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NATION AND IDENTIFICATION

PSYCHOANALYSIS, RACE, AND SEXUAL DIFFERENCE

Tracey Sedinger

Group rights, or individual rights and privileges derived from membership within a group, have become a pressing issue within contemporary political theory, especially insofar as new social movements have challenged Western democracies' traditional liberal individualism. Given widespread geographical mobility, as well as the recognition that other types of collective identity (including race, class, gender, and sexual orientation) are central to the distribution of social and economic goods, many political theorists have argued that the latter identities have more political salience than collectives based on propinquity (Guinier). In one of the more systematic efforts to legitimate group rights, Iris Marion Young has tried to delineate a justice that takes into account the many differences politicized by the new social movements. She defines a social group as "a collective of persons differentiated from at least one other group by cultural forms, practices, or way of life.... A social group is defined not primarily by a set of shared attributes, but by a sense of identity." Young therefore privileges identification as the process by which a group is formed (43–44). But such identification is not voluntarist, since for Young the social group under consideration (which includes and encloses individuals regardless of will) is quite different from voluntary organizations based on religion, profession, etc.

Young's work has been subject to considerable critique, especially because the relation she posits between the collective and "culture" is unspecified (Fraser, 194–96). Will Kymlicka, one of the most ardent proponents of group rights, has suggested that Young's extension of such rights to every oppressed group within a liberal democracy would

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result in privileged treatment of 80 percent of the population. He therefore proposes that only those racial and ethnic groups that can be said to form a "nation" (though one without a state) should possess and exercise such rights, since only they have the cohesive and stable cultural institutions to engage in autonomous decision making (131–51). Kymlicka argues that, contrary to traditional liberal individualism, imposing change on such cultures becomes a problem because of the constitutive role that culture plays in constructing the self: change the culture, and one has destroyed its individual members. He thus attempts to overcome the distinction between a procedural liberal individualism (in which individual rights are guaranteed by law) and a more communitarian approach to politics (which sees liberalism not as a disinterested set of formal procedures but as a primary component of a sociohistorically specific ideal of the good life). For Kymlicka, multiculturalism, with its strong sense of common cultural goods, need not therefore be inimical to liberal democracy (see also Taylor). But Kymlicka assumes, and fallaciously so, that cultural identities do not change. As James Clifford's "Identity in Mashpee" demonstrates, this expectation quickly transmutes into an impossible demand for immutability and authenticity. It is precisely in reaction to such a demand that postcolonial theorists have argued for the various notions of hybridity, creolization, and *mestizaje* that refuse the metaphysical underpinnings of ideals of authenticity.

Despite the distance between contemporary political theory concerned with group rights and postcolonial cultural studies, the debate between Young and Kymlicka raises some important questions about the relationship between culture and collectives. Though there have been various efforts to document the cultural practices or ways of life of racial, gendered, sexual, and class collectives, Kymlicka's critique of Young seems correct: not all ascriptive identities are supported by cultural practices in the same way or to the same extent. Nevertheless, I take issue with Kymlicka's efforts to limit group rights according to culture alone; I will argue that collective identities need not be coextensive with cultural practices. This essay interrogates the relationship between culture, cultural practices, and subjectivities, in order to argue that cultural practices are not sufficient to account for identity effects. I have pursued this task via a critique of current concepts of identification as they are used in postcolonial, antiracist

discourse. However, I have rejected any presumed symmetry between different modes of identity; within the general question raised by the couplet "culture and identity," different modes of subjectivity are configured differently in relation to culture—an asymmetry that seems especially evident within contemporary discourses on the nation and nationalism.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND RACIALIZATION

Given the theoretical and analytic successes of psychoanalytic explorations of subjectivity, a number of contemporary identity theorists have suggested that psychoanalysis might also offer a rigorous, nonessentialist account of how individuals become racialized social subjects. But efforts to use psychoanalytic concepts to theorize race have confronted a history of elision, ethnocentrism, and theoretical chauvinism, most evident in early efforts to apply psychoanalytic theory to non-Western cultures and therefore buttress its claims to universality (for examples, see Jones; Róheim; Mannoni). Insofar as psychoanalysis describes subjectivation, its canonical texts have tended to focus primarily on sexual difference (which most recent critics have interpreted as gender acquisition) and secondarily on sexuality, as they are constituted and problematized within a specifically European, bourgeois, and modern "family romance" (Butler 1993, 181; Abel, 185). Several scholars have suggested that the foreclosure of race has actually enabled the psychoanalytic theorization of sexual difference.[1] Consequently, many theorists have argued that psychoanalysis is too much implicated within European, racist, and colonialist institutions, that, in fact, "Oedipus (the ur-paradigm of psychoanalysis) is the figure of (universal) colonization *par excellence*" (Iginla, 32; see also Tate, 54–57, 59–60; Carr). Or as Mary Ann Doane has suggested, "Psychoanalysis can ... be seen as a quite elaborate form of ethnography—as a writing of the ethnicity of the white Western psyche" (211). And efforts to overcome the traditional psychoanalytic elision of race are often marked by assumptions that implicitly relegate racialization to a secondary moment in subject formation.[2] Given the persistence of psychoanalysis's privileging of sexual difference, it is clear that race cannot be "added" to sexual difference in

psychoanalytic accounts of subjectivation; too often, such efforts are marred by an unexamined tendency to assign sexual difference some priority, even if only temporal.

Other efforts to appropriate psychoanalytic discourse for explanations of racialization have resorted to analogy, using feminist psychoanalytic explanations of the construction of gendered identities as a model for explanations of racialized identities. The tendency to model race on gender is evident both in those theoretical articulations of race that depend primarily on identification as the psychic process by which identity is secured and subjectivity given content, as well as those that rely on performativity. As an example, I turn to an excellent rereading of Joan Riviere's essay on the masquerade. As both Jean Walton and Ann Pellegrini have pointed out, feminist analyses of Riviere's essay have ignored the racial difference that figures so prominently in the fantasies that she records. Her patient, who grew up in the American Deep South, repeatedly fantasizes that she is the "victim" of attacks by black men: "if a negro came to attack her, she planned to defend herself by making him kiss her and make love to her (ultimately so that she could then deliver him over to justice)" (Riviere, 37). In general, Riviere does not remark upon the pervasiveness of racial difference, perhaps because, as Pellegrini and Walton note, in Riviere's scheme it is little more than a trope for a more fundamental sexual difference (Walton, 226–32; Pellegrini, 137–38). Riviere therefore views this fantasy as yet another example of her patient's habit of propitiating powerful men. But given the weight of institutionalized racism in the United States, it doesn't make much sense to compare these fantasied black men to privileged white professionals. Walton therefore suggests a new and ingenious reading of these fantasies, routed through Lacan's "The Meaning of the Phallus." She rejects Riviere's reading of the attacker as yet another father figure and suggests, "By fantasizing a black man, Riviere's patient is calling upon a figure whose relation to the phallus, as signifier of white male privilege in a racialized, patriarchal society, is as tenuous as her own" (229). In delivering the black man up to justice, the patient offers up a phallus in order to escape retribution. These fantasies therefore record a struggle over the phallus, which designates symbolic positions (as opposed to biological realities), and therefore, for Walton, the exercise of political and economic power.

Certainly, Walton's rereading of Riviere's analysis is both important and salutary. But I am uncomfortable with viewing the phallus, in its Lacanian mode, as a signifier of "white male privilege." If, as in Riviere's original essay, possession of the penis results from identification and implies the imaginary castration of the other with whom the subject identifies, the penis becomes an extremely scarce commodity, while identification is reduced to its most aggressive and assimilationist aspects. Despite her move to a more sophisticated Lacanian reading (in which the penis is replaced by the phallus), Walton's essay continues this trend. Kaja Silverman and Daniel Boyarin produce, I think, similar readings of the phallus and its relation to racialization. Silverman argues that racist discourses repeatedly define black masculinity as a "surplus" in relation to white masculinity (e.g., the myth of the black rapist, the giant black phallus, etc.) that "threatens to erase the distinction between him [the black man] and the white woman" (Silverman 1996, 31). Boyarin argues that both racial (in this case, Jewish) and sexual identity derive from a castration analogous to circumcision, which makes the sign of racial identity, the Jew's circumcised penis, almost identical to the sign of sexual difference, the woman's lack of a penis (Boyarin 1995, 216–17). These efforts confront me with two problems. First, if the phallus is the signifier of some prior material reality (the distribution of political and economic power), not having the phallus becomes the common term that defines a variety of subject positions—gender and race in this case. Gender is implicitly treated as if it were conceptually analogous to race, as if it were one in a series of subject positions or various identities (race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) as mapped onto axes of power and oppression, including the oppressive systems of racism, capitalism, patriarchy, compulsory heterosexuality, etc. (de Lauretis, 2). Reading the relations between man and woman, black and white, colonizer and colonized as a series of binary oppositions denoted by possession of the phallus or the lack thereof promotes an understanding of the disparate social relations that make up the social field as organized around a center (white male privilege) and series of hegemonized others ("whose relation[s] to the phallus ... [are] as tenuous as her own" [Walton, 229]). As a consequence, sexual difference's difference from racial difference is erased. Moreover, Walton, Pellegrini, et al. short-circuit the distance and difference between the psychic

and the social, and end up foregrounding the imaginary. The phallus no longer marks sexual difference in the psychoanalytic field, but rather social identities that reflect the distribution and circulation of power in some prior Real. Gender and race therefore become something acquired through the process of identification and are assigned positive content, which too often means that subjectivity is reduced to its material, cultural, or social determinants (e.g., Butler 1990, 60–65; Fuss 1995, 10). But is identification really the motor behind gender and race acquisition? If the phallus is the privileged term in the psychoanalytic paradigm, does it enable the construction of identifications such that both gendered and racial/ethnic collectives are formed?

RACE, CULTURE, AND IDENTIFICATION

Contemporary discussions of race and the difference it makes usually begin with the by now standard assertion that racial identities are made, not born; that race is a function of culture, as opposed to nature (Frankenberg, 191–234). Of course, what this would actually imply for the analysis of racial identities is a subject of considerable controversy. Many scholars have concluded that if race is a function of culture, then race can and should be reduced to a culturally based ethnicity; anything else would suggest a biological essentialism that is in itself a racist dogma (Appiah 1992, 13–14).[3] Michael Omi and Howard Winant, on the other hand, have objected to subsuming race under ethnicity because, within the United States, white ethnicity has mandated an assimilationist model that the experience of various "racial" groups (including African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanics) has called into question (14–23). In their view, replacing race with ethnicity is all too often complicit with traditional liberal ideals of racelessness that perpetuate white privilege.

It appears difficult to resolve the above debate since the majority of its participants subscribe to two fundamental tenets that are apparently contradictory: (1) race does not exist as a biological category; (2) but race is not an identity that one simply chooses, like a club membership. To adapt Werner Sollors's terminology, race is grounded in descent as opposed to consent. For this reason, Walter Benn Michaels has maintained that any account of cultural identity that does "cultural

work" (including the identification and evaluation of those traditions or practices that belong to a people) must be underwritten by some "natural" essence, which we call race. Rather than culture replacing race in our analyses, culture perpetuates racial thought on another level: "only the appeal to race ... makes culture an object of affect" (684–85). He therefore rejects Michael M. J. Fischer's efforts to represent racial identity as the intersection of social discourses originating from another and one's own self-production (Fischer, 196–97; see also Spillers 1997, 136–40). In order to describe the subjective disruptions associated with racialization, Fischer had suggestively evoked a Lacanian vocabulary of the symbolic: familial relations and kinship ties as the media through which racial and ethnic identities are transmitted and constructed. Michaels reads this reliance on descent as necessarily biological, since only biology confers a "mark of identity that transcends one's actual practices and experiences" (681). For Michaels, no matter how "culturalist" one gets with one's definition of race, one ends up positing some notion of kinship, family, etc., in order to account for our strong sense that racial/ethnic identities are as much a result of involuntary ascriptions as they are voluntary cultural identifications. Like many critics, Michaels assumes that the Lacanian symbolic is coextensive with (biological) kinship structures, and that Lacanian psychoanalysis is therefore underwritten by a problematic anthropology (Gearhart, 196).

I won't address this peculiarly antihistorical reading of Lacan's thought, but I do want to note that Michaels's solution rests on a mistaken assumption, that nature (descent) is the only alternative to culture (consent).[4] But I believe that Michaels is correct when he argues for a "mark of identity that transcends one's actual practices and experiences": what "quilts" or fixes cultural practices in the determination of racial identity, given the discontinuities and ruptures that usually inflict cultural "traditions"? What makes culture an object of affect? In order to make a case for psychoanalytic answers to these questions, I turn to Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. Despite his own ambivalence toward (and, I would argue, ultimate rejection of) psychoanalysis (Gordon; Vergès, 582), Fanon remains one of the premier theorists of racialization's psychic economy (Gates; Bhabha; Hall).[5]

Fanon's account of racialization suggests that more sociological notions of identification (which would collapse the distinction

between the social and the psychic) are problematized by the specifically traumatic character of subjectivization. Accounts of identification tend to focus on the horizontal relations of resemblance that allow the constitution of collectives; in the postcolonial framework, treatments of identification have, following Fanon, discussed identification (and its failures) between colonizer and colonized. But Fanon's account of racial subjectivation (or more properly, epidermalization) reveals a prior moment: the traumatic interpellation by which the subject-as-individual is called into being (Althusser, 170–77). Interpellation happens regardless of the subject's will, which accounts for its traumatic character; however, it is not simply involuntary, since the subject it founds grounds the distinction between voluntary and involuntary. Interpellation is also traumatic in a Lacanian sense. Because the subject is called to an identity for which he has no "natural" predilection, interpellation remains radically contingent and unmotivated—in other words, Real (Žižek 1989, 113). For this reason, prior to being an identification, interpellation is an encounter with the Real: with the inscrutable will of the Other who issues the mandate to be, exclusive of meaning.

The trauma of subjectivization persists within the subject's psyche as a sort of primal scene. In Fanon's version of this scene, the installation of racial/ethnic identity occurs within a representational structure that resolves the trauma of interpellation in a specifically imaginary way. He recounts a moment when a child suddenly calls out to its mother: "Look! A Negro!" (1967, 11–12). At this moment, Fanon "discovers his blackness," becomes aware of a "racial epidermal schema" that enforces his own responsibility "for [his] body, for [his] race, for [his] ancestors" (112). He therefore describes the installation of racial identity not as an internalization, but as an epidermalization, reminding the reader that the ego, the apparent site of interiority, is first and foremost a bodily ego (Freud 1960, 16). The signifier "Negro" initially has no meaning for Fanon: "an external stimulus that flicked over me as I passed by" (1967, 111). It is the task of epidermalization to provide this signifier with a signified, to fix it to what Appiah has called a "badge of color," which transforms an originally inert physical feature into a signifier, a badge, and then gives it a signified, a meaning (1996, 78). The intrusion of the signifier and translation of skin into a signified enacts a trauma, what Julia Reinhard Lupton has

called "a unique point of traumatic nonsignification informing subjectivity" (198). Epidermalization is traumatic because it is a "missed encounter" between the subject and the Other, in which the Other's interpellation of the subject is unmotivated by any preexisting content or set of attributes (Lacan 1977, 55). Because of this contingency, the "missed encounter" cannot initially be symbolized or made part of "reality."

Identification is an effort to represent the Real of epidermalization. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, there are two types of identification: imaginary and symbolic. Imaginary identification is mimetic; it occurs in a dual relation with another, whom the subject takes as a model for her identity. The apparent positivity of imaginary identifications (which seem content rich) supports the more totalizing and destructive aspects of the self's relations with and to others (as we see in Riviere's essay). Imaginary identifications are often marked by a will to incorporate and destroy: if the subject cannot be the object with which she identifies, then that object must be destroyed. Moreover, imaginary identifications enforce homogeneity: they produce or underwrite a particular type of collective or class on the basis of a resemblance between their members, most often based on a shared property, which can often be represented in visual form. They produce a *substantive* community: each member participates in a common substance. As Fanon writes, the black man must be black "in relation to the white man" (1967, 110); the relation between the black man and the white man is one of "dual narcissism" (10), in which "The Negro is not. Any more than the white man" (231). As a consequence, the black man experiences alienation (as opposed to symbolic separation), which paradoxically entraps him in an imaginary plenitude, a corporeality that ties him directly to his ancestors (see also Appiah 1996, 77). The "white mask" apparently offers the only escape from an identity overdetermined from without. Thus, Diana Fuss and Homi Bhabha argue that enforced identifications are one of the primary means by which colonizers maintain control over colonized peoples: the colonizer offers him- or herself as a model that the colonized must imitate. But this imitation must never be exact; the colonized must never identify such that he or she would assume a position equal to that of the colonizer (Fuss 1995, 145–46; Bhabha 1998, 50–52, 85–92). And unlike the little boy in the Oedipal scenario, the colonized's

frustration is never allayed with the promise of deferred fulfillment. For Fuss and Bhabha, the colonial condition mandates an imitation that cannot help but fail and therefore generate its subversion. In Lacanian terms, we might say that the colonial scenario prescribes imaginary identification but proscribes symbolic identification.

Lacan bases his concept of symbolic identification on a type of identification that Freud develops in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. Freud uses the following example to highlight the specifics of hysterical identification: a girl at a boarding school receives a letter from a potential lover that arouses her jealousy; she reacts by having a fit of hysterics. The other girls also adopt this symptom (the hysterical fit) through what Freud calls "mental infection" (49). Freud suggests that hysterical identification is not a regression of object choice to identification, as we see in melancholia, nor is it based on what he calls "sympathy," a mimetic or imaginary identification underwritten by friendship. Symbolic or hysterical identification is based on the subject's desire for the desire of the other. This identification is therefore marked by the adoption of a single symptom or trait, or what Lacan called the *trait unaire*, an individual signifier (1977, 256). Symbolic identification is positional, as opposed to mimetic; it occurs in a triadic relation, in which the subject identifies with a signifier in relation to the Other, or the symbolic order. As a consequence, symbolic identifications produce collectives that do not necessarily require homogeneity: "Subjects are thus identified not as *similar* individuals, but as individuals *in solidarity* although absolutely dissimilar ('unique')" (Balibar 1995, 188). Despite the importance of this conceptual distinction, actual identifications are never purely imaginary or symbolic; as Elizabeth Cowie suggests, it would be more correct to conclude that identifications occur not within but between the three Lacanian registers (real, imaginary, and symbolic). For example, symbolic identifications ratify and support imaginary ones: the subject identifies with a signifier (symbolic identification), which then allows an identification with another subject who does likewise (imaginary identification) (86–98). A provisional closure can be introduced into a series of identifications when one (such as race or nation) lays claim to the ultimate horizon, hegemonizing the others by offering itself as a determination in the last instance (see Gilroy, 236).

But simply asserting the end of analysis does not necessarily result in a reorganization of psychical structures; likewise, arguing for the political necessity of symbolic as opposed to imaginary identification can fall into the trap of voluntarism. Identifications cannot be simply willed. The problem that this poses for revolutionary politics is evident within Fanon's later texts, particularly *The Wretched of the Earth*, which grapples with the revolutionary problem of how to supplant the imaginary appeals of race with the symbolic structure of the nation. As we trace the movement of Fanon's thought, we can see why, given the understanding of epidermalization in *Black Skin, White Masks*, he explicitly opposes such "culturalist" movements as negritude to the nation. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, racialization is largely a function of imaginary identifications; basing loyalties and political programs on race alone chains one to an inert and fictional tradition that eschews the future: "The desire to attach oneself to tradition or bring abandoned traditions to life again does not only mean going against the current of history but also opposing one's own people" (180). For Fanon, negritude accepts the colonizer's image of the native and participates in this racialization of thought and culture. Negritude cannot sustain a war of liberation, for it leaves intact the symbolic network that underwrites relations of domination.

In reaction to the culturalist framework in which negritude flourishes, Fanon's project ("the liberation of the man of color from himself" [8]) requires the revolutionary establishment of a nation radically distinct from race. In order to highlight the paradoxes within Fanon's argument, I want briefly to juxtapose his work on the nation with that of Ernest Gellner. Like Benedict Anderson, Gellner has defined the nation as a function of intersubjective relations, based on mutual recognition, rather than political or governing institutions (Gellner, 7, 53). For Gellner, as for Fanon, the nation is a function of its *people*, as opposed to its state or territory. Gellner initially defines nationalism as the principle that ethnic boundaries should be congruent with political boundaries: a nation's people should logically share one ethnic (cultural) identity (1). In other words, the people would preexist the nation, insofar as their unity would be underwritten by a similar ethnic identity. But later in his text, Gellner also argues that nations create the cultures that they claim to represent (56). Which comes first, the people or the nation? And what is the role of

ethnicity or cultural identity in underwriting the people's existence as people?

Though Fanon rejects those understandings of nationalism that assume historicist, organic, and/or cultural foundations, Gellner's formulation illuminates something interesting about Fanon's own response to the problem. In *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon imagines a nation based neither on race nor culture, in which the symbolic identification of Algerian replaces that of European, Jew, or Muslim. Local, tribal, and racial loyalties must be extinguished for the people to emerge as such (152). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, revolutionary violence becomes the site for the performative emergence of symbolic identifications that replace the involuntary trap of imaginary identifications. Lupton has explored the relationship between symbolic identification and the nation's construction. Taking as her primary example the Jewish nation, she asserts that the function of circumcision is to "racialize" or "nationalize" the male, Jewish body; the surrender or sacrifice of foreskin to the Other (God) simultaneously estranges the subject from the symbolic, while also guaranteeing his access to it. In other words, the subject's membership within the nation is underwritten by his symbolic separation (not alienation) from it. Moreover, separation (and symbolic identification) requires a violent act that, in a sense, re-marks the subject. I don't think it is too great a stretch to compare Lupton's analysis of circumcision to Fanon's description of revolutionary violence in *The Wretched of the Earth* (29–74). As Hussein Abdilahi Bulhan writes, "The consideration of culture, no longer marred by reactive and metaphysical assertions as in negritude, with which Fanon briefly flirted, became directly linked to the realities of the *nation*. What is more, the solution to alienation was articulated as nothing short of total war—a coordinated, and collective counterviolence against the violence of the oppressor" (188). Revolutionary violence is a political effort to free subjects from imaginary identifications that entrap them within racial identities. For Fanon, national liberation provides the terrain on which symbolic identifications can be forged, since he envisions the nation as an "imagined community" ultimately based not on similarity but on solidarity. Fanon therefore attempts to articulate an imagined community without the imaginary. What is required is, in a sense, a new symbolic: the foundation of a new nation, which would incarnate a

new people. The "people" therefore seems to arise as an intersubjective unit sui generis. The collective identification in which the people is formed occurs "all at once," as Homi Bhabha has noted, the product of a performative in which the not yet existing people calls itself into being. Revolutionary violence is that performative, a performative without a performing subject. Intersubjectivity, the psychical "glue" that would hold the new nation together, cannot be formed without a radical and originary trauma—an act, as Slavoj Žižek has described it, whose authenticity is paradoxically underwritten by the absence of a self-present, self-willing subject (1999, 374–75).

For Fanon, the nation, as the product of an act of will, provides an escape from the involuntary nature of racialization. And though globalization and diaspora may have called into question the viability of the nation as institution, the nation as rhetorical trope and "fictive ethnicity" (Balibar, "Racism," 1991, 49) remains one of the means by which to politicize, to convert into an object of contestation as opposed to ascription, involuntary racial ascription. Identity-based political movements have used the rhetoric of nationalism in order to intervene into the process of racial subjectivation, to mobilize affect and reconfigure identifications. But Fanon also reminds us that any attempt to theorize race or racial subjectivities through identification must not forget the trauma of interpellation that tends to destabilize the reciprocity and homogeneity of intersubjective relations. And the lesson for postcolonial cultural studies? Racial subjectivities cannot be exhausted by socialization or identification, or by an intersubjective relation to some collective underwritten by culture. Culture does not exhaust race; in fact, racialization depends on something foreclosed by the representations that constitute culture.

SEXUAL DIFFERENCE AND THE NATION

National solidarity does not occur without a certain asymmetry. The first chapter of Fanon's *A Dying Colonialism*, entitled "Algeria Unveiled," describes two related phenomena: colonial efforts to conquer Algeria by unveiling Algerian women and the entry of Algerian women into the revolution. Women, and especially the woman's body, become a symbol of the Algerian nation itself. Anne McClintock, in a

careful and sensitive reading, has demonstrated how Fanon fails to conceptualize the place of women within the nation or to demonstrate how the nation as "imagined community" can adequately address women's demands. She writes, "Fanon does not consider the possibility of women committing themselves to action.... the possibility of a distinctive feminist agency is never broached" (336). But what would a "distinctive feminist agency" consist of? As McClintock's own readings of numerous colonial and postcolonial texts reveal, feminism retains an awkward, often antagonistic relation to both the nation-trope and to numerous nationalist movements. Individual women, as well as groups of women, have, of course, been central to nationalist movements. In the introduction to their anthology, Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias list five major ways in which women have participated in nationalist struggle; these range from sexual reproduction to participation in political and military struggle, to symbolizing racial/national differences (7). But as the various articles illustrate, feminist struggle is usually subordinated to nationalist struggle. The anthology's very organization suggests that efforts to deal with the relation between feminism and nationalism, both empirically and theoretically, privilege race/nation as the more fundamental category, for all the articles discuss women in relation to individual ethnic groups and nation-states (see also anthologies edited by Scott, Kaplan, and Keates; Williams; and Jayawardena). In other words, the women written about in these anthologies are always already members of an ethnic/racial or national collective, which has the following effect: nationalist discourse subordinates any such feminist agency to its own demands, or at the very least, such feminist demands can only be heard insofar as they are articulable as national demands.

One response to the hegemonizing of feminist demands via nationalist discourse has been to reject nations as inevitably male dominated and to imagine women as forming their own nation. Virginia Woolf wrote in *Three Guineas*, "as a woman, I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world" (166). And though the concern with differences such as race, class, etc., has caused many theorists to view the promotion of autonomous women's communities with suspicion, Lois West, in her introduction to *Feminist Nationalism*, calls for a "feminism as its own kind of nationalism" (xxxii). But the history of colonialism, as well as the

pressure of other salient social identities (including race and class), disrupts her efforts to imagine this female "nation"; and several articles in the anthology argue that feminism and nationalism are almost always politically incompatible.[6] For example, Haunani-Kay Trask maintains that feminism and nationalism are (and should remain) antagonistic since she sees a feminism dominated by white, middle-class women as already subordinated to nationalist demands—in this case, the United States, an oppressive, colonizing force within the Hawaiian Islands. Though I am uncomfortable with Trask's assumption that feminism is necessarily white, I do think that she points to a fundamental difficulty with women and the "nation" as two collectives whose interaction various feminisms have attempted to promote, mediate, or imagine. In other words, the problem posed by the relation (or lack thereof) between women and the nation cannot necessarily be answered by trying to incorporate women into the nation, nor by imagining that women could form their own nation. In fact, as I will argue, women and the nation are differends, in large part because they constitute different types of collectives. The nation can be imagined as a "fictive ethnicity" because, as I have argued, it is underwritten by the same sorts of identifications as racial and ethnic identities are. Women, however, do not constitute a collective that could be metaphorized by the nation-trope because, as psychoanalysis reveals, femininity is not an identification at all. "Woman" has often represented in imaginary form the nation, but because women form a paradoxical class whose solidarity cannot be forged through symbolic identifications, the nation-trope remains unsuitable for the representation of women as a social collective.

In *Imagined Communities*, as well as his more recent *The Spectre of Comparisons*, Benedict Anderson has drawn a strong connection between a particular form of the nation (as imagined community), a particular form of politics (anticolonial democracy), and a particular type of abstract individual (one, for example, subject to statistical analysis, which requires a division between the individual and his qualities). And it is because of our ability to feel for these citizen-abstractions that Anderson sees the nation as both imaginary and affective. In this context, it is important to pay attention to the processes by which this type of individual is manufactured. The primary political fantasy that underwrites the production of such an

individual is the social contract, a legalistic procedure by which equals enter into agreement and thereby constitute a polity. Of course, the social contract has come under fire for its presumption that differences of power and condition could be so easily set aside. Moreover, two trenchant critiques (by Carole Pateman and Charles Mills) have suggested that the social contract actually legislates inequality, as opposed to simply ignoring it. Pateman's thesis is that underlying the social contract is a hidden and suppressed sexual contract, one that renders women naturally (as opposed to politically) subject to their husbands. In order to highlight this exclusion, she compares the standard social contract (for example, Locke's) to one of Freud's more bizarre myths, the sacrifice of the primal father as detailed in *Totem and Taboo*. Because the primal father is all-powerful, the brothers must band together in order to defeat him. They construct a fraternal group based on identifications that underwrite equality, as opposed to the identification with the father whose power and position they envy. After killing and eating the father (an incorporation that also recalls an identification, this time based in melancholy [Hope]), they institute a civil society: "The social contract *replaces* the law of the father with impartial, public laws to which all stand as equal civil individuals" (Pateman, 104). Of course, as many political critiques have testified, this theoretical distinction between citizenship and fraternity, solidarity and commonality, is problematic and unstable. The social contract attempts to create horizontal, symbolic identifications between the brothers while repressing the prior melancholic identification with the primal father, therefore producing a "regime of the brother" (MacCannell). The individual is both abstract (i.e., characterized by no qualities) and implicitly masculine; women's exclusion from democracy is not accidental but structural (Pateman; see also Phillips).

Are racialized others similarly excluded from the demos? In another effective critique of social contract theory, explicitly modeled on Pateman's work, Charles Mills demonstrates that the social contract creates racial exclusion on the basis of equality. Mills argues that the social contract has constructed a racialized polity by creating social groups based on race. For Mills, race is essentially a modern construct; he argues that prior to the modern period, differences between Europeans and non-Europeans were represented primarily in theological terms (54, 62–63). He suggests, therefore, that the racial

contract is not merely a legal fiction underlying democratic polities, but a real historical event. Thus far, Pateman's and Mills's respective arguments seem completely symmetrical. But Mills also sees racial difference and sexual difference as fundamentally different, for (in a revision to Pateman's argument that the sexual contract is a crucial aspect of modernity) he characterizes the origins of the sexual contract as so ancient as to be virtually ahistorical. In Mills's work, race becomes uniquely modern, sexual difference premodern.

I cannot pursue here the historical consequences of this important difference between Mills and Pateman. Rather, I would like to suggest that Mills's efforts to define the difference between sexual and racial differences in terms of historical origin might better be characterized as a difference in the types of collectives made available within and by the nation-state. Though race is not coextensive with nation, nevertheless (in Mills's work) both race and nation are modern forms that emerge from an effort to found a new form of democratic polity in which national difference is predicated upon a previously formulated but nevertheless symmetrical racial difference. Mills's conviction that sexual difference is premodern highlights what one might call the foreclosure of sexual difference from the democratic field within the nation-state: whereas racial difference is an exclusion that nevertheless remains symbolizable (representable), sexual difference is subject to a different exclusion, one that eschews representability. The social contract creates a sexual asymmetry—one that differs from racial asymmetry, insofar as the racial contract (Mills) creates collectives while the sexual contract interdicts women as a collective—and bars femininity from representation.

Psychoanalytic theory is, I would argue, uniquely situated to describe this problem given its refusal to define femininity in terms of "identification," especially if we take that term to refer (mistakenly) to a set of contents. If Oedipus is the structure by which castration and a sexual position are installed in the subject, it would initially seem that this proceeds via identification: one assumes a gendered identity by desiring one parent and identifying with the other (the hated rival for the love object's affections). But when Freud turned his attention to the greater problem of femininity (more problematic both sociologically and theoretically), he discovered a concept of difference that was not the result of identification. In part, this resulted

from his resistance to the alternative understandings of female sexuality put forth by Ernest Jones, who saw biology as the most significant determinant of female identity, and Karen Horney, who emphasized sociological factors. Freud attempted a specifically psychoanalytic—and nonpositivist—theorization, one in which anatomy and identification played small roles. For example, in "Femininity," he argues that a primary penis envy is transformed into a wish for a baby in "normal" femininity. Freud compares this wish for a baby with a similar wish that the girl exhibits during the phallic stage and concludes, "But that play [with dolls] was not in fact an expression of her femininity; it serves as an identification with her mother with the intention of substituting activity for passivity" (113). Prior to penis envy, the nonbiological and nonsociological bedrock of femininity, identification with the mother is not sufficient to constitute femininity because femininity is not an identification. Freud therefore resisted a theory of sexual difference as identification, which would have reduced psychoanalysis to a sociology—the positions of the unconscious becoming little more than the functionalist result of an ill-conceived notion of identification.

This argument remains undeveloped in Freud's work, largely because he defined castration as lacking a penis. But Lacan's later work moves beyond a definition of sexual difference as anatomical or empirical. Sexual difference, for Lacan, only makes sense in relation to the structures of representation, subjection to which bars the subject from the pleasures of being or *jouissance*. In the standard account, Lacan articulates sexual difference in relation to a master signifier, the phallus. Because the penis bears a metonymic relation to the phallus, men have the ability to represent the phallus and their relation to it, and hence to assume (even parodically) phallic privilege. Men lack the phallus, but have the ability to represent that lack. Women, on the other hand, lack the ability to represent the phallus: paradoxically, they lack lack, which results in their overwhelming proximity to *jouissance*, as well as an inability to know anything about it. As Lacan said of St. Theresa, she's coming but she doesn't know it.

This account has empowered a certain strand of feminist theory in the United States, while also occasioning much critique for Lacan's phallo-logocentrism. What is interesting is how dependent it is on a single article, Lacan's "The Meaning of the Phallus," first published in

1958. Lacan's later and more interesting work on female sexuality, the seminar *Encore* (1972–73), has been largely ignored, except for the scandalous remarks on St. Theresa. What makes *Encore* significant is its consideration of sexual difference in terms of the formation of collectives (or the impossibility thereof). *Encore* features Lacan's quasi-logical efforts to "formalize" sexual difference, to describe masculinity and femininity in terms of logical classes, and hence to delimit one's "belonging-ness" to those classes. Lacan refuses the standard discourse of possessive individualism, which ascribes predicates or properties (i.e., identifications, traits, or dispositions) to the individual subject (Copjec, 224). Sexual difference is no longer a property of being but a mode of failing to be; and efforts to give this position a content (e.g., the various determinations of gender) operate in the imaginary register. Whereas much feminist thought (particularly difference or cultural feminism) has been captivated by gendered content, Lacan's formalization forces us to look at the types of relations that structure collectives based on sexual difference. Moreover, it suggests a profound asymmetry in terms of how each class is formed.

Masculine	Feminine
(1) $\exists x \overline{\Phi x}$	(3) $\overline{\exists x} \overline{\Phi x}$
(2) $\forall x \Phi x$	(4) $\overline{\forall x} \Phi x$

What these formulas propose is the following:

1. There is at least one x that is not subject to the phallic function (i.e., castration).
2. All x's are subject to the phallic function.
3. There is not one x that is not subject to the phallic function.
4. Not all x's are (not every x is) subject to the phallic function. (Lacan 1998, 78)

Lacan's formulas of sexuation take the class of masculine beings as the prototypical symbolic class. This class recalls Freud's myth of the primal horde in *Totem and Taboo*, and anticipates Pateman's reading of that myth as foundational to democracy: the class of men (beings subject to the phallic function) can be defined in its totality only in

relation to an entity (the primal father, the being not subject to the phallic function) excluded from the set. The class of masculine beings is universal, since all beings in this group are subject to castration, but for the class to be closed, it has to evoke a being that by definition transgresses its limit. In other words, the collective must be defined by what it is not. In this sense, it should be clear that the relation between the sons and the primal father cannot be one of identification, at least in its imaginary sense, since the very definition of that class precludes their sharing any properties with the primal father (his access to enjoyment, women, or being). Rather, the primal father, or the negation of his position, confirms a universal class based in solidarity: men are universal precisely insofar as they identify (symbolically) by virtue of their failure to identify (imaginarily) with the primal father. Though they cannot become him, their resemblance to each other emerges from his interdicted position. As a consequence, the members of this class are members without qualities: they belong to the class not because of any shared properties, but because they have been barred a common substance embodied in the primal father; paradoxically, the failure to be constitutes the universal group. The formulas on the left side imply the existence, in logical form, of man as an abstract universal: "Everything that has been said about being assumes that one can refuse the predicate and say 'man is,' for example, without saying what" (Lacan 1998, 11). "Man" exists because the masculine side constitutes a group whose members are demarcated and represented, though only insofar as there is a being that eludes the phallic function. Hence the collusion of humanism with the representation of the citizen as a man without qualities, a statistical abstraction capable of being enumerated.

Lacan's formalization of femininity anticipates Pateman's argument that women have been foreclosed from the democratic field, insofar as the type of class articulated by these formulas is based not on the symbolic, or the imaginary, but the Real. Femininity describes a class that is not really a class at all, since the relation to the phallic function remains indeterminate. Whereas the members of the class defined by masculinity can be counted, the members of the class defined by femininity cannot. Their individual relation to the phallic function is unclear, but hardly nonexistent. Proposition 4 suggests that there may be exceptions to the phallic function, an assertion that

proposition 3 denies. The indeterminacy of proposition 4 is bolstered by the double negative of proposition 3, which denies the existence of an external limit to the group, such as the primal father. Women speak (i.e., are subject to the phallic function), but do not assume the existence of a class, since there is no exception, specific to this side, which sutures or totalizes the group. There is no primal matriarch that would legitimate women's identifications with other women. In other words, no concept of the woman is possible (unlike a concept of man), since "woman" cannot be universalized as "man" can be. For this reason, Lacan referred to "Woman" as "not all" (1998, 72–73).

Though this might apparently relegate women to the outside of the symbolic, of culture, these formulas say nothing about individual women. This is not to say that individual women don't exist in the symbolic or that femininity occupies some sort of linguistic beyond. But it does suggest that when women get together *as women*, there is no symbolic identification that would underwrite their group formation: "strictly speaking there is no symbolization of woman's sex as such" (Lacan 1993, 176). The formulas therefore recall, in logical form, the problematic position of the little girl at the end of the Oedipus complex; as Catherine Millot has written, "For her [the little girl] there is no ideal feminine identification possible other than the phallic woman; but this is precisely a 'pre-Oedipal' identification" (300). The only identifications that could represent women as women are imaginary and mimetic. But these identifications not only create the illusory ideals of wholeness that can be so normative and demanding, they also create a collective subject that ignores or erases the many other differences constitutive of contemporary politics (Adams, 55–56). "The Woman doesn't exist": there is no transcendent term (like the primal father), no final cause, by which one can conclude that there is, or is not, some collective entity called "women." In other words, the symbolic identifications that would allow the constitution of women as a totality, such that a universal could represent the collective, are absent.

Women therefore constitute what Etienne Balibar has called a "paradoxical" class, defined as "a collection under a single name of subjects whom nothing binds to one another, except their always singular way of *being an exception*" (Balibar 1995, 190). The position of women within a modern social field is one of "interior exclusion": though located within a culture or community, women qua women

are not of it, nor do they have a culture or community of their own (Balibar 1994, 56). Because sexual difference has no positive content, it does not provide grounds for the types of identifications that Balibar sees as necessary to the construction of collective identity; a relation to real positive institutions (the banality of patriarchy aside) that would give form and closure to a group of women is lacking. Women (though not individual women) are therefore structurally excluded from a democratic field that disavows its reliance upon the nation for its principle of closure. As Anne Phillips has written:

> The representation of women as women potentially founders on both the difficulties of defining the shared interests of women and the difficulties of establishing mechanisms through which these interests are voiced.... The representation of women as women does not fit within the framework of representative democracy, and while this may count as ammunition in the battle for democracy of a different kind, it should not be glossed over in discussions of change. (90–91)

In other words, the woman/women relation is an aporia within modern thought, and we cannot look forward to a resolution—within this historical moment—in which an individual woman will be able to speak for all women.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to investigate what impact a psychoanalytic understanding of sexual difference would have on the "distinctive feminist agency" that McClintock accused Fanon of ignoring. My suspicion is that rather than rendering feminism impossible (as Tania Modleski and others fear), feminism only becomes impossible insofar as democratic politics takes the nation-trope as its implicit (and not usually recognized) ground. Women and the nation remain incommensurate entities. As a consequence, within contemporary political discourse, feminist movements must either pursue their own separatist autonomy (i.e., adopt the discourse of nationalism) or seek integration into a liberal democratic paradigm.

THE NONSUBSTANTIAL COMMUNITY

Beyond its implications for feminist theory and politics, psychoanalytic theory offers important challenges to the contemporary discourses that

remain bound to substantialist notions of community, underwritten by the nation-trope and culture. As the group rights debate makes evident, both liberalism and multiculturalism are incapable of representing femininity, in large part because of the nature of the groups they envision. Despite a diversity of liberal and multiculturalist positions on the "woman question," liberalism and multiculturalism have one thing in common: the community of women (feminist or not) is measured against a substantive cultural or national community. For example, Will Kymlicka ignores feminism in his discussion of multiculturalism, since a community of women is lacking when compared to those groups with distinctive cultures. On the other hand, Charles Taylor and Iris Young take feminism as seriously as multiculturalism as a basis for group rights, since in their analyses both gender-based and culture-based groups have positive existence. In fact, Taylor assimilates feminism to multiculturalism, suggesting that women have their own distinctive culture. This habit of thought is even evident in Susan Moller Okin's controversial rejection of multiculturalism, which distinguishes between women and the cultures that it would seek to protect. According to Okin's argument, multiculturalism is not good for women, since women are somehow external to a generic culture identified with men. In opposition to a total subsumption into one's culture (associated with non-Western men), Okin argues that liberal voluntarist free choice is most likely to nourish feminism. The poverty of Okin's notion of subjectivity and its relation to culture needs no rehearsal here; what I would like to note is how her ethnocentric faith in the voluntarist liberal self is bolstered by her identification of women as a positive entity.[7]

In fact, endowing women with positive existence may constitute one of the ruses of a liberalism under attack. Lacan's denial of the Woman's existence demonstrates that liberalism and multiculturalism, despite their apparent opposition, are not so different after all. In order to explore (briefly) this possibility, I turn to Chantal Mouffe's critique of liberalism in her recent book, *The Democratic Paradox*. Mouffe argues that contemporary democratic liberal societies are structured by two antagonistic logics: a liberal logic (characterized by a universalist drive) that respects individual rights and liberties, and a democratic logic that emphasizes "equality, identity between governing and governed and popular sovereignty" (3). For Mouffe, the

two logics are fundamentally incompatible, but she rejects efforts both theoretical and political (such as the Clinton-Blair "third way") to surmount their incompatibility. The role of these two logics in structuring contemporary democracies is historically contingent, but they have produced a form of political life that Mouffe continues to find valuable and important to defend against enemies both internal and external. Above all, Mouffe argues that the relation between the two constitutes the political (as distinct from politics): the political describes a boundary-destroying revolutionary experience of democracy, whereas politics describes the attenuation of democratic energies in the institutionalization of politics-as-usual (see Wolin).

In this text, Mouffe is explicitly concerned neither with nationalism nor multiculturalism, but her analysis of the democratic paradox is useful, I think, to understanding the conservative role that both discourses have played in the preservation of a certain substantialist account of democratic community. Arguing against the resurgence of a universalist cosmopolitanism, Mouffe maps Derrida's notion of a "constitutive outside" onto Carl Schmitt's assertion of the importance of the friend-enemy antagonism to political thought and action (Schmitt, 28, 67; Mouffe, 12–13, 36–59). Because democracy requires the constitution of a people, or a specific group of citizens, Mouffe argues that democracy always requires relations of inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion and exclusion, or friend and enemy, are necessary for properly political relations, or relations characterized by what Mouffe (and Ernesto Laclau) have called antagonism. Cosmopolitan efforts to make humanity a fundamental political category (as in Martha Nussbaum's efforts to make a cosmopolitan sensibility the centerpiece of civic education) are misguided amplifications of the universalist tendencies already evident in liberalism. They are misguided since, for both Schmitt and Mouffe, "humanity" is not a political concept because it has no constitutive outside (or enemy). For Mouffe as for Schmitt, liberalism's universalism is an effort to eschew antagonism, and hence politics.

Though Schmitt did not limit the exercise of the political to the state (20–22), in the modern world nation-states are the primary entities organized according to the friend-enemy distinction. The nation, as Ernest Gellner argued, remains one of the primary modern means of externally delimiting the people in the demos. Though it is precisely

this unity of the people that multiculturalism has challenged, nevertheless the challenge (when issued on behalf of culture or the nation-trope) remains on a liberal terrain. Charles Taylor has attempted to distinguish between a procedural liberalism, one that insists on a uniform application of rules and distribution of rights and eschews defining for its citizens the "good life," and a "cultural" liberalism (my term), one that recognizes liberalism to be constitutive of a specific way of life and therefore with specific content. Though Taylor prefers the latter (calling it his "fighting creed" [62]) and sees it as more in accord with multiculturalist goals, in some fundamental ways neither is opposed to multiculturalism. For whether it legislates competing goods or mandates the good, contemporary liberalism gives concrete form to the good. In its efforts to eradicate political antagonism and conflict from the social space, liberalism imposes formal homogeneity on different collectives, transforming them into competitors (in an economic sense) for the distribution of social and economic goods. In contemporary societies, liberalism mediates between different interest groups, all of which are reduced to the same form, ruled by what Wendy Brown has called "the conversion of attribute into identity" (1995, 21). Though the contents of the interest groups change, the groups, in order to occupy the same field, are similarly structured via the discourses of possessive individualism and recognition, as underwritten by culture or the nation-trope. In Brown's brilliant analysis, identities become structured around "wounded attachments" to a lost substance, a culture that requires recognition. Hence the appeal—as well as the homogenizing dangers—of what Janet Halley has called "like race" arguments.

Mouffe's adoption of Schmitt's challenge to liberalism suggests that we need to rethink the possibility of political communities that would not have some substance (such as culture) as their essence. Mouffe departs from Schmitt's prognostications for liberalism's doom by arguing that Schmitt overly emphasized the unity, and hence identity, of the people. Mouffe, on the other hand, argues that though the "people" requires a limit to be constituted as a people, and hence as a political entity, the limit need not be exterior to the people, as Schmitt argued (56). In other words, it may be possible to conceptualize the limit as internal to the people. Mouffe raises the possibility of a

community in which antagonism is immanent, as opposed to externally directed toward an enemy. This possibility has both a concrete and a utopian dimension. In terms of the former, it means the refusal of a social imaginary that itself disguises political conflict via such oxymorons as "responsible development" or "compassionate conservatism." Mouffe therefore seeks to revitalize our political discourse and institutions by reminding us that politics is about struggle and choice, something that Western democracies increasingly forget.

But Mouffe's critique of liberalism also has a utopian dimension: a community in which antagonism is immanent as opposed to external would be a community without foundation, essence, or substance. In the absence of a common substance (such as culture) to provide the glue for what Jean-Luc Nancy has called "being-in-common," it would be possible to imagine new forms of community, consubstantial with a form of commonality based on a lack of identity rather than shared identity (Nancy, xxxviii–xxxix, 25); or what Giorgio Agamben has called a "whatever singularity," a singularity defined not by properties or the absence of properties, but by virtue of belonging itself (84). Though neither Nancy nor Agamben consider how sexual difference might structure such a community, Lacan's formulas suggest how fraternity has given substantive form to present liberal communities; as a consequence, a community that attempts to implement the paradoxical logic of femininity might offer a way out of the cul-de-sac of both liberalism and multiculturalism. As R. Radhakrishnan has argued, contemporary feminism should reject both nationalism and liberalism, so as to develop an as yet unarticulated (and perhaps inarticulable within a politics that takes the nation as its norm) "relational-integrative politics" that eschews totalization (78–79). In other words, a feminist politics that does not attempt to speak for some collective entity called "women" might proffer a new, as yet unarticulated, democratic politics, one that surmounts the temptations of imaginary and voluntarist identifications. Lacan's formalization of sexual difference suggests both the exclusions occasioned by the modern formation and delimitation of the people, and the utopian possibility of new forms of community that would refuse the boundaries of the people without falling into pre- or postpolitical cosmopolitan humanism.

Notes

1. Sander Gilman and Daniel Boyarin have suggested that many of the characteristics assigned to Jews by anti-Semitic discourse and medical science were displaced onto the figure of the woman within psychoanalytic theory (Gilman, 83; Boyarin 1995).

2. For example, Kaja Silverman offers a reading of sexual difference as it is articulated with racial and class differences, in which the family is seen as its theater. In a narrative of subjectivity, sexual difference comes first: though it might not retain ontological priority, it certainly has temporal priority (Silverman 1992, 30). But as Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks has pointed out, this theoretical move depends on a highly problematic division between family and society (137–38) that assumes, in a sense, that the family is not racialized or a site for the acquisition of racial identity.

3. Appiah has revised his views in "Race, Culture, Identity: Misunderstood Connections."

4. Though my essay takes another direction, I should here like to note that Michaels errs in reading the involuntary ascription as the result of kinship relations that can only be read as natural or biological. Kinship relations are not themselves biological or natural; rather, kinship intervenes in nature and therefore converts nature into a real that eludes the scientific and symbolic discourses that would presume to represent that real as something knowable (Shepherdson, 55–62). As an example, we might look to Hortense J. Spillers's description of the trade in African slaves; though she describes a specific sociohistorical case of racial construction, I believe that her example can serve as an allegory for the construction of intraracial relations. According to Spillers, the practice of slavery (and the races to which it gave rise) was predicated on the erasure of kinship relations that were not natural, but that had to be actively cultivated in order to persist. For slaves, kinship relations could be (and were) disrupted at any time by property relations. Spillers then locates racial awareness in a supplemental relation to destroyed kinship relations: "the captive person developed, time and again, certain ethical and sentimental features that tied her and him *across* the landscape to others, often sold from hand to hand, of the same and different blood in a common fabric of memory and inspiration" (1987, 75). In other words, racist intervention into traditional kinship structure/symbolic brings race as a horizontal community into being; actual kinship relations are dispersed, but are supplemented by "fictive" kinship relations.

5. Many other feminist scholars have discussed how Fanon's treatment of racialization is inextricably bound up with the problem of sexual difference; for trenchant critiques, see Doane; Lola Young; Bergner; McClintock, 352–89; Chow, 55–73. T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting argues that the majority of these criticisms are misplaced and that Fanon's work should be taken more seriously by contemporary feminisms. I have chosen to consider race alone, so as to explore the "genealogies of particular modalities of subjection" that Wendy Brown has called for (1997, 94). Since so many efforts to explore race, sexual difference, class, etc., as

interarticulated categories have depended on an understanding of subject positions as analogous, I think it important to isolate (provisionally, of course) the processes by which these modes of subjection are secured.

6. A recent essay by Sylvia Walby (the only essay devoted to women and gender that merited inclusion in an anthology on "mapping the nation") argues that women and the nation are incompatible because of women's suspicion of and overt hostility to the militarism that she associates with the national will.

7. As several contributors to the anthology note (Honig, Al-Hibri, Tamir, Parekh, and Bhabha), Okin's argument is deeply problematic insofar as it posits a fantasy "we" (defined as liberals) who must deal with a "them," who are by definition a problem. Okin thus ignores the considerable heterogeneity of "we" and of "them," as well as the considerable inequities perpetuated in the name of liberalism (whose victims would include both "us" and "them"). In other words, absent from Okin's argument is a realization of the economic and political power that supports liberalism and that is operative in the very framing of the question.

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