Critical Exchange

Bodies in Politics

Feminist reconstructions, critical race interventions: The presence of the past and the future of political theories of race and gender

'If the present looks like the past, what does the future look like?' (Walker, 1983). Alice Walker's question introduces and frames a meditation on the gradations of color that have separated Black women from each other. The intimacy of Walker's essay, which begins as a letter to an unnamed friend, and its focus on internal divisions among African American women in the early 1980s could suggest that it has little to say about the contemporary condition of a predominantly white and, to a lesser degree, male academic discipline like political theory – a discipline, furthermore, that has been notably unresponsive to the concerns of women of color, in general, and Black women, more specifically. Without presuming that Walker aims to speak to political theorists, this critical exchange begins from the premise that her question and the essay it inaugurates can instigate a confrontation with the unowned intimacies that haunt the practice of political theory and indicate new avenues for inquiry. Walker's query troubles the narratives of progress and presumptions of theoretical innocence that shape expectations about what we write and how we teach political concepts, especially democratic concepts, in an era that has been heralded, disturbingly, as both post-racial and post-feminist.

Against this backdrop, Falguni Sheth, Heath Fogg Davis, Shatema Threadcraft and Jemima Repo take up the challenge of considering the aims and status of political theories of race/gender and the relationship between 'feminist' and 'critical race' thinking. Before turning to their individual contributions, I would like to draw out four themes from Walker's piece that appear, in different guises, in the contributions collected here. First, and most obviously, Walker's title puts the idea of time into question. It both unsettles the teleologies that often undergird narrations of the civil rights and women's movements in the United States and presses readers to consider what kinds of revised temporality might give rise to

more critical and visionary work in political theory. Second, by grounding general claims on behalf of 'women' in the experiences of those women to whom the promises of membership in the polity cannot be take for granted, Walker upends conventional assumptions about the particular and the universal and raises fertile questions about what it means to think theoretically about political subjectivity. Third, Walker traces the destructive and productive effects of racial and gender power that impede political solidarities and substitute an integrative ideal of whiteness for more transformative conceptions of freedom. Fourth and finally, Walker's exploration of the African American literary canon confronts political theorists with questions about our own practices of canonization.

How does the present look like the past and what does that mean for the future? The present from within which Walker writes is that of the post-civil rights era in the United States, a time when the promise of the Black freedom struggle and of the liberation movements inspired by civil rights activism appeared, increasingly, under threat. In Walker's (1983) words, 'all the things hoped gone forever' appeared to be "back with the wind" (p. 290). Noting how 'colonialism, sexism and racism' condition Black women's possibilities (p. 291), Walker's essay focuses on intraracial practices through which lighter-skinned Black women erected and policed boundaries between themselves and 'Black Black women'. Academic feminists, particularly white ones, must surely tread carefully in developing an argument about our own present from Walker's reflection. Nonetheless, Walker models an approach to time that illuminates the difficulties of opposing oppressive institutions and practices in what Chandra Mohanty (2013) calls the 'neoliberal "post-everything" US academic and political culture' (p. 968). By identifying those features of racism and sexism – and traditions of resistance to both – that outlived the abolition of slavery and Jim Crow, Walker calls into question the power of the 'post-'. Her point is not that nothing has changed but that change is not to be confused with emancipation. When our students can recite on cue that 'race is a social construct', and proclaim that feminist politics is either capacious enough to capture all perspectives or so narrow that it can never go beyond articulating the demands of bygone women who were, unhappily, white-heterosexual-middleclass, Walker's question reverberates anew. 'Posterizing', Paul Taylor (2014) remarks, 'is all at once a gesture of repudiation, of indebtedness, of skepticism, and of openness – done with an eye toward the inexorability of change over time' (p. 16). Political theorists have an obligation to unpack that gesture, to examine its validity against the features of the present, and to raise questions about *which* problems and *whose* concerns we are supposed to have been laid to rest. To that end, Repo's essay in this exchange confronts the race/gender dynamics of 'posterizing' in a Europe that regards itself as 'multicultural and postfeminist'. At the same time, in the United States, political theorists would do well to heed Claudia Rankine's remarkable exploration of what it means to be an American 'citizen', which crystallizes the degree to

which disownership of the past is the price of membership for anyone whose race/ gender renders her suspect. 'Yes', Rankine (2014) writes, 'and this is how you are a citizen: Come on. Let it go. Move on' (p. 151). Meanwhile, anti-Black and gender-based violence and domination flourish.

'If the Present Looks Like the Past' also poses vital questions about political subjectivity in Walker's time and ours. 'To me', Walker (1983) writes, 'the Black Black woman is our essential mother' (p. 291). In the context of the anti-essentialist academic culture of the twenty-first century, Walker's language may be off-putting; yet her essay does not enshrine a simplistic identity politics so much as probe the degree to which Black Black women's history reveals the collaborative operations of white supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism and trouble the presumption that whiteness is a precondition for full human subjectivity. It traces what Kimberlé Crenshaw (2012) calls 'the discursive and political dynamics that leave the social vulnerabilities of marginalized women both unnamed and unnamable' (p. 1424). Like Sheth's essay, it calls into question 'an approach of inducing vulnerability while promoting a certain narrative that blames the very subject who is being disenfranchised'. Walker thus provokes us to consider both the degree to which the experiences and interests of the politically vulnerable have been elided in work undertaken under the banner of feminist and critical race thinking and also why it is so vital that the lives of Black Black women be reckoned with as sources of general claims and universalizable truths. The urgency of this work, ironically, has intensified as the broad influence of intersectional scholarship has incurred new pressures to ' "get beyond" Black women's experiences' (Carbado *et al.*, 2013, p. 310). As Davis demonstrates, it is possible both to take these experiences as a generative starting point and to think creatively about the broad range of what he calls 'race-sex identities'. Indeed, in different ways, all of the essays in this exchange pursue lines of thought that ask: *who* can be seen (by the state, by other citizens, by political theorists), *whether* visibility is a source of protection or violation, and *how* attending to the specific experiences of disregarded political subjects enables the development of general claims of theory.

Walker's essay also invites reflection on the workings of racial patriarchal power in postracial and postfeminist times. When she recalls 'being literally pushed off the sidewalk outside the Dom in New York, by young Black men who wanted to speak to the white women I was with' (Walker, 1983, p. 293), she both captures a facet of what Cathy Cohen calls 'secondary marginalization (1999),' and intimates the invisibility of her injury to both the Black men and white women involved. Walker's essay reveals the microlevel interactions and relations through which norms of human worth, beauty and virtue circulate. She limns the deadly effects of patriarchal prerogative in ways that complement Threadcraft's attention to the mortal toll of a state that does not acknowledge the harm it visits on Black women. And Walker's analysis of the intergenerational significance of colorism resonates with Repo's account of the generative work of biopolitics and eugenic desire. 'If the Present Looks Like the Past' not only tracks the violent and creative

workings of power but also alerts readers to the illusory pursuit of freedom through whiteness (Walker, 1983, p. 291). Implicitly, Walker contrasts the escapism of such an ideal with the forms of escape enacted by fugitive slaves and their descendants (see Roberts, 2015), and she invites readers to examine our own conceptions of freedom, to consider whether we foreground self-determination of the kind that challenges the status quo or set our sights on the promise of inclusion in a polity that has been disastrous for women of color.

Looking for resources to understand Black women's predicament at the turn of the twenty-first century, Walker turns to nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century African American literature and thereby discloses both the canon's value as a source of cultural and political knowledge and its function as an avenue for the reproduction of oppressive norms. Walker (1983) warns that, for African American women, 'our models in literature and life have been, for the most part, devastating' (p. 311). Regarding the canonical texts of political theory in light of Walker's insight elicits further a disturbing consideration: How should political theorists approach a canon in which women of color have largely not existed at all? We have an important model in Charles Mills's (1998) effort to envision scholarship on race that would build on feminist critiques of the sexism of canonical texts and figures, expand the canon through the recovery of unacknowledged and 'oppositional' women's texts, and transform its key concepts and questions (pp. 120–126). In view of the ongoing disciplinary (in the sense of defining the field and in the sense of constituting us, subjectively, as political theorists) power of canonical texts and organizing concepts, much work remains to be done to explore and criticize dominant figurations of race and gender.[1] Where the essays in this critical exchange reflect indirectly on thinkers who might dominate survey courses and comprehensive exam reading lists, they heed Mills's injunction to listen for voices that have been suppressed in mainstream accounts of what counts as political theory. Accordingly, Sheth's 'portfolio approach' to theorizing political vulnerability and Davis's excavation of the lost promise of early critical race feminism suggest how new canon formations are constituted. Threadcraft's interrogation of the meaning of sovereignty in the lives of Black women and Repo's creative reworking of Foucauldian biopolitics, furthermore, exemplify the kind of conceptual transformation Mills envisions. Like Walker, none of these authors presumes that the proliferation of more richly self-reflexive and multimensional canon readings will put to rest old questions about how studies of race/gender and the work of scholars of color are valued in the academic cultures and structures we inhabit today.

Sheth's contribution to this exchange reflects directly on Walker's title and embraces its provocation to think anew. Calling attention to 'a deceptive bifurcation' between feminist and critical race scholarship within political theory, Sheth considers whether feminist thinkers perpetuate the practice of political theory as a white-male project, and she discloses the kinds of invisibility through which women of color are rendered, simultaneously, exposed to political violence and un-seeable in prevailing

theoretical frames. Sheth credits Mills's *Racial Contract* and early work by Howard McGary and Bill Lawson with providing an opening for political theoretical and philosophical studies of race; but her essay also troubles some of the optimism of Mills's (1998) proposal, in the late 1990s, to build on the success of 'the revisionary feminist cartography – the redrawing of the map of the political so that what had formerly been taken to be natural, personal, unchanging becomes the object of political discourse' (p. 121). Sheth's observations offer eloquent testimony to the fraught character of any success and discredit narrow definitions of what counts as 'feminist'. When she inquires into 'the deceptive ontological stability required for an intersectional analysis', for example, Sheth refuses the gestures of dismissal through which intersectional scholarship has been attacked; rather, she advances an account of 'interstitiality' that enhances intersectional thinking by taking seriously the 'fluidity' of identity categories. In order to reckon with forms of vulnerability that are not contained by Black–White categorizations or national boundaries and that are often institutionalized through the criminalization of a wide range of raced and gendered populations, Sheth encourages us to adopt a 'portfolio approach to feminist scholarship'. She points us, forcefully, toward a future in which the terms of engagement have been thoroughly destabilized and transformed.[2]

If Sheth exposes divisions that hobble theorizing in the present, Davis focuses more directly on those elements of the past that have been eclipsed by developments in progressive scholarship to the detriment of race/gender justice. He advances a 'modest plea for reviving the legal "reformist dimensions of intersectionality" that, if taken fully to heart, is not modest at all. Looking to the emergence of critical race feminist theory (CRFT), Davis discerns a twofold approach that both used and criticized liberal legal norms to attack race/gender oppression. On the one hand, CRFT rightly rejected the ways that antidiscrimination law dehistoricizes and individualizes deep structural harms. On the other hand, Davis shows how discarding the promise of legal reform altogether – as the radical strand of CRFT enjoined – disables ongoing fights against racism, sexism and their interactions. Instead, Davis builds on Iris Marion Young's conception of 'pragmatic theory' to envision new interpretations of the law that can challenge the enforcement of binary sex-classification policies. In this regard, he notes, theorists should not be too quick to abandon the diagnostic and critical power of liberal legalism; and, at the same time, he reckons with the limitations of legal fixes for oppressive relations of power and draws upon CRFT's narrative practices as a resource for alternative ways of understanding and deconstructing those relations in our everyday lives. Davis's arguments open the door to further debate beyond the context of this exchange. For where he concludes by 'shunning pessimism' and embracing liberal reform, I suspect that Sheth, Threadcraft and Repo may press us, in different ways, to ask whether race/gender domination and violence are constitutive to liberalism to a degree that defies redemption.

Threadcraft's and Repo's essays raise a cluster of pointed questions about how to think theoretically about the raced and gendered character of power in the early twenty-first century. Threadcraft begins by noting the double-vulnerability of African

American citizens: they are exposed both to violent effects of what Lisa Miller identifies as 'racialized state failure' and to the successful exercise of sovereignty in the form of what Achille Mbembe calls 'necropolitics'. The specific threat of state failure is doubled again for Black women, Threadcraft argues, insofar as their deaths go unremarked, and their lives are unprotected. In other words, 'the distance between the citizen and the black body' (Iton, 2008, p. 194) can be measured not only through the unpunished police killings of Michael Brown and other unarmed Black men and boys, but also through the unremarked forms of official, random, and intimate violence that affect Black women at rates that dwarf those experienced by white women. Furthermore, Threadcraft points out how attention to race/gender illuminates the hand of state power in creating what she calls 'a kind of death world', an environment where the decline of public investment in predominantly Black communities and the continuing force of gendered conceptions of responsibility collaborate in Black women's slow death.

Where Threadcraft enlarges our understanding of state sovereignty and its deadly consequences, Repo alerts us to the life-*generating* dimensions of politics. Drawing on Foucault's lectures in *Society Must Be Defended*, Repo contends that European political theories of biopolitics have over-emphasized the exclusionary and death-administering dimensions of state power (the 'real stuff' of political scholarship), and, as a consequence, they have misunderstood the degree to which rising right-wing xenophobia and racism are entangled with 'the reproductive and productive politics of population management, at the heart of which is sexuality'. Repo models an alternative theoretical approach through a close reading of Anders Behring Breivik's *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, a manifesto he penned before slaughtering 77 people in Norway in 2011. Without suggesting that Breivik is representative of right-wing thinking in general, Repo uncovers the interplay of gender, sexuality and race in his *Declaration* to elucidate the role of disciplinary power in his effort to revive a patriarchal and 'European' Europe. If feminist political theorists aim to oppose narratives about the decline of European populations and the rise of austerity programs, she argues, such a biopolitical approach offers an account of how race and sex interact in the arguments of *both* far-right grassroots groups *and* establishment parties. In the context of this exchange, Repo's essay invites new comparative projects that consider how the distinctive histories of slavery and colonial conquest that have constituted the liberal polities of Europe and North America inflect the political vocabularies and theoretical concepts we share.

'Perhaps we *can* learn something, even from the discouraging models of earlier centuries and our own time' (Walker, 1983, p. 311, emphasis in the original). The 'we' to whom Walker's essay appeals is not the women and men who define ourselves as political theorists, and *this* 'we' would do well to take care not to enfold Walker's words into academic projects that she might not want to own. As the essays in this critical exchange so elegantly demonstrate, however, it is possible to take up Walker's charge without displacing her concerns or inserting ourselves into the original invitation. As scholars who are differently situated in relation to those 'discouraging models' and

who share the impetus both to learn from them and undo their destructive work, Sheth, Davis, Threadcraft and Repo call attention to the ways in which categories of race and gender structure political possibility despite, and in some ways because of, the 'posterizing' moves that tell us it is time to get over bygone identities and injustices. And while Walker's piece ends on a utopian note that may be more hopeful than the contributions to this critical exchange, she shares with Sheth, Davis, Threadcraft and Repo a commitment to analyzing the presence of the past in today's violence and violations and the aspiration to alchemize them into something like emancipation.

Notes

1 For an account of the dangers of simply doing away with or discrediting canon-building projects at the moment when they begin to include the contributions of non-white, non-Western and women writers, see Morrison (1989).
2 I borrow this phrasing from Cohen (2005).

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Lawrie Balfour
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22904, USA
klb3q@virginia.edu

If the present looks like the past, what does the future look like? Feminist and critical race scholarship in political theory

I agree with and appreciate the general impetus behind the questions that Lawrie Balfour and Lori Marso ask: we must attend to the importance of doing feminist scholarship that consistently and keenly integrates questions and analyses of race.[1] As well, it seems on the face of it correct to say that much more attention seems to have been paid to the significance and impact of race in the current moment – a shift that is certainly reflected much more prominently in political theory currently. For example, two decades ago, it was much more rare to find articles that challenged certain premises of key texts in the history of political thought, often having to do with race and political exclusion. By contrast, feminist interpretations of those same key texts – Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, to name a few – had been in existence for decades before the publication of key racial critiques of modern political theory (Butler, 1978; Okin, 1979; Shanley, 1979; Lange, 1981; Pateman, 1988, to name a few examples). Charles Mills, and Howard McGary and Bill E. Lawson, notably published some of the earlier political philosophical texts addressing issues of race and attendant philosophical concepts in modern liberal and social contract theory.[2] *The Racial Contract*, among other texts, facilitated the ability to do more than analyze some of the explicit concepts of modern political theory; it enabled a number of political theorists, including myself, to explore the implications of race within various political and legal systems.

I'm not sure that feminist scholarship by white or Black feminists, or other feminists of color, is falling by the wayside.[3] I see less of a retreat of feminist scholarship in political theory alongside the emergence of race scholarship than a continued separation of the two subfields. This may be, in part, because of a deceptive bifurcation between the two. Must one necessarily commit to identifying either as a feminist theorist or a race theorist? Must one prioritize being a feminist political theorist over and above being a race theorist, or *vice versa*? Such dichotomies seem to be the result of a troubling implication that a feminist lens necessarily includes attention to women of all backgrounds, while a race theory lens – unless it is specifically qualified as 'feminist' – does not necessarily include a focus on women's issues. Anecdotally speaking, it seems that the term 'race theorist' (without the qualifier 'feminist') is most often ascribed to male scholars.[4] By extension, scholars who discuss issues pertaining to Black women or women of color are often identified as 'Black' or 'postcolonial' or 'transnational' feminist theorists, respectively.[5]

The problem of self-identification reveals a set of tensions that seem to be questions of conceptualization, method and approach. For example, intersectional

feminism, as emerging through the voices or writings of Black feminists throughout history, from Sojourner Truth to Anna Julia Cooper to Kimberlé Crenshaw, illustrate the sharp focus by which race is intrinsically affected by factors such as gender, and class. Intersectional frameworks are enormously useful when considering issues or concerns that emerge for subjects with clearly delineated or 'ontologically stable' racial identities, at least for analytical purposes.[6] Racial identities, under intersectionality, are in such sharp focus – correctly so, since this is the purpose of several versions of intersectionality – so as to bring into relief racial identities that have been obscured by overly general analyses of race or gender separately.

But there is work that still needs to be done when thinking about race and gender together. There are other important questions to address, especially for political theorists, that explore the starting point of political identity, such as the sources of fluid, or 'ontologically unstable' racial identities, that is, of changing racial meanings over time, across, geographies, national borders, global migrations, even within supposedly clear racial groups. For example, analyses of Black or Latin@ subjectivity sometimes incorrectly assume a monolithic set of intraracial interests – obscuring political, social and ethical commitments that are often predicated on a range of factors.[7] These factors affect one's self-identification and location on a political terrain. To self-identify or be interpellated as Black and female does not necessarily reflect sufficient conclusive information regarding positions on range of other issues – whether immigration policy, healthcare policy on reproductive concerns, economic policies or sexuality, to name a few issues.

Moreover, outside of the Black–White racial discourse, it is unclear how other populations, such as (South/East/Southeast) Asians or 'Latinas' fit on an intersectional grid, precisely because of a deceptive ontological stability required for an intersectional analysis. This is another reason why the starting point of race, and factors that lead to changes in racial identifications over time, need to be examined. This is what I'm calling 'racial fluidity'.[8] But racial fluidity is not necessarily liberatory; it can be oppressive, marginalizing or increase vulnerability.[9] Racial fluidity, though, without augmenting analyses of power, runs the risk of being reduced to a simplistic multiculturalist discourse where identities don't have institutional, historical, political context. Such discussions, as crucial components of power, lead us to ask: Which identities are visible? Which identities matter? Which identities are (more deeply) embedded in vulnerable political or social contexts, and which are not (or less so)?

Why, for example, are discussions about the War on Terror centered on Muslim men, but pay virtually no attention to Muslim women – except through certain tropes of suffering at the hands of non-Western, non-white men: non-white women who wear the veil, or non-white women who are oppressed and exploited by the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Isis or Boko Haram? There is little popular or scholarly discussion of women who have been rendered as alleged terrorists by western governments in the War on Terror, such as Dr Aafiya Siddiqui,[10] or of women who were captured by US military forces and imprisoned in Abu Ghraib prisons (Harding, 2004). There is

slightly more discussion of women whose spouses, family members have been imprisoned by the United States in the name of the War on Terror (Brittain *et al.*, 2013), but fewer analyses of these topics, which presumably have more than just a little to do with (non-white) race and gender.[11]

As well, since the recent ramp-up of ISIS in Syria, there have been a seeming plethora of stories about the susceptibility of young (generally white) women and men in Europe and North America to online jihadi romances (for women) or invitations to become 'freedom fighters' or 'martyrs' (for men). The increasing visibility of these populations is striking, but what is also striking are the classic non-structural, Hollywoodish individualist narratives that govern these stories: alienated, lonely young women and men – from single-parent or missing-parent families, often in rural areas, without sufficient adult guidance, left to themselves to explore their questions and longings on social media. The inevitable conclusion to the story is that these men and women, though white, have succumbed to certain cultural, religious, racial fates: (Converted Muslim) terrorists or wives of (converted Muslim) terrorists. The shock value lies in the seeming 'fact' that white people have no good interest, reason or business to be seduced by extremist jihadis; after all, they are privileged to be white (and therein lies the lurid interest in this trope of stories)! Why would they choose to become Muslim/a terrorist/jihadi/anti-state?[12]

There is little questioning about the increasing focus on these white teenagers or adults which interrogates the implicit structures underlying the journalists' assumptions: why wouldn't it be as strange or tragic for South Asian or Somali or Middle Eastern Americans to be caught up in these online seductions? Can the alienation of the young white women and men (or even brown and Black women and men) be traced to a larger (legitimate) dissatisfaction with state-led framing on the War on Terror? Perhaps they, like a number of critical scholars who work on National Security/WoT/Transnational Race-Feminist issues (including myself) sense that the targets of North American and European governments are unjust, and are trying to find a way to dissent, to resist, to have their voices acknowledged? This is a more complicated framing of their ontological/racial fluidity than traditional individualist narratives, and requires a more *interstitial* analysis (more on this below).

There has been ample analysis of why the focus on the exploitation and oppression of women seems to have certain Orientalist or imperialist gazes. Take, for example, the trenchant analysis of Gayatri Spivak in her well-known essay, 'Can the Sub-Altern Speak?' (1985), which points to the eternal problem of white men saving brown women from brown men. Spivak's analyses echoes Edward Said when he points to the production of a certain set of cultural values, norms and intelligence that *de facto* define those who are located in the 'East', be it the Middle or Far East. As he says of Europe's relation to the 'Orient' during the post-Enlightenment:

> … [W]ithout examining Orientalism as a discourse, one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture

was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, scientifically, ideologically, and imaginatively … (Said, 1994, 25th anniversary edn, p. 4)

Said's insights are useful for us today not merely as historical, but also as methodological guideposts by which to understand the repetition of the discursive production of the foreign Other in ways that are still unwitting for certain contemporary feminist scholars. For example, the discursive production of Muslim women appears to stick to the tropes of 'the veil', religious oppression or patriarchy (or some combination of these).

Similarly, it is the production of certain 'representations' (in terms of recognizing, speaking for, as well as in terms of theorizing) – such as the integration of questions of race and gender – that requires a return to certain fundamental questions. If this sounds plausible, then it might also be helpful to consider new approaches by which to think about race and gender, on the Spivakian grounds that theory cannot be developed or applied devoid of context.

Let me suggest three angles to consider in order to integrate analyses of gender and race in the spirit of race as a fluid concept: Political Vulnerabilty; Political In/Visibility; A portfolio approach to feminist scholarship.

Political Vulnerability

If we take seriously the idea that gender and race are socially constructed categories, then it follows that political issues pertaining to race and gender within the context of political theory, at base, are questions about political and social vulnerability within an institutional context. For example, the systematicity of police violence against Black men, women, and teenagers raises the issue of what renders them exposed and unprotected, or even such 'magnets' for violence, to paraphrase James (2012). Blackness, in the context of police brutality, has been unveiled to some degree for the historical, political, material factors that combine to engender such violence against Black subjects in particular. However, institutional brutality is directed toward a range of populations of color in a range of contexts, for example, such as Muslim men and women at the hands of the US military, whether in Guantanamo Bay detention facilities, or Abu Ghraib, or Baghram; or through drones and chemical warfare, etc; Latin@ migrants in US border detention facilities, and so on.

As well, institutional persecution can be deployed against certain populations in more subtle ways, such as through employment, housing, health-care and reproductive services discrimination, rendering them unprotected, thus vulnerable.[13] As I have written about this elsewhere, in such contexts, it is crucial to see how race as a metaphysic of power (understood broadly, to encompass gender and sexuality as well) functions as a

technology (Sheth, 2009, Chapter 1), or as a tool of sovereign power, such that it is concealed in other discourses: such as the War on Drugs or Terror or Immigration, whereby subjects are constructed as unruly or monstrous, in Michel Foucault's words, and positioned so as to be deprived of various protections through an otherwise superficially neutral language.

Consider the example of the Alien Land Laws of 1913. As Keith Aoki argues, these were directed primarily against farmers of Japanese origin (though they had the added advantage of disfranchising other non-citizen Asians in California as well), and were an effective step toward completely disfranchising the Japanese in time for President Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, seemingly emerging in response to the attacks on Pearl Harbor five months earlier. Yet, as Aoki (1998) and Robinson (2001) point out, the US government had long been sparring with the government of Japan for decades prior. Both the Land Laws and the internment of migrants and US citizens of Japanese descent had a history in a long-standing wary American foreign policy, even as these policies were couched in the context of national security and protection of the US's own citizenry.

The material, historical and political context for racism and the racializing of residents of Japanese origins are, ironically yet consistently part of an approach of inducing vulnerability while promoting a certain narrative that blames the very subject who is being disfranchised. We see this time and time again, from the targeting of indigenous populations during the early settlement of the area now known as Connecticut and Massachusetts (precipitating, among other conflicts, the misnamed 'King Philip's War')(Archer, 2001, p. 24) as having been the unruly population that waged war upon the settlers, to the long-standing post-slavery criminalization of emancipated slaves through the Black Codes and Jim Crow laws (Davis, 2003), to the dispossessed Black populations in Ferguson, Baltimore and elsewhere, viewed as 'thugs' for lifting goods from corporate pharmacies while the same corporations exploit poor towns for their tax revenues are viewed neutrally (Lowry, 2015).

Similarly then, politically induced vulnerability is a core battle for feminist political theorists, regardless of whether it takes the form of gender-based exploitation or violence. Political vulnerability, at its heart, takes any number of forms. For feminist *theorists*, it is the multiplicity of forms of vulnerability that (should) form the basis of its concerns, approaches and struggles. I would suggest that gender, or sexuality, do not represent singular foundations of exploitation; rather they are but two vessels by which exploitation can be manifested – because these are manifestations of pendulums of power rather than of ontological hierarchies. If the above argument makes sense, then it would follow that by their very nature, race theorists *can be intrinsically* feminist theorists, if we understand the methods of feminist theory to dissect and analyze those pendulums, regardless of their specific gender(ed) manifestations. [14] More on this in a later section.

Political In/Visibility

What makes one group more susceptible to being defended or sympathetically discussed, while the plights of other populations come to light (and sympathetic interest) much more slowly? As Butler (2004) has suggested, some populations are valorized or lionized in terms of the value of their lives, whether through the state, media, and foreign policy, or some combination thereof. I hope that my consideration of Said and Spivak augments Butler's explanation about why certain populations are visible while others are not: In part, some populations are not visible because we accept uncritically the production of certain visible populations, whether due to the successful management abilities of sovereign power (as Foucault has named it: governmentality; (Foucault, 2007, sec. 25 January 1978) or due to the success of a free-market political economy in facilitating the collaboration and alliances between corporations, the state and the media, or due to the long, easily sedimented yet radioactive history (and political economy) of European and US imperialism, among other factors.

But the above framework is also intrinsically linked to 'uneven' (political) vulnerabilities, or perhaps better named as the 'uneven recognition' of (political) vulnerabilities. By political vulnerabilities, I want to suggest the other side of marginalization – namely a population's susceptibility to be exploited or persecuted through creation of social and political institutions (laws, policies, practices, norms) that have the effect of stripping them of political standing or respectful recognition. I want to suggest that political vulnerability is not only produced, but also contributes to the process of vilifying or demonizing populations, which in turn is an important factor in whether and how they are 'visible'.

There are many historical and contemporary examples of state-led production of political vulnerability. A well-known example is that of the NYPD's 'stop and frisk' policy, whose stated agenda is to make New York City 'safer', according to Police Commissioner William Bratton's endorsement of the 'broken windows' theory of law enforcement. Yet, Judge Shira Scheindlin, who issued an injunction against stop and frisk, points to it as a needless policy that harasses young Black and Latino men (Gambino, 2015). Such a policy has the effect of exposing these young men to criminal arrests, which along with a host of other factors contributed to increased incarceration rates, convictions, unemployment and so on. It is not difficult to see how Stop and Frisk is a legal policy that 'produces' vulnerability, which in turn significantly influenced, at least for a long time if not currently, how much of the United States, if not other nations, understood Black men, as part of a history of criminal, savage, dangerous men.

Other examples include the criminalization of poor and Black women through drug laws (Roberts, 1997), anti-prostitution ordinances and, of course, the regulation of the hijab. Each of these examples target women on the basis of class, race, culture and access to heterosexual, marital or dominant cultural protections. Such practices

have the effect of fetishizing certain visages of feminist or female subjects, while deepening the bifurcation between legal and 'illegal'/criminal/vilified female subjects.

There is still a widespread political invisibility that runs through contemporary times as well as through history – of certain populations that are recognized in their vulnerability, while others are not. Butler (2004) made this point eloquently when she compared the grievability of US lives that were lost in the 11 September 2001 attacks even as the Palestinians who were casualties of various Israeli attacks are barely recognized to have names, stories, histories.

The production of criminalization then is also the production of more (and by extension) less vulnerability – deepening the cultural, moral and legal disapprobation of one population at the expense of another. If this is correct, then it may also be the case that populations who are subject to criminalization or vilification work hard to remain invisible precisely because there are good reasons to avoid the attention of the state. If so, then at least for the our purposes here, namely as feminist political theorists or feminist theorists of race, such populations may still be difficult to locate, even if they attract the interest of feminist scholars.

A Portfolio Approach to Feminist Scholarship

Here I will only offer some general thoughts about how feminist political theorists can locate or 'see' these invisible populations. I have written about this elsewhere at length, on the topic of interstitiality. Interstitiality is an augmentation to the concept of intersectionality, whereby the racial meanings of a particular issue emerge or are affected by the interstices – by the set of historical, social and political institutions that help to produce racial identities that may be subject to change, depending on the contingencies surrounding a particular political moment (Sheth, 2014).

I would suggest that rather than committing to the conventional understanding of feminist scholarship as prioritizing gender, we would do well to follow a multi-pronged, or portfolio, feminist approach that can accommodate a range of issues that should be of concern to feminist political theorists. In such a scenario, feminist political theoretical approaches should encompass issues concerning any variety of (socially or politically) vulnerable populations, such as men of color, working-class populations, transgender subjects, international populations, to name a few. For example, in a US context, vulnerable populations may include male, trans-, women prisoners with the US prison system, or detention facilities that are located domestically or internationally, from the T. Don Hutto immigration detention facilities in Texas, or Guantanamo Bay detention facilities for 'enemy combatants' on the US Naval Base in Cuba, or Diego Garcia detention facility (Camp Justice) in the Indian Ocean.

Understanding such an approach as feminist facilitates a more complex understanding of what feminist scholarship not only can, but *must*, be able to accommodate, so long as it is accompanied by an account of the methodology and rationale for a broad, varied approach. In turn, a portfolio feminist approach can allow us to suspend skepticism about whether issues pertaining to unconventional topics are in fact, feminist.

The key to being able to suspend such skepticism lies in the category of socially/politically vulnerability, as articulated above – as the ground for the material, tangible, expressions that we call 'race' or 'gender' or 'sexuality'. Political vulnerability, at heart, is the manifestation of a certain inequality of power between at least two parties (states/institutions/corporations versus subjects or groups of subjects) that results in exploitation, oppression or its extreme probability. As such, we need to look at race and gender, especially, in order to understand the mechanics of the structures that (silently, subtly) produce them as politically vulnerability features of subjects.

Conclusion

If we approach race as a fluid concept, one whose meaning is affected by the set of historical, social and political institutions through which race is understood,[15] then our understandings of race will gradually, but substantially, better informed by gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and other dimensions of racial identity. In adopting a more flexible approach, may facilitate the integration of race and feminist theory, such that bifurcations between the two are less frequent.

At some level, the issue of the bifurcation between race theory and feminist scholarship is a rather anachronistic, if persistent, one which assumes that race, gender and sexuality are discreet areas of analysis, rather than mercurial and messy and intertwined taxonomical structures reflecting oft-vacillating inequities of power, and frequently changing historical, political, legal, institutional and social narratives. As Brown (2005) suggests so incisively,

> … [S]ubjects of gender, class, nationality, race, sexuality, and so forth are created through different histries, different mechanisms and sites of power, different discursive formation, different regulatory schemes … As so many feminist, postcolonial, queer, and critical race theorists have noted in recent years, it is impossible to extract the race from gender, or the gender from sexuality, or the masculinity from colonialism. Moreover to treat various modalities of subject formation as additive in any of the ways suggest by the terms above is to elide the way subjects are brought into being through subjectifying discourses. (p. 123)

Feminist political theorists should retrain our focus to hone in, not on the precise identity of the subjects in question, but rather on the key feature of what makes them

subjects of interest to feminist (political theory) scholarship: their political/social status as having been (being) neglected, exploited or deprived from full access/protection to the apparatuses of social/political justice. This approach allows us to consider populations who may not fit the ordinary parameters of feminist scholarship, but who should still be of concern to feminist scholars. In doing so, perhaps the bifurcation which seems evident between race and feminist theory will begin to fade, as might the persistent, seeming, discreteness between race versus gender, while re-cognizing vulnerable and marginal, though heretofore invisible or unpopular, populations through a larger, more complex, lens.

Notes

1 My sincere thanks to Lori Marso and Lawrie Balfour for inviting me to participate in this exchange and their incisive comments on an earlier version of this contribution and deep gratitude for allowing me a much needed reprieve before finishing this article. Thanks also to Lynne Huffer, Mickaella Perina and Robert E. Prasch for their helpful feedback on this piece, and to Tripp Johnson for his excellent research assistance. This essay is dedicated to Robert, who passed away in January 2015 as I was finishing an earlier incarnation of this contribution. An ardent supporter of the integration of race and feminist theory in scholarship, Bob's insights infuse this essay, though of course, all mistakes remain my own.

2 Certainly there were many others earlier in the century, such as W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Alain Locke, but here I'm thinking of more recent political theorists (McGary and Lawson, 1992; Mills, 1997).

3 One indicator might be the rate of inauguration of feminist journals across a range of fields. A limited perusal suggests that there were approximately 17 feminist scholarly journals inaugurated between 1970 and 1979, and approximately 20 new feminist journals inaugurated in each successive decade, peaking at 25 journals inaugurated in the 1990s, and leveling out at 22 new feminist journals between 2000 and 2012.

4 See, for example, the way that scholars such as Robin D.G. Kelley, Dylan Rodriguez, Michael Eric Dyson, Cornel West, Robert Gooding-Williams, Charles Mills, Lucius Outlaw and others are considered (critical) race theorists or philosophers of race.

5 It is unclear to me whether women or trans scholars who discuss institutional issues that may have relevance to women's issues, but who do not write about 'women's' or 'feminist' issues specifically, are considered 'race theorists' without the attendant qualifier 'feminist' or any of the above mentioned descriptors.

6 Such as understanding the concerns of South Asian victims of domestic violence, for example.

7 I discuss this at length elsewhere (cf. Sheth, 2014).

8 Since this article was written, the case of Rachel Dolezal, the former head of the Spokane chapter of the NAACP, who is alleged to have been 'passing for black' has arisen (Yuhas, 2015). There may or may not be reason to consider Dolezal's case as one of racial fluidity, but certainly this is not what I had in mind. I am thinking of changes in 'group' or 'collective subjectivity' across a series of historical moments and political and social contexts.

9 Consider, for example, the long history of policing and shaming of subjects with some Black lineage, who identify as biracial rather than as Black, as passing or engaging in fraudulent self-representation.

10 Siddiqui is a US-educated neuroscientists who, along with her children, disappeared from the streets of Pakistan for several years, only to reappear on an Army Base in Ft. Hood, Texas, shot up and accused of trying to shoot at two military soldiers. She is reportedly the only female prisoner who was in

Baghram prison when it was under US authorities (cf. Bartosiewicz, 2009 for one of the few initial investigations into Siddiqui's case).

11 (Young, 2003; Mohanty *et al.*, 2008). In fact, the ever-expanding trope of literature that has to do with race and gender in the context of US militarism is about sexual violence and US women soldiers. To be sure, this is a crucial and important topic, long neglected. However, this topic should not be seen as exhausting the intersections of race and gender in the context of war or imperialism. Recently Elizabeth Mesok has completed a dissertation on the re-enactment of colonial logics through contemporary female US soldiers, which also promises to inaugurate a long-overdue area of study (Mesok, 2013).

12 Cf. Ioffe, 2015; Callimachi, 2015; Erelle, 2015. Similarly the Rachel Dolezal case raises a similar question: why would a white person, privileged as she is, 'choose' to identify as Black?

13 A simple example of this is the banking crisis, which scholars such as William K. Black, Robert E. Prasch, and Jamie Galbraith have attributed to complex bank fraud (cf. Black, 2009; Galbraith, 2010; Prasch, 2013).

14 'Can be' rather than 'necessarily are' because there are those race theorists who privilege and juxtapose racial analyses against direct degradation of gender.

15 Such as national borders, migration patterns, immigration laws, foreign policy, marriage laws, domestic violence policies, national security policies and so on (cf. Sheth, 2014).

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Falguni A. Sheth
Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322, USA

An argument for reviving the pragmatism of early critical race feminist theory

The feminist journal *Signs* recently dedicated an entire issue to revisiting critical race theory's original themes and arguments. In the introductory essay, guest editors Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Crenshaw and Leslie McCall (2013) write that 'while the reformist dimensions of intersectionality embodied interventions that addressed the marginalization of, for example, Black women plaintiffs, these projects were coextensive with a more radical critique of law premised in part on understanding how it reified and flattened power relationships into unidimensional notions of discrimination' (p. 791). It seems to me that the 'reformist dimensions of intersectionality' have faded from contemporary critical race feminist theory (CRFT), which focuses primarily and often exclusively on how legal reform exacerbates structural oppression. The pioneering CRFT articles of the 1980s and 1990s were more sanguine about liberal legalism. Many of these theorists lauded the pragmatic value of using the law to bring about important reform, even as they simultaneously stressed the limits of such reform. They called for a mixed approach of legal and extra-legal descriptive and prescriptive theorizing. Contemporary CRFT, by contrast, no longer speaks of liberalism's limited virtues.

I can understand this pessimistic turn away from liberal legalism, but I want to resist it. I still see value in a certain kind of liberal legal reform. In this critical exchange I make a modest plea for reviving the legal 'reformist dimensions of intersectionality'. First, I want to acknowledge that the pessimistic turn away from legal liberalism is understandable given that the law has been used both to create and reify race–sex-based inequalities. As Crenshaw recently noted in response to the decision of a New York City grand jury not to indict the police officers who killed Eric Garner, an unarmed Black man, 'Some of the worst racist tragedies in history have been perfectly legal' (McDonough, 2014). In large measure, this is because antidiscrimination law narrowly focuses on the perpetrator's perspective, and more specifically the perpetrator's intentions – whether or not the perpetrator intended to bring about the discriminatory impact at issue. Contemporary CRF theorists rightly criticize such legal narratives for airlifting both perpetrators and victims out of the deep structures of intersectional racism-sexism that ensnare all of us. I think that we can and should take structural inequality into theoretical account. But I part company with the view that this requires that we give up on using liberal legalism to reform the perpetrator's perspective, altogether. In this critical exchange, I briefly describe my understanding of what Cho, Crenshaw and McCall mean by the 'reformist dimensions of intersectionality', and then offer a brief account of why I have found this pragmatic theorizing helpful in my own work on 'gender identity' discrimination.

The Reformist Dimensions of Intersectionality

The idea of intersectionality did not begin with critical race theory, but the scholar-activist movement that originated in the 1980s and 1990s helped to introduce the term and concept into mainstream academic disciplines. Since then, intersectionality has been adopted and amended by scholars and activists in a wide range of humanistic and social scientific fields, including political science in both its theoretical and empirical formats. These intersectional arguments share the basic descriptive premise that race, gender, sexuality, class and other socially salient identifications factor into policies and laws in substantive ways, even when such identifications are redacted from the official transcripts of harm. Single-identity discrimination laws and policies tease apart the identity vectors of race, gender, class, sexual orientation and disability, for instance, but we experience these identities together in 'simultaneous and interactive' ways (Simien and Hancock, 2011, p. 185).

CRF theorists put a unique twist on the general idea of intersectionality by applying it to the seemingly contradictory frameworks of legalism and humanist storytelling. Their turn to structural critique sought to broaden our understanding of power both beyond liberal models of individualized harm that treat racism and sexism as anomalous deviations from American liberalism, and 'vulgar' Marxist models of top-down 'class' domination. We misunderstand power, and thus how to fight its discriminatory causes and effects, if we focus solely or mostly on formal public policies and the letter of the law. With this critique of power in mind, political theorists should use 'intersectional type' analyses to investigate the diffuse set of 'interactive processes and structures in which meanings of privilege and penalty are produced, reproduced and resisted in contingent and relational ways' (Dhamoon, 2011, p. 238).

This strong critique of liberal capitalism did not prevent the early CRF theorists from seeing law as an important, albeit limited, vehicle for bringing about social reform. In this regard, they parted company with the critical legal studies movement of the 1970s, which harnessed postmodern and poststructural critiques to 'trash' or discredit law, altogether. The 'crits', as they were nicknamed, argued, 'that power is not ultimately, "out there", but in the very institutions and relationships that shape our lives'. This meant turning away from law, because, as a formal institution of liberal capitalism, it could only be used to replicate status quo inequalities. The CRF theorists noted the crits' deep structural critique but rejected their dismissal of legal reform. Rather than viewing the law and rights discourse as nothing more than tools of domination that are wielded by those with power to oppress those without power, the CRF theorists recognized 'the transformative dimension of African-Americans re-imagining themselves as full, rights-bearing citizens within the American political imagination'. They acknowledged and applauded the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s for producing important legal victories, even as they acknowledged

and criticized cyclical periods of political retrenchment when civil rights gains have been eroded by conservative jurisprudence and lack of political enforcement (Crenshaw *et al.*, 1995, p. xxiv).

To address the deficits of liberal legalism, the CRF theorists supplemented single-identity formal discrimination narratives with personal narratives, storytelling, cultural criticism and psychoanalytic theory in a series of groundbreaking and genre-bending law review articles that continue to influence progressive legal theory (Crenshaw *et al.*, 1995). Some critics charge that in turning to history and cultural context, CRFT denudes law of its generalizability, and thus its capacity to serve as a far-reaching lever of social redress. But this misunderstands the role of particularity in CRFT projects. The point, as I understand it, was not to narrow the scope of discrimination law so that each identity combination or permutation could have its own legal category. Nor did these scholars advocate formally bringing plural identities into the legal narratives of race- and sex-based discrimination. On the contrary, they demonstrated that intersecting identities, personal narratives, storytelling, cultural criticism and history were already present in formal legal narratives that purported to be free of such contextualizing details.

The CRF theorists used the term intersectionality to show that women of color, and Black women in particular, were ontologically stranded between legal accounts of racism that assumed race to be devoid of gender, and legal accounts of sexism that assumed sex to be devoid of race. Crenshaw exposed the failure of courts to recognize Black women as suffering discrimination in the absence of any evidence of discrimination against either Black men or white women. Devon Carbado notes that this same representation problem resurfaces in much of the criticism leveled against intersectionality for being 'just' about Black women. 'The critique that intersectionality is necessarily and only about Black women reflects a similar representational problem: Black women cannot specifically name themselves in a theory (they are too similar to be different), nor can they function as the backdrop for the genesis and articulation of a generalizable framework about power and marginalization (they are too different to be the same)' (Carbado, 2013, p. 4). I agree with Carbado and many other contemporary CRF theorists that we can and should extend intersectionality to other race–sex identities, but that we need not base that expansion on the spurious contention that the experiences of Black women cannot serve as points of critical departure for theorizing such discriminatory causes and effects.

Pragmatic Political and Legal Theory

This brings me to pragmatic political and legal theory. I find the normative prompt to both keep in mind the virtues *and* limitations of legal reform incredibly helpful in my own work on intersectional gender identity discrimination. I also find helpful the creative use of storytelling and allegory because it reminds us that humanistic

political theorists have something important to contribute to the incomplete tale told by the law. Normative political theorists are, in my view, well positioned to theorize the extra-legal remainder highlighted by the early CRF theorists. Iris Marion Young's definition of pragmatic theory heeds this call. Young defined *pragmatic theory* as a mode of analysis that must always be geared toward solving political problems. For her, this meant drawing upon a range of empirical and philosophical work, as well as drawing from personal memoir and the arts (Young, 2005). She defined social theory, by contrast, as 'self-enclosed, in the sense that it offers no particular purpose other than to understand, to reveal the way things are' (Young, 1995, p. 192). Feminist theory, in her view, should always be aimed at solving the political problem of sexual injustice.

Young did not specify legal reform as the only or best route for pragmatic theory, but I see the law, especially antidiscrimination law, as fertile ground for this kind of problem solving. CRF theorists rightly point out that liberal legalism has often been used to maintain and even exacerbate existing social inequalities. This typically occurs when the law is merely used to assimilate individuals into existing institutions without challenging the justness of those institutions. Most trans civil rights advocacy, for instance, strives to assimilate trans and gender-variant individuals into sex-segregated institutions, such as public restrooms and athletic competition instead of challenging the legality of those institutions, in the first place. As the work of Paisley Currah and Dean Spade demonstrates, this kind of liberalism leaves behind people who either cannot or will not assimilate into binary sex frameworks (Currah and Spade, 2007), rendering them 'administratively impossible' (Spade, 2011, p. 369).

But assimilation is not the only interpretation of liberal legalism. Antidiscrimination law can also be harnessed to a more extensive feminist project that challenges the legality of these and other sex-classification policies. I find inspiration for doing so from old-school CRF. Sex-segregated institutions such as public restrooms, sports, education and even criminal detention and incarceration are major sources of trans discrimination because they wrongly transfer our sexual self-authority to administrative agents, who can then use their subjective ideas about what 'real' men and women look, sound, and act like to harass and exclude us from the public accommodations under their watch. These evaluations are subjective because, contrary to conventional wisdom, there are no objective, socially agreed upon criteria for determining who is male and who is female. Moreover, these subjective gender judgments are always interlaced with normative ideas about race, class, sexuality and disability.

How particular individuals will use intersectional stereotypes in their own decision-making processes is something we cannot know for certain. Much of contemporary CRFT strongly implies that invidious race–sex intersectional judgments are a matter of course rather than a strong possibility. I want to focus on possibility rather than inevitability because I believe in our moral obligation and capacity to resist giving in to our worst prejudicial impulses. I read old-school CRFT as alerting us to the ubiquity and deep-seated nature of intersectional stereotypes, but

also as imploring us to challenge and override our invidious impulses. Noting intersectional stereotyping does not tell us how individuals will use such information to make particular decisions. What this information does mean, however, is that we should be extremely careful about when, where, and how we institutionalize certain kinds of sex-based decision making.

Liberal legalism can aid us in this diagnostic work because it prompts us to ask whether a given policy is necessary, and whether it is harmful. According to the 'rational relationship test', a policy must be 'rationally related' to a legitimate policy goal. When a government or state actor uses sex or gender in a policy, it must meet an even higher standard of scrutiny, and show that the sex-classification policy is 'substantially' related to a policy goal that is not only legitimate but also 'important'. Most sex-classification policies fail even the lowest level of scrutiny because they are not rationally connected to the legitimate goals they ostensibly serve. For instance, the legitimate and important goals of personal privacy and safety when using public restrooms could be better met by designing and building these facilities differently. We can and should ask more searching questions about the purpose of sex-segregated sports at various levels and ages. Whether we are perceived as male or female is often a poor proxy for assessing our individual athletic ability and skill level. I examine these and other policies such as single-sex education, sex-marked government-issued personal identification documents, and criminal detention and incarceration in my current book project. I argue that we should do away with the vast majority of sex-classification policies because they are neither necessary nor benign.

Liberal feminist jurisprudence has failed to challenge the legality of most sex-classification policies because it has narrowly construed sexism as female disadvantage in relation to male advantage, and *vice versa*. Anti-sexism is surely about eradicating this kind of harm, but it should also be attuned to undoing the related, but conceptually distinct, harm wrought by discrimination on the basis of being perceived as having changed or being in the process of changing one's sex identity. All sexism involves sex-role stereotyping, but not all people who are vulnerable to discrimination on the basis of sex-role stereotyping are vulnerable to the further scrutiny of having their identities as male or female called into question. Trans discrimination is about sexual affinity, about where and with whom we belong sexually. This differs from other forms of discrimination such as racism, homophobia and traditional sexism, which are typically not about whether a person belongs to the group, but rather about the low expectations and pernicious stereotypes about what a person can and cannot do precisely because she or he *is* Asian, a woman or gay. Most liberal feminism presumes that maleness and femaleness are immutable characteristics that are analogous to immutable racial ascription. Trans experience, in all its variation, challenges this presumption by revealing that the sex categories we are assigned to at birth are in fact changeable. Liberal trans civil rights advocacy recognizes the mutability of sex, but it has largely fought for the right of trans people to assimilate into the existing sex binary

instead of pushing for the eradication of institutionalized sex segregation. These gains are important, but incomplete.

One could object that the radical reform of eradicating sex-classification policies is nevertheless shallow because it does not actively address the many instances of informal intersectional sex-identity policy that will continue to harm those who either cannot or will not, assimilate into the male–female sex binary. I concede this point. There will always be considerable extra-legal work to do, even in the wake of the most radical legal reforms. Reformist CRFT does not end where legalism leaves off. It tells us that there is a deeper intersectional human story or set of stories to take into account beyond the letter of the law. Antidiscrimination law is silent, and rightfully so, about how we should use normative intersectional identity constructs in our everyday interpersonal decision making. But the test for whether a formal sex-classification public policy is 'rational' is one that can informally help us in a variety of settings where we might be tempted to monitor and police the racialized gender norms being expressed by others. Just as courts should consider the function of a restaurant or hospital when deciding the relevance and rationality of their use of sex classification policies, we should think critically about the different social roles we embody in various settings, and the goals we have in interacting with others (Davis, 2014).

What are the appropriate goals imbedded in the various relationships we have with others whom we may or may not personally know? We may be curious to know whether a fellow bus rider or the person we attend school with, or see in a shopping mall, is male or female, but curiosity does not give us free moral reign to say and act in whatever way we choose to satisfy our curiosity. There are mitigating factors to consider, and these pertain to our role and goals in specific contexts. What is motivating my impulse to know someone's sex identity as they pass me on a public sidewalk, or as I wait for a subway? And what does knowing really mean when it comes to gender identity, given that transgender and intersex identities are not always visually knowable? How are race–sex normative stereotypes driving my need to know? And how might my words and actions impact the person about whom I am curious? As humanists, political theorists are poised to explore these questions. At the same time, the political focus of our inquiry pushes us up against the political and legal structures that are designed to purge or at least minimize subjective human experience. How do we render experiences of racism and sexism politically and legally knowable without erasing or distorting human experience? I think that reformist CRFT lights a way for us to do just that sort of work by specifying what legal reform can and cannot do, and imploring us to undertake both legal and extra-legal work.

We make numerous decisions in the course of our daily lives about whether and how we will use race–sex normative stereotypes in the 'interactive processes' we find ourselves in. The purpose or function of our relationships and interactions should dictate whether and how our race–sex feelings and opinions are in or out of place.

Gender identity laws can help to spark this sort self-reflection and guide our actions by reminding us to consider the potential impact of our words and actions on those whose race–sex appearances challenge our imagined ideals of what 'real' men and women look, sound and act like. Such laws can also prompt non-transgender or cisgender people to notice that their sex identities are in fact changeable, even if they have never considered, and cannot fathom ever wanting such a change.

This kind of liberal tolerance is activated by democratic attentiveness to the prejudice animating our actions and their consequences. I heed Wendy Brown's important caution that liberal toleration very often leaves intact our feelings of aversion because it asks so little of us in the way of personal and interpersonal work. By contrast, the tolerance I have in mind requires us to grapple with our aversion, and to make choices and decisions to override our worst impulses when we have particular decisions to make. I draw this 'categorical imperative' from the logic of antidiscrimination law, which if we listen, both speaks to us in formal rules and extra-legal moral whispers of personal and interpersonal accountability. My endorsement of liberal legalism may not be tempered enough for some or many contemporary intersectionality scholars, or its originators who now speak in graver tones about antidiscrimination law than they did three decades ago. I want to shun this pessimism, and revive the pragmatic reformist dimensions of intersectionality. If taken to heart, this kind of pragmatic political and legal theory can lead us toward some institutional reforms that are meaningful, and perhaps even radical.

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Heath Fogg Davis
Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122, USA
hfd@temple.edu

The Black female body at the intersection of state failure and necropower

Protests against the murder of unarmed Black men in the latter part of 2014 raise important questions regarding the function and operation of state power on the Black male body in the United States, but it is imperative that we consider as well how Black women are affected by both the successes and failures of the deployment of state power in these communities. I say successes and failures because I hold that two divergent ways of thinking about racialized sovereignty are necessary; under one account the operation of sovereign power has been a rousing success, on the other it has failed completely. Achille Mbembe's conception of sovereign necropolitics, where the sovereign is that which decides who dies, is all too powerfully executed within Black communities. We need too, however, to consider how state power fails Black communities. Miller (2014) characterizes contemporary conditions in Black communities as 'racialized state failure', where 'the racialized state of American politics continues to leave African-Americans out of the promise of security from violence that many middle or even low-income whites enjoy'. What do these successes and failures of sovereignty portend for Black women?

Mbembe (2003, p. 11) holds 'that the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die'. In thinking about the exercise of sovereign power in this way, he asks us to consider 'what place is given to life, death and the human body (in particular the wounded or slain body)? How are they inscribed in the order of power?' (Mbembe, 2003 p. 12). Mbembe certainly helps to illuminate much about contemporary conditions in Black communities, where weekly – daily – community members confront the bodies of the slain. Mbembe (2003) goes on to say:

> Hence to kill or to allow to live constitutes the limits of sovereignty, its fundamental attributes. To exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over

mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power. (pp. 11–12)

For Mbembe (2003), one of power's most important functions is to deploy weapons 'in the interest of maximum destructions of persons and the creating of *death-worlds,* new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of the living dead' (p. 40). In US history, for example, in regard to lynching, we cannot say that necropower was deployed in the interest of creating maximal death, but perhaps, instead, sufficient death, death sufficient to create docile, subjected Black bodies. The rise of militarized police forces, however, seems to bring American necropower more in line with what Mbembe observes in late colonial and postcolonial African states. In addition, as Wright (2011) notes in her examination of the gendered necropolitics of femicide and narcopolitics at the US-Mexico Border, states also play a role in circulating the discourse that justifies the death, in the Mexico case both the death the state itself produces and the deaths it fails to stop – in marking the bodies as deserving of death. In an effort to justify death by lynching Black men were affixed with the mark of the rapist, with police slayings, the mark of the thug.

Within a necropolitical order, possessing feminine embodiment exposes one to distinct risks. First, one risks others not recognizing one's death as a part of the operation of necropower since Black men are the ones who are perceived as most vulnerable. This is apparent, for example, as activists who took part in the #sayhername campaign and others struggle to have Rekia Boyd and Tanisha Anderson's names repeated as often as their Black male counterparts. Their campaign seeks to have Rekia Boyd and Tanisha Anderson become as symbolic of the operation of necropower on the Black body as Mike Brown and Trayvon Martin. Workneh (2015) writes of #sayhername:

> The African American Policy Forum, along with the Black Youth Project 100 and several other community organizations, rallied together to plan the event. The groups say the #BlackLivesMatter movement – which launched in response to the death of Trayvon Martin in 2012 and has inspired thousands of people worldwide to raise awareness around the injustices affecting Black people – has become especially focused on the lives of Black men, with women and girls seemingly an afterthought.

Here to possess feminine embodiment is to be thought immune from the operation of necropower when this could not be further from the truth.

I have argued elsewhere (Threadcraft, 2015) that Black American women's subjectivities have also been shaped by a host of practices – including pervasive sexual assault as a weapon of racial terror and targeted population control techniques – that have much more in common with Mbembe's necropower than with Foucault's normalization though not identical to it. Here power acts on the Black female body to

produce not simply its preferred forms of black feminine embodiment – the assaulted, abjected, terrorized Black female body, the significantly less fertile body and at its limit the infertile body – but often to extinguish the possibilities of future embodied black life and care for life that would otherwise come into existence.

Part of what I argue is that feminine embodiment encourages us to think differently about the particular 'weapons' of necropower. Taking feminine embodiment seriously helps to decenter the wounded body as the sole evidence of the operation of necropower, so that we might consider as well the sterile body, the unwell body, the unhealthy body and untold others among America's living dead and the particular weapons deployed against these bodies. When we decenter the wounded body we can discern the operation of necropower in Black communities beyond phenomena like police violence extending our gaze to population control, and therefore to significant forms of necropower that grip female and male Black bodies alike.

We know, too, that the rise of residential segregation in the 20th century was no mere product of drift but a state project. As Naa Oyo Kwate and I argue (2015) these state projects should be reframed as part of a long-term necropolitical project. Residential conditions in Black neighborhoods are described as 'pathogenic' in themselves, producing 'excess death'. Furthermore these neighborhoods lack resources that support health as compared to other neighborhoods in the United States. Public health officials have acknowledged that 'racial residential segregation is the cornerstone on which Black–White disparities in health status have been built in the United States'. Here, '[s]egregation is a fundamental cause of differences in health status between African Americans and whites because it shapes socio-economic conditions for blacks not only at the individual and household levels but also at the neighborhood and community levels' (Williams and Collins, 2001, p. 405). Residential segregation, then, has created a kind of death world that is distinct from that which Mbembe is thinking of, and a form of necropower that grips the male and female body in equal measure.

Blacks also live under another form of racialized sovereignty, however, and we must also keep this form of state power in view. In the wake of the death of Mike Brown – the unarmed Black teen shot by police officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri, Miller (2014) urged that we not lose sight of other significant threats to black life, specifically the threats Blacks continue to face from others in their communities. Importantly, however, Miller rejects the conservative construction of 'black on black crime', reframing the problem as a failure of the state project in Black communities. The state (and not, as conservatives hold, Blacks themselves) has failed to provide adequate security from a host of risks that it has long secured white life against. Here, it should be noted that, as Blacks have not been exempt from taxation, it has provided these benefits to whites as a redistributive injustice. This is cause for concern as for far too many Blacks, life is, as Hobbes might say, 'nasty, brutish and short'. I would add that it is not only that the white body has been shielded from risk, but that the powers and capacities of that white body, particularly the white male

body, have been enhanced by state power as well, enhanced by what Iton (2010, p. 133) calls the 'prophylactic' face of Janus-faced racialized state power.

If we accept, then, that Blacks, in addition to being disproportionately exposed to state necropower, also live under a form of state failure, where their bodies are unprotected from risks, both the risks they face from others and the risks posed by nature, we must remember that those who possesses feminine embodiment must fear violent death and more. Miller remarks on the extraordinarily high Black female murder rate: 'And despite the widely known gender gap in murder victims on a global scale – with men far more likely to be murdered than women – Black women in the US have been more likely to be murdered than white men for decades' (Miller, 2014) This is further evidence, then, of exactly how well the American state has secured the white male body from the threat of death. And while there is truly no cause for celebration in this country regarding the prevention of violence against women it is worth noting that gender-based violence statistics, too, provide evidence of racialized nature of security provision in our country, as Black women are two times more likely to be murdered by their husbands than white women and four times as likely to be murdered by their boyfriends or girlfriends than white women (Richie, 2012, p. 26). The Black female murder rate, given murder's status as something that most often threatens the male body, is extraordinary; that it surpasses the murder rate for white men in the US is astounding, evidence of the extraordinary success of the American state in securing white male life and its extraordinary failure to mobilize resources to secure black life. Again, possessing feminine embodiment puts one at risk, not only of death but also of having one's death go unrecognized, as not counting as evidence of state failure as often one's death occurs on the wrong side of the public/private divide. But women are at risk of even more than this.

Feminist analysis reminds us to keep in view as well the unique threats to the female body not afforded the benefits of state protection, where women face the threat of sexual assault and sexual violence as well as persistent vulnerabilities in childbirth and childrearing in the absence of such protection. Richie (2012, p. 42) notes that Black women are living, working, schooling and worshipping in degrading, dangerous and hostile environments where the threat of rape, embarrassment and public humiliation are defining features of their social environment. Black women in these communities are not only more likely to be sexually assaulted than their white counter parts, the assaults they experience are much more brutal.

Implicit in Miller's diagnosis of state failure is a call for extending the state project to Black communities. It is important here to remember feminist critiques of how modern thinkers 'embodied' the liberal state, that is, that they designed it in order to best protect and enhance the male body and to protect it from risk. As Gatens (1996) states:

> Modern political theory typically conceives of political life as a state created by
> a contract, entered into by rational decision and designed to ensure the

protection and safety of the body and its needs. As it is a contract entered into by men only, one must surmise that it is a contract designed to secure the needs of male bodies and desires. (p. 51)

Gatens (1996) says 'the modern body politic is based on an image of a *masculine* body which reflects fantasies about the value and capacities of that body' (p. 25). Modern states, she says, give little attention to – have 'the occasional surrounding legislative insets concerning' – such issues as abortion, rape, maternal allowances. (Gatens, 1996, p. 24). We must take care not to do the same in calls for the extension of state protection to Black communities in the United States.

Miller and Mbembe, then, both provide critical insight into contemporary conditions in Black communities today, but it is important to keep in mind the unique consequences for feminine embodiment at the intersection of state failure and necropolitics.

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Shatema Threadcraft
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, USA
s.threadcraft@rutgers.edu

Thanatopolitics or biopolitics? Diagnosing the racial and sexual politics of the European far-right

Michel Foucault's *Society Must be Defended* Collège de France lectures on the genealogy of race have had an immense impact on Foucauldian scholarship since their publication in English in 2003. The lectures not only led to a more widespread consideration of the politics of 'race' in political theory, but also introduced a new political dimension to race theory. Foucault approached race not as a theory or social construct, but as an apparatus of power indelible to liberal modernity. Foucault's previous work influenced the critique of the scientific production of racial hierarchies emerging from the eighteenth century onwards (for example, Schiebinger, 1993), and the *Society Must be Defended* lectures demonstrated how this was critical for the birth of the liberal governmentality. The deposition of autocratic monarchy combined with the discourse of freedom inscribed racism into the mechanisms of the liberal state. The former sovereign right to institute death was replaced by the duty of the state to foster the life of the population. The legitimacy to make distinctions between who must live and who must die moved from the monarch to the democratic state, which did so through the division of the species into a hierarchy of races (Foucault, 2003, pp. 254–255).

In the United States in particular, political theorists and philosophers have used the *Society Must be Defended* lectures to supplement the insights of *Will to Knowledge* (Foucault, 1980) to create new intersectional genealogies of race and sexuality in modernity (for example, Feder, 2007; McWhorter, 2009). By contrast, European theorists tend to read *Will to Knowledge* mainly for the last section of the book that discusses race, disregarding the analysis of sexuality in the rest of the book. Arguably, the popularity of post-Foucauldian thinkers like Agamben and Esposito has contributed to this tendency to omit sexuality from the theorisation of biopolitics, which often leads to the reduction of biopolitics, the politics of and over life, to thanatopolitics, the politics of and over death. This theoretical bias also has political consequences. For example, it distorts our understanding of the current rise of right-wing politics in Europe today, which I argue cannot be grasped without locating it at the intersection of the racial and sexual biopolitics of a multicultural and post-feminist[1] Europe. In this piece, I want to highlight how the biopolitical approach makes it possible to understand both the racial and sexual politics of these current trends.

Thanatopolitics, Sexuality and the 'Political'

At best, the focus on the *Society Must be Defended* lectures has engaged a whole body of scholars to analyse the politics and practices of war, colonialism, border

control and homeland security as fundamentally embedded in biopolitical racial logics (Bigo 2002; Jabri, 2007). Not only has it made race an essential concept among scholars not primarily associated with critical race and postcolonial studies, but it has also deepened the analytical status of race in political theory. It is no longer sufficient to theorise the discrimination and oppression suffered by immigrants, ethnic minorities, refugees and asylum seekers as merely unfortunate effects of prejudicial ignorance and scapegoating. Foucault's genealogy of race helps us grasp how the exclusionary operations of biopower are designed to uphold and enhance the survival and well-being of the population by normalising, weeding out or killing threatening others.[2]

This new focus on race, however, has led to a disproportionate emphasis on thanatopolitics, that is, the murderous underbelly of biopolitics. In the lectures, Foucault identifies two functions of racism. The first is 'to create caesuras within the biological continuum addressed by biopower' (Foucault, 2003, p. 255), in other words, to divide and administer death. The second permits the establishment of a 'positive relation' (Foucault, 2003, p. 255), which by allowing others to die will not only guarantee the safety of the race, but it 'will make life in general healthier … and purer' (Foucault, 2003, p. 255). This second function is where Foucault locates the link between race and sexuality, and it is also where biopower's 'reason for being and the logic of its exercise' (Foucault, 1980, p. 138) is found, that is, in the administration of life. Much Foucauldian political theory has focused exclusively on the first function of race, that is, its thanatopolitical function. This has led to its theoretical detachment from the reproductive and productive politics of population management, at the heart of which is sexuality. This is not only because of the influence of certain readings of Foucault's work, but also certain disciplinary norms that continue to influence the definition of the 'political', even in Foucauldian theory.

Indeed, much of the literature on race and biopolitics in European political theory is located within certain discussions in critical International Relations (IR) theory. Despite three decades of feminist critique (for example, Enloe, 1989; Peterson and Runyan, 1993) in IR, the terrain of the 'political' is still largely conceptualised through questions of sovereignty and the public/private divide (Youngs, 2004, pp. 82–83). The predominant view that state power and violence are the 'real stuff' of political scholarship (Penttinen, 2013) is also reproduced in many Foucauldian studies, despite Foucault's critique of a state-centred view of politics and the auxiliary position of sovereign power in biopolitical modernity.[3] This merely reinforces the unspoken view that, despite the centrality of sexuality for Foucault, sexuality/sex/gender are still seen as peripheral questions at best left to feminist scholars.[4]

In this context, it is less surprising that the interest in race in political/IR theory is more disposed to analyse the thanatopolitical metaphysics of exclusion instituted by sovereign power. This is reflected in the popularity of certain post-Foucauldian frameworks like Agamben's (1998) concept of bare life and Esposito's (2008)

immunisation (rather than postcolonial or critical race theory, which is rarely cited or employed).[5] Agamben's framework argues that Western history since antiquity can be understood through the separation of politically recognised life (*bios*) from bare life (*zoē*), the form of existence reduced to mere biological existence and therefore can be killed. This mechanism of sovereign exceptions is epitomised in the metaphor of the camp and represents the structuring paradigm of modern politics. This contrasts starkly to Foucault's approach, where it makes no sense to speak of biopower before the invention of life in biology (Foucault, 1994, p. 166), and where biopower is understood as 'bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them' (Foucault, 1980, p. 136).

While I do not contest the applicability of the powerful argument regarding the violent exclusion of racialised others from the legal order through sovereign distinctions between forms of life, this conceptual apparatus oversimplifies racial logics and their accompanying governmental techniques. One can lose sight for example of how the governance of global migration flows is tied to productive capitalist attempts to restructure global labour markets (Mezzadra and Nielson, 2003), and it tends to gloss over the relational play of governance, agency and resistance that characterise border regimes (Rygiel, 2011; Ansems de Vries, 2014). Moreover, the exclusive focus on race elides the sexual politics that transforms bodies into productive and reproductive machines through processes of regulation, discipline and subjectivation (Foucault, 1980, p. 104; 1991, p. 26). By ignoring the positivity of biopower and its historicity, it is easy to forget how biopolitics is very much about the 'growth and establishment of bourgeois hegemony' (Foucault, 1980, p. 125) as is reflected for example in today's commodification of both sex and race (Hennessy, 1995; Pitcher, 2014) and the marital normalisation of homosexual monogamy (Repo, 2013) in the era of neo-liberalism. In the former, race is no longer simply a basis for exclusion, but is transformed and disciplined into a resource for capital accumulation through branding and marketing. In the latter, same-sex love morphs from being a threat to being the basis for an expanded and diversified family norm that ensures the healthy upbringing of children in a time of increasing divorce rates and declining fertility. The disciplinary techniques enacted through racial and sexual discourses are therefore complex, contextual and constantly shifting.

Yet, because the trope of the camp has been prominent in critiques of the racial politics of Western asylum and immigration regimes (Butler, 2004; Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005; Vaughan-Williams, 2009), it may also be tempting to apply this framework to analyse the xenophobic and racist strands of current European politics with their calls for states to curtail minority rights and tighten immigration laws. The pivotal place of fascism in Agamben's work makes it even more appealing. For Agamben, there is no fundamental difference between the operative logic of the liberal democratic state and the fascist state. If fascism is merely the inevitable zenith of liberal modernity, what we are witnessing today in the rise of European far-right

parties and neo-fascist movements is merely the true face of liberalism stripped of its emancipatory pretences. For Foucault (1980, p. 149), however, it was an intensification of biopolitical control that sought to introduce the eugenic ordering into all aspects of society and politics, the realisation of which entailed an intensification of labour exploitation and reproductive regulation (Federici, 2004, p. 66). This suggests that it is worth adopting an approach that is open to account for the diverse aspects of the political rationality of today's far-right as well.

Biopolitics of the Far-Right in Europe: Feminist Anti-Racist Critique

Instead of treating biopower ontologically as a mode of politics, Foucault introduces it as an analytical tool that establishes the link between the invention of the human sciences, the birth of the liberal rationality of government, and the rise of capitalist production. Operating through the dictum to ' "make" live and "let" die' (Foucault, 2003, p. 241), it is first and foremost an empowering, expansive and subjectivising force rather than a disempowering, diminishing and objectifying one. The apparatus of race distinguishes whose lives should be promoted and regulated, and the apparatus of sexuality is deployed to ensure their normalisation and reproduction (Deutscher, 2012; Repo, 2013). As Foucault emphasises both in the *Society Must be Defended* lectures and *Will to Knowledge*, sexuality is 'a field of vital strategic importance' (Foucault, 2003, p. 251) because it holds a central position in tying the large macro-level politics of population to the everyday corporeal disciplinary practices through which individuals are persuaded to govern themselves.

In this final part I want to broach the rise of far-right parties in European politics in recent years from the biopolitical angle as a feminist anti-racist analytical framework. I argue that it is equipped with tools for conceptualising the common strategies of (bio)power underpinning both the racial and sexual logics of the far-right. Since the beginning of the economic crisis in Europe, the discourses of cultural racism[6] have become increasingly prominent through far-right parties such as the Golden Dawn in Greece, the Front National in France, the openly neo-Nazi National Democratic Party of Germany, and Jobbik in Hungary. The Golden Dawn and the National Democratic Party have links to neo-fascist, neo-Nazi or white power movements, and all of them won seats in the elections for the European Parliament in May 2014.[7] While their overt anti-immigration and Islamophobic agendas are seen as central components of their racist and often white supremacist ideologies, their sexist views receive far less attention.

As Norocel (2013, p. 33) observes, research on the far-right tends to be gender-blind, apart from observations pertaining to the male dominance of party leadership, membership and public support. Motivated as they are to counter the feared loss of as assumed European cultural, biological and religious homogeneity, they are also concerned by the declining fertility of European women and espouse patriarchal visions of the future. Anti-feminism, the re-domestication of women's labour,

the reassertion of patriarchal control over reproduction, remilitarisation and homophobia are commonly found at the core of far-right agendas. Foucault's analysis of biopolitics makes it possible for political theorists not only to consider the intersectional aspects of race and sexuality (Crenshaw, 1991), but how they are tied to common political *strategies* centred on the perceived decline of European populations.

One of the most well-known and deadly culminations of far-right logics occurred in July 2011, when Breivik massacred 77 people in Oslo and at the Youth Worker's League's summer camp on the island of Utøya in Norway. The 'manifesto' he left behind, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, is representative of much more than his personal views: many parts of the text were copied directly from a Norwegian blogger known as Fjordman[8] whose texts on the Islamophobic Gates of Vienna webpages are read widely across Europe. With over 100 pages on feminism and gender issues in his manifesto, often copied from Fjordman, gender is more than just a strand within it (Walton, 2012, p. 5). In the document, Breivik (2011, p. 343) made it clear that he was targeting 'cultural Marxists' and 'feminists', the 'suicidal humanists' (whose liberal views he believed had weakened Western civilisation. Too happy to let in cultural others in the name of 'political correctness,' according to Breivik (2011, p. 346) feminism, 'the vanguard of PC' has also made Western women promiscuous, leading to the decline of Western fertility and putting white races in danger of being outbred by (presumably non-white) immigrants (Breivik 2011, p. 1143). Moreover, he purported that the increase of women's participation in the labour market and decision making has emasculated Western men and robbed them of their ability to 'protect […] the "tribe"' (Breivik 2011, p. 345). 'If you break down men's masculinity', Breivik (2011, p. 343) argued, 'their willingness and ability to defend themselves and their families, you destroy the country'. For Breivik (2011, p. 792), Norway's multicultural liberal democracy was too 'impotent' to understand or respond to the gravity of the eastern Islamic threat to Western European civilisation.

The massacre therefore was not an act of terror against the undesirable Muslim other, but a purge targeted at the members of the community whose ideological and sexual profiles he regarded as responsible for facilitating the infiltration of the national population by that other: left-wing politicians and intellectuals, the majority[9] of which he identifies as women. It was not an act of exclusion as such, but a violent act of discipline to punish women and put them back in their 'proper' place, away from making political decisions that weakened white men and empowered Muslim ones. Danger could only be thwarted through the reassertion of white patriarchal masculinity (Mulinari and Neergaard, 2012), reflecting the extent to which cultural racism in Europe is tied to the broader discourse of male woundedness and disempowerment in the so-called post-feminist era (Keskinen, 2013, p. 226). Breivik's (2011, pp. 1175–1179) suggestions on how to realise such a society included introducing a ban on abortion, restrictions on the availability of

contraceptive pills, curbing sexual education, discouraging women from seeking full-time employment, controlling the images of female sexuality circulated in the media, outsourcing select breeding and care work to surrogacy networks and state boarding schools, giving men the right to choose their sexual partners and forging 20-year marriage contacts enough to bear and rear children into adults. For Breivik (2011, p. 1138), 'demography is king' (and the expulsion of Muslims from European soil went hand in hand with the reimplementation of patriarchy.

Breivik's is far from representative of the diversity far-right ideologies found across Europe today, but his problematisation of the demographic status of Europe is nonetheless echoed in varying degrees both by grassroots neo-Nazi groups and political parties alike. The point that needs to be made is twofold. First, by bringing in sexuality, biopolitics scholars in political theory are better equipped to diagnose full complexity of the exclusionary politics of current Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism. Second, while the intersectional study of sexuality and race is nothing new to feminist theory, combining this with a biopolitical approach has the potential of equipping feminist theorists with a broader analytical perspective that goes beyond the deconstruction of identities. By focusing on rationalities of government and strategies of power, the biopolitical approach provides feminist anti-racist critique with the means to tie the far-right deployment of sex and race to broader historical, economic and political trends, especially pertaining to the material issues of capitalism and demographic governance. Austerity and demographic decline are perhaps the central battlegrounds where these confrontations are taking place, so it is not only desirable but essential that feminist theory challenge the far-right on that ground.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 By post-feminist Europe, I do not mean a Europe after or done with feminism, but a Europe where feminism is assumed to be over and is seen as increasingly irrelevant (Tasker and Negra, 2007, p. 1).
2 Foucault's analysis has been criticised for example by postcolonial and Black-feminist thinkers for neglecting to grasp the importance of colonialism and slavery in the constitution of modernity, prompting the creation of new genealogies supplementing and revising Foucault's original thesis (for example, Stoler, 1995; Davis, 1998; Federici, 2004).
3 Political theorists in this tradition do comprehend Foucault's critique of sovereignty. Numerous articles discuss Foucault's critique of sovereity, but paradoxically also unwittingly contribute further to the burdgeoning literature on sovereignty and the reproduction of its significance for IR theory (for example, Neal, 2004; De Larringa and Doucet, 2008; Barder and Debrix, 2011)

4 In addition to vast number of feminist political scholars (for example, Smith, 1994; Luibhéid, 2004; Ziarek, 2008) who address the intersectional biopolitics of race and sex, other exceptions include for example Lobo-Guerrero (forthcoming), Massad (2007) and Ailio (2011).

5 One text frequently cited, however, is Stoler's (1995) archival research for *Race and the Education of Desire*, which was one of the few texts that shed light on Foucault's *Society Must be Defended* lectures before their publication, and made a contribution that bridged colonial stuides with Foucauldian scholarship.

6 The delegitimation of biological racism in the post-war period has led to the emergence of 'cultural racisms' that declare the incompatibility of foreign cultures (rather than a eugenic concern for racial purity) and emphasise the threat of social disorder and conflict that would ensure if they mixed (Giroux, 1993; van Dijk, p. 116).

7 Other political parties that have gained seats either at the national or European level whose ideologies exhibit fascist and racist thinking, and/or whose members often have informal links to neo-fascist, neo-Nazi or white power movements include Front National (France), The Finns (Finland), Party for Freedom (Netherlands), Austrian Freedom Party (Austria), Lega Nord (Italy), Sweden Democrats (Sweden), Svoboda (Ukraine).

8 Fjordman's real name is Peder Are Nøstvold Jensen.

9 Breivik (2011, p. 933) wrote that it would be essential to kill women because in his estimation, 60–70 per cent of 'cultural Marxists' were women.

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Jemima Repo
Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, UK
jemima.repo@ncl.ac.uk