According to the exhibit's Senior Project Manager, Todd Tubutis, the Museum's lack of primate specimens prevented the exhibit developers from including many of our direct ancestors as a lead-in to the hominid room (personal communication). Instead, *Evolving Planet* introduces hominids in the context of the environmental conditions that allowed for the development of mammalian life in the Tertiary period. Some mention is made of hunters during the Quaternary period, but the real human impact on planet Earth is saved for the end. Throughout *Evolving Planet* the narrative is interrupted by kiosks that demonstrate the mass extinctions the Earth has survived (photo 7). We are in the midst of the Earth's sixth mass extinction, which has been triggered by human exploitation. *Evolving Planet* leaves open the question of whether humans will survive. Here, there is an abrupt shift in the role of the visitor—from that of adventure tourist in a foreign past to destroyers of the life that emerged from that past and habitats that humans require for survival. But, ultimately, *Evolving Planet* places responsibility for saving the planet in the discoveries and innovations of humans, especially those that inspire the conservation projects currently undertaken by The Field Museum's own researchers.

The work of these researchers and scientific research more broadly, is featured prominently throughout *Evolving Planet.* Museum staff collected many of the 1300 specimens on exhibit. These researchers are featured in eight video kiosks or "Scientist Stops," stationed throughout the exhibit. They appear in both office and laboratory settings, explaining and actively conducting their work. Their indirect observations of events and processes that occurred in the past provide the data necessary to simulate periods of the Earth's history that human bodies were never meant to experience directly. *Evolving Planet* goes to great lengths to espouse the authority of Western scientific epistemology when it comes to observing and understanding so-called natural phenomena. Even from the introductory text panel, visitors are schooled on the meaning of evolutionary *theory:*

> For an explanation to be a valid scientific theory, it has to be supported by evidence. Any new evidence puts the theory to the test. If the evidence does not support it, the theory is modified or rejected. All available evidence, which includes fossils, comparative anatomy, and

DNA, supports the theory of evolution as the scientific explanation for the rich diversity of life on Earth.

Natural selection is the operative explanatory theme that weaves itself through *Evolving Planet.* In the training materials that it provided for docents working in the exhibit, the Field Museum describes natural selection as "the Darwinian explanation for what drives evolution. The basic principle is that organisms that are better adapted to their environment are more likely to survive" (The Field Museum, 2005). Each phase of *Evolving Planet* is introduced in the context of the climatic and geological changes in the Earth to which organic life had to adapt. In the hominid room, for example, natural selection explains why *Homo neanderthalensis* was not the favoured species. Referring to the diets most suitable for "gracile" and "robust" hominids, the accompanying text reads: "looking at Neanderthals, we start to see how climate can shape evolution" and "evolution favors bodies that fare well in their environments." The environment as prime mover leaves little room for interpretations of human evolution that would include the sometimes irrational and inefficient sets of practices that anthropologists associate with societies and cultures, although the hominid room gestures toward the cultural with a section entitled "Being human is more than biology." Projectile points, cave paintings, goddess figurines and stone tools are meant to illustrate this assertion (photo 8). In walking the natural selection line so closely, *Evolving Planet* leaves little room for discussion of the complexities and debates of evolutionary theory. Indeed, as Rufolo argues, "It is becoming more commonplace to construe natural selection as one component in a complex of distinct factors resulting in the observed and theorised nature of evolution" (1999: 24).

The Field Museum may have simplified its message on evolution to satisfy the museum audiences who were overwhelmed by *Life Over Time.* But the simplified explanation of evolution's mechanisms might also reflect the Field's desire to present a clear message to combat recent challenges to the authority of evolutionary theory. The exhibit planners are quick to point out that planning for *Evolving Planet* was underway well in advance of the recent controversies regarding intelligent design at school boards in Pennsylvania, Kansas and Québec. But there is an implicit dialogue with critics of evolution detectable in the exhibit's promotion of Western science. From the promotional materials and training documents, to the opening reception and the exhibit text, the Field's discourse on evolution relies on dichotomies between science and religion, the natural and the supernatural. The ethnographic

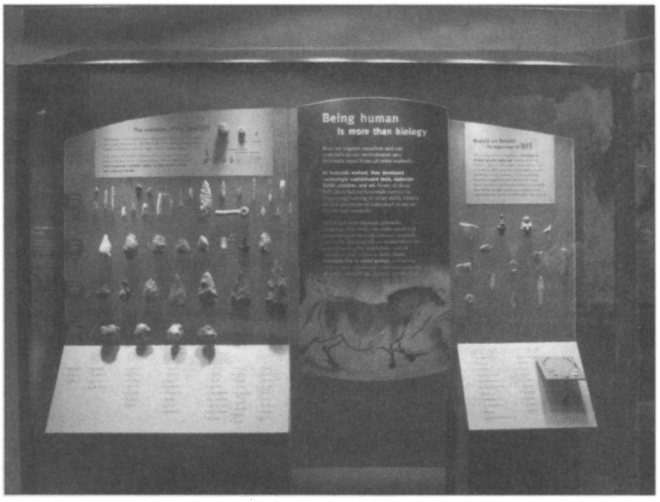

Photo 8: Eric Manabat © The Field Museum

study of how such knowledge is produced is ideally placed in the museum setting. As the product of the Field Museum's geology department, *Evolving Planet* has few outlets for exploring the role that culture and society play in effecting, not only the development of life on earth, but also *how* that development is observed, analyzed and shared. When the Creation Museum opens in 2007 we will have the opportunity for a comparative study. The creationist sponsors of the 4600m^2 museum declare that it "will be a wonderful alternative to the evolutionary natural history museums that are turning countless minds against the gospel of Christ and the authority of the Scripture" (see www.answersingenesis.org/museum). It appears as though museums are becoming a front in America's culture wars, and visitors are welcome.

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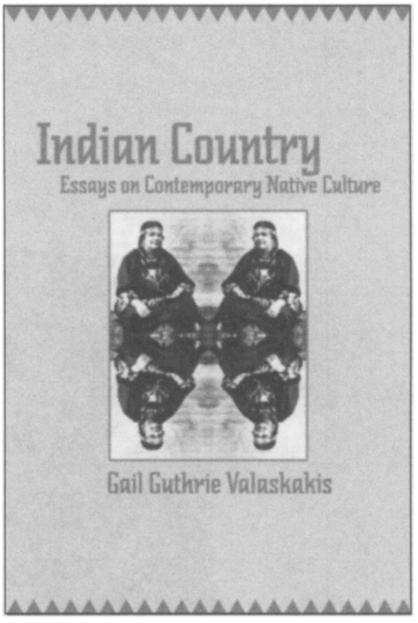

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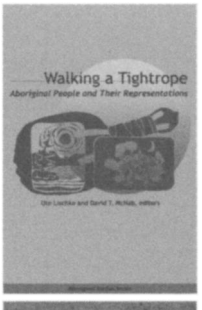

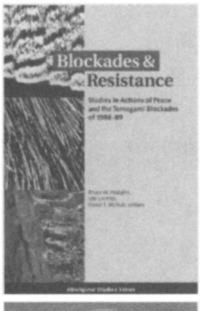

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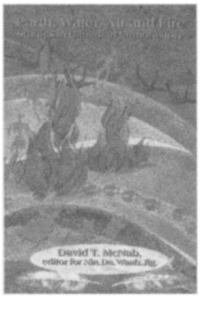

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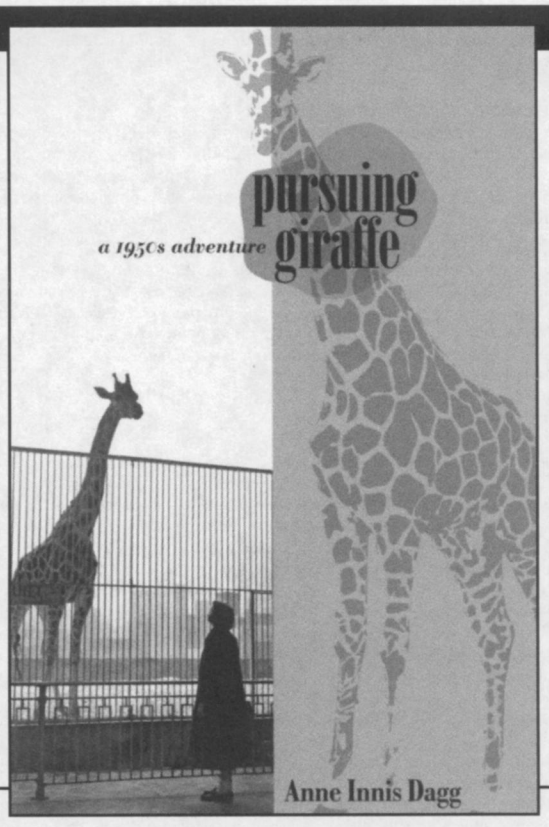

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In the 1950s, Anne Innis Dagg was a young zoologist with a lifelong love of giraffe and a dream to study them in Africa. Based on extensive journals and letters home, *Pursuing Giraffe* vividly chronicles the realization of that dream and the year that she spent studying and documenting giraffe behaviour. Dagg was one of the first zoologists to study wild animals in Africa (before Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey); her memoir captures her youthful enthusiasm for her journey, as well as her naïveté about the complex social and political issues in Africa.

Once in the field, she recorded the complexities of giraffe social relationships but also learned about human relationships in the context of apartheid in South Africa and colonialism in Tanganyika (Tanzania) and Kenya. Hospitality and friendship were readily extended to her as a white woman, but she was shocked by the racism of the colonial whites in Africa. Reflecting the twenty-three-year-old author's response to an "exotic" world far removed from the Toronto where she grew up, the book records her visits to Zanzibar and Victoria Falls and her climb of Mount Kilimanjaro. *Pursuing Giraffe* is a fascinating account that has much to say about the status of women in the mid-twentieth century. The book's foreword by South African novelist Mark Behr (author of *The Smell of Apples* and *Embrace*), provides further context for and insights into Dagg's narrative.

Anne Innis Dagg graduated with a biology degree from the University of Toronto and earned her PhD in animal behaviour from the University of Waterloo—before many women made careers in science. She has published numerous books and articles on animal behaviour and on feminist issues, including *The Feminine Gaze: A Canadian Compendium of Non-Fiction Women Authors and Their Books, 1836-1945* (WLU Press, 2001).

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REGISTRATION NO. 9373
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0003-5459(2006)48:2;1-U