Sex and Racial Theory in Britain, 1690-1833

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Abstract

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This thesis explores the interrelation of sexual and racial ideas in British thought over the course of a 'long' eighteenth century. The emergence of racial thought in the eighteenth century has tended to be discussed in isolation from that of modern forms of sexual difference. Where they have been discussed together, one has usually been privileged over the other, or their development is explained by recourse to a 'revolutionary' moment. To fully appreciate the development of racial and sexual identity, it is necessary to examine their intellectual prerequisites and to trace their emergence over a long period. It is argued that the apparent suddenness of the emergence of modern 'race' and 'sex' masks a longer-term development of greater significance: the popularisation of an empiricist epistemology which privileged sensory over revealed knowledge. This was increasingly used to produce European knowledge about non-European peoples, and was a necessary precondition for the development of modern corporeal identities.

The thesis argues that eighteenth-century racial thought was saturated with interest in sex. Lurid details of sexual features and behaviour fed into the aesthetic judgements at the heart of racialised discourse. The thesis also contends that a stable notion of sexual difference was predicated on a strong empirical foundation. It explores these questions through an analysis of three discursive episodes, spaced throughout the period, which encapsulated the range of discourses within which racial and sexual difference emerged. By looking at the human/animal divide and monstrous motherhood in 1726, at discourses of Pacific discovery in the 1770s, and at the sexual economy of slavery in the early nineteenth century, it is argued that the progressive stabilisation of the body as a source of empirical truths contributed as much as short term political or cultural change to the development of sex and race as categories of human difference.

Long Abstract

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This thesis explores the concepts of 'sex' and 'race' within British culture during the long eighteenth century. It will argue that these two identities, based on the physical body, shared a broad and deep interconnection. Indeed, it is a central axiom of this thesis that these identities cannot be understood in isolation from one another. It will be argued that the nature of their interconnection offers a new perspective on the change which both underwent towards the end of the eighteenth century. This was the emergence of their 'modern' forms, which entailed a movement from an early modern mode, characterised by fluidity and an ease with boundary transgressions, to one more concrete, discrete, and rooted in the fabric of the body. The body is at the heart of this thesis, and it is argued that the relationship of race and sex was based on the empiricist epistemology which renders that body interpretable to the observer. This body, its physical and behavioural features – such as skin colour, hair type, genitalia, and skeletal structure – were all 'read' by a variety of individuals in the eighteenth century. Such 'readers' then used these empirical data to formulate, negotiate, or undermine ideas of racial and sexual identity. As a result of the situation of the sex-race relationship within the fabric of the physical body, it will be argued, the change in these identities appears to be a consequence of a long-term epistemological, and a short-term ontological cause. This epistemological cause was the progressive dominance of empiricism which began with Bacon and the Royal Society in the seventeenth century, and which reached its most influential expression in John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). Empiricism, which came to supersede other sources of knowledge as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries progressed, gave observers and 'readers' of the body confidence that what data they received from their senses was authentic. This thesis will argue that the epistemological cause – a necessary rather than sufficient cause – converged

with a short-term ontological change after the Seven Years War to produce modern forms of race and sex. This ontological cause was the stabilisation of concepts of the body, which lost its ability to change sex, erase racial peculiarities under a different climate, or shape offspring through the effects of maternal imagination. With a newly 'legible' body and a means by which to read it, modern notions of race and sex were elaborated as the eighteenth century drew to a close.

Ideas about the body are crucial to this thesis and are analysed throughout. It will be shown that the sex-race relationship subsisted in many discourses which took the human body as their focal point. Discourses of reproduction, for example, are central to this consideration of the sex-race relationship. Not merely were several racial theorists keen embryological theorists, but, it will be shown, consideration of the processes of reproduction entailed those of the transmission of racial characteristics. In addition, questions of reproduction and racial identity were bound up within the ubiquitous eighteenth-century desire to increase the size of the population. It will be argued that this desire survived into the nineteenth century – notwithstanding the paradigm shift enacted by Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798) – particularly within abolitionist and emancipationist argument. A third way in which the body was central to the sex-race interrelationship was through the naturalisation or pathologisation of sexual behaviour. In both the Pacific and the Caribbean, as well as at home in Britain, sexual behaviours were inscribed on the physical body, most frequently in the shape of physical deformities matched to moral aberration.

This argument fills a considerable historiographical gap. The interrelation between race and sex, unlike that between race and gender, has gone comparatively unnoticed. Historians who have recognised its existence, such as Thomas Laqueur, Nancy Stepan, Karen Harvey, and Londa Schiebinger have either made only passing mention to it, or have interposed a mediating mechanism, such as 'analogy', to regulate the interconnection between sex and race. The argument of this thesis particularly engages with a more recent account of the relation between race and sex, that offered in Dror Wahrman's provocative *Making of the Modern Self* (2004). This ambitious text attempts to

account for the change in race and sex (and, he argues, other categories of identity) by citing as the cause a crisis of identity provoked by the American Revolution. Wahrman places particular emphasis on the 1780s as the decade in which radical change occurs. In making this claim he reacts, in part, to his own earlier arguments for the importance of the 1790s for the formation of middle class identity. Here it is argued that the crucial decade for change – limited strictly to corporeal identities such as sex and race – was the 1770s, and then merely as a point *by which* the older mode of identity had ceded primacy to the 'modern' configuration. In particular, Wahrman's seeming insensitivity to continuity is obviated in this thesis by an emphasis on both short-term and long-term causes for the emergence of race and sex in their modern forms.

This thesis is structured in two parts, each of which correspond to the two main components of the argument: that race and sex were interrelated on the basis of their common epistemological foundation, and that notions of the human body become more stable over the period. The first part establishes the linkage between sex and race in several ways. Chapter one focuses on this relationship from the racial side. It argues for the fundamental importance of empiricism for the project of grounding identity in the body. It begins by demonstrating that racial theory of the period was fascinated with sex. Discourses of reproduction appear alongside often lurid descriptions of sexual characteristics and behaviours. These are treated in common with other racialised characteristics – such as skin colour, bodily odour, and skeletal configuration – in being assessed through contemporary aesthetic categories. Aesthetic judgements produced attempts to measure and classify beauty and ugliness, giving rise to crude craniometrical and physiognomic techniques. Parallel with this was the use of other empirical markers to denote inner worth, such as language, which was used as a mechanism to assess intellect, although language never functioned as well as a yardstick of race as it did of species.

Chapter two addresses the sexual side of the sex-race interconnection. More explicitly than in chapter one, the focus throughout is on the human body, collectively and individually, as a primary site of this interrelation. The first section discusses one way in which the collective body hosted this interrelationship: the desire to increase the population by reproduction (also

known as philoprogenitivism). The logic of this cultural imperative of the eighteenth century – that the size of a population is an index of its happiness – remained intact, despite appearing to give way rapidly to Malthusian argument after 1800. Many anathematised sexual behaviours, such as abortion, polygamy, and contraception, owed a great deal of their pariah status to the damage they reputedly did to population growth. This pronatalist ideology was so influential that it formed a benchmark by which questions of social and political policy were judged. The individual body, on the other hand, hosted the sex-race interrelation through the naturalisation (or embodiment) of sexual behaviours or attributes in the human form. Sexual identities, such as the sodomite or the onanist (masturbator), were created as a result of the pathologisation and biologisation of deprecated behaviour. Sensible physical markers of these immoral behaviours were thought to exist on the body, which could also be shaped by the unpredictable power of the mother's imagination. Although belief in this waned across the period, it acts as a powerful reminder of the importance of the senses, and of an empiricist epistemology as a whole, for the physical shape of the body and for the moral and intellectual outlook of its inhabitant.

The second part of this thesis moves to tackle the implications of the sex-race interrelationship for the emergence of sex and race. Through three case studies, it shows that both an epistemological and ontological condition must be met before modern embodied identities could be created. The gradual, long-term, domination of empiricism is matched with a shorter-term emergence of a stable human body, largely complete by the 1770s. The case studies, spaced throughout the period, focus in depth on three key episodes in the cultural history of eighteenth-century Britain which bear directly on the sex-race relationship as sketched in part one. Emphasising continuity as well as change, they demonstrate conceptions of the body before, during, and after the emergence of ontological stability.

Chapter three examines three events which took place in 1726: the presentation at court of Peter 'the wild boy', a feral child from Hanover; the reproductive hoax of Mary Toft, who claimed to give birth to seventeen rabbits; and the publication of Jonathan Swift's masterpiece, *Gulliver's Travels*. The

instability of the body in this period is amply demonstrated by Toft's ability to fool even the highest surgeons in the land into believing her tale. Capitalising on the lack of medical agreement on the influence of the maternal imagination over the body of a foetus, Toft undermined the credibility of the medical establishment at the same time as hastening the demise of one of its more egregious and misogynistic errors. However, this was not to come until later in the eighteenth century, and where Toft undermined the ability of the human form to divide humans from animals, Peter frustrated attempts to use language to that end. His lack of speech prompted serious reflection on his humanity – Defoe pondered whether Peter even had a soul – and both he and Toft demonstrated that the body could not be relied upon as a repository of human identity, despite clear evidence in both cases of a commitment to empiricism. What is even more remarkable is that the body was deemed so unreliable at the same time as elements of later racial theorising, including genocide, eugenics, and ethnographic description, were available to Augustan culture. This is shown through an analysis of the fourth book (the 'Voyage to the Land of the Houyhnhnms') of *Gulliver's Travels*, in which Swift utterly undermined human pretensions to reason at the same time as radically resituating human identity in the body. Swift demonstrated the conceivability of corporeal notions of difference which, given the contemporaneous denunciation of his Yahoos as a portrayal of all humans and not just (for example) Africans, were not yet widely deployed. Thus, the conceivability of such notions of difference as well as a continuing commitment to empiricism in the 1720s serves to isolate the instability of the body as a key reason why modern racial and sexual identities were not yet enshrined.

As chapter four will show, this had changed by the 1770s. This chapter examines the representation of the voyages of Captain James Cook to the Pacific. Cook's three voyages (of 1768-71, 1772-5, and 1776-81) were a source of boundless pride for eighteenth-century Britons, and became the stuff of legend as Cook himself entered the pantheon of British heroes following his murder on Hawai'i in 1779. These voyages enabled Britons to take pride in their achievements, especially during the dark days of the American crisis, and also to judge other ethnic groups more precisely and to reinforce metropolitan

gender norms. The voyages brought back a wealth of ethnographic data, in which the public reposed an unprecedented degree of trust. The chapter begins with a discussion of the prior unreliability of voyage accounts and of the change wrought by the Cook voyages. The ethnographic data compiled was used as source material for racial theorists, who were either participants in the voyages or correspondents with those who were. The provision of the materia medica for racial theories in the eighteenth century is perhaps the most significant British contribution to the elaboration of human races. Simultaneously, such data demonstrated the range of sexual practices and moral orders in the Pacific. Authors sought a bourgeois sexual order amongst the peoples living there, and in so doing they naturalised that which they wished to establish at home. They also marginalised other sexualities, and this marginalisation was based on the sexualities of discrete populations in the Pacific. It came to be used, therefore, to support the elaboration of a lasting and influential bipartite racial division of the Pacific. Thus the naturalisation of the metropolitan gender order contributed to the creation of races as to that of the sexes. All of these activities would have been meaningless had it not been for a stable concept of the human body, and a sense that identities grounded therein have a privileged ontological, moral, and epistemological status. Nor indeed would these endeavours have made much sense had the Pacific not been a deeply sexualised zone, even prior to European penetration.

The final case study explores discourses of slavery in the years after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. Chapter five introduces a causal element to the sex-race interrelationship, arguing that sex made race in the British Caribbean in two ways: first, interracial sex between 'blacks' and 'whites' produced the 'coloured' population, a series of racial groups inhabiting a system of racial gradations. Faith in the body to signify identity had become so commonplace by this time that Caribbean peoples, 'white' and 'black', sought to distinguish all possible racial categories on the basis of skin colour. The ineloquence of the skin, already apparent to many metropolitan racial theorists who had already begun to look beneath the skin for more permanent and telling signs, resulted in this system of gradations being so overloaded as to cease to function properly. Second, intra-racial sex within the slave community

contributed to the view of sexual customs as a racial characteristic. The reproductive failure of slaves was a source of frustration for planters but encouragement for abolitionists who remained committed to the notion that the size of a population connoted its wellbeing. The resounding failure of the slave population to increase is partly a result of planter apathy in promoting increase, as marriage continued to be viewed as essential for regular and healthy propagation. With marriage came Christianity and baptism, to which planters – with near unanimity – refused to countenance. As this chapter will conclude, the overall argument of the thesis may be encapsulated within the early-nineteenth-century discourse on slavery: the linkage of sex and race and the progressive stabilisation of the human body both reach their apogee in the cultural systems and norms which fed into the sexual creation of race.

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Abbreviations

Place of publication is London unless otherwise indicated.

Bendyshe, *Treatises*	Thomas Bendyshe (ed.), *The Anthropological Treatises of Johann Friedrich Blumbenbach* (1865).
BL Add. MS	British Library, Additional Manuscripts.
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford.
De Generis$_1$	Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa* (Göttingen, 1775), translated in Bendyshe, *Treatises*, 65-143.
De Generis$_3$	Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa*, 3rd edn. (Göttingen, 1795), translated in Bendyshe, *Treatises*, 145-276.
Edwards, *History*	Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (2 vols., 1793).
Laqueur, *Making*	Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA, 1990).
Locke, *Essay*	John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Roger Woolhouse (2004).
Long, *History*	[Edward Long], *The History of Jamaica* (3 vols., 1774).
MND	[Daniel Defoe], *Mere Nature Delineated: or, A Body without a Soul* (1726).
NLS Monboddo	National Library of Scotland, Monboddo Papers.
Wahrman, *Making*	Dror Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self* (New Haven, CT, 2004).
Williams, *JS*	Kathleen Williams (ed.), *Jonathan Swift: The Critical Heritage* (1995).

AHR	*American Historical Review*
BJECS	*British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* (now *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*)
ECL	*Eighteenth-Century Life*
ECS	*Eighteenth-Century Studies*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
ELH	*English Literary History*
GM	*The Gentleman's Magazine*
HJ	*Historical Journal*
HWJ	*History Workshop Journal*

JBS	*Journal of British Studies*
JHI	*Journal of the History of Ideas*
JHS	*Journal of the History of Sexuality*
JPH	*Journal of Pacific History*
MR	*The Monthly Review*
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary*
P&P	*Past & Present*
Phil. Trans.	*Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*
PMLA	*Proceedings of the Modern Language Association of America*
SVEC	*Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*
TLS	*Times Literary Supplement*
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
W&MQ	*William and Mary Quarterly*

Introduction

I

This thesis focuses on the concepts of 'race' and 'sex' in British culture during the long eighteenth century. It aims to rectify a significant gap in scholarship by exploring the complex interrelation of sex and race, a relationship primarily situated in the human body. In particular, it will be argued that sex and race cannot be understood apart from one another. As the second half of this thesis will show, it is precisely the nature of their interconnection that provides a new perspective on their development in the period under investigation. This period is that in which 'modern' understandings of race and sex gradually emerged, shedding the fluidity that characterised them in the early modern period, and assuming more rigid, discrete, and biologised forms. The emphasis on the body explains why the thesis deals with sex rather than gender, a distinction discussed below.

The argument and structure of this thesis are in two parts, the first establishing the nature of the sex-race relationship, and the second outlining the implications of this for the respective development of the two concepts. Part one of the thesis argues that race and sex, as identities based in or on the body, are also founded on the empiricist epistemology which renders that body interpretable by an observer. The features and behaviours of this body (such as its language, skin colour, hair type, and genitalia) were 'read' by racial theorists, travellers, moral commentators, and the general public. These then interpreted such empirical data to construct, maintain, or challenge notions of sexual and

racial identity. The two chapters in this part focus on the racial and sexual sides of the race-sex interrelationship, respectively. Chapter one establishes the importance of sex for the formation of racial identities, and outlines the empirical basis of this relationship. Chapter two then broadens the range of discourses in which the interrelation can be seen to subsist to those more self-evidently sexual, and emphasises the role of the human body as the site of interconnection.

As a result of situating the sex-race relationship within the body, it becomes possible to reinterpret the change in these concepts which took place over the course of the century. This change was the move away from a mode characterised by fluidity and easily blurred and transgressed boundaries, to one more concrete, discrete, and resistant to transgression. In the words of one recent account, this was a movement away from 'play' towards 'panic'.[1] Part two of the thesis argues that this change had both a long term epistemological and a short term ontological cause, and the specifics of this argument dictate the particular dates which bound the period under investigation. The epistemological cause was simply the progressive domination of empiricism, over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as *the* source of knowledge about the natural world. An empiricist epistemology was a necessary, rather than efficient, cause of the modern embodied identities of sex and race. In other words, the relationship between sex and race was *underwritten* by an empiricist epistemology, the most influential definition of which was offered in John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

[1] Wahrman, *Making*, 41-4. See also his 'On Queen Bees and Being Queens: A Late-Eighteenth-Century "Cultural Revolution"?', in Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman (eds.), *The Age of Cultural Revolutions: Britain and France, 1750-1820* (2002), 251-80.

(1690). Few scholars have discussed the importance of empiricism for modern ideas of race or as a basis for the relation of these to sex.[2] Empiricism provided observers of the human body with confidence that the data they received via the senses could not be seriously challenged by alternative knowledges, such as scriptural or classical authority. However, the body remained stubbornly ambivalent, as chapter three will show. Consequently, before concrete identities based on the authentic reality of the body could emerge, agreement on the nature of that body was necessary. Thus, an ontologically stable body was required and, as chapters four and five will argue, this was in place by the 1770s and became absolutely fundamental by the time slavery in the British Caribbean was abolished, five years after the passage of the 1833 Abolition Act.

In accordance with this bipartite argument, the two parts of the thesis are methodologically distinct. The first draws widely from discourses on race, aesthetics, language, political economy, and sexual texts of various kinds to establish the nature of the sex-race relationship. The second part, in attempting to provide an account of change for concepts as widely discussed as sex and race, is in the form of three case studies. These allow for a more minute focus on particular events in the cultural history of the period, in which the sex-race relationship can be seen at work. These events were significant enough to be familiar, in most cases, to people today, and they attracted a range of comment from contemporaries, something which the wide source base for each endeavours to capture. This thesis aims primarily to fill the gap in scholarship on race and sex in the period, created by the sad neglect or haphazard treatment

[2] Rare exceptions are Terrence W. Epperson, 'The Politics of Empiricism and the Construction of Race as an Analytical Category', *Transforming Anthropology*, 5 (1994), 15-19; Nicholas Hudson, 'The "Hottentot Venus," Sexuality, and the Changing Aesthetics of Race, 1650-1850', *Mosaic*, 41 (2008), 19-41.

of their interrelationship. Before proceeding to explore this gap, the remainder of this section will establish an historical and conceptual context.

Race has only lately entered the historiography of eighteenth-century Britain. This is partly the result of a recently remedied neglect of the eighteenth-century empire, and is also a consequence of the tendency, prevalent amongst American historians, to deal with questions of race in terms, literally, of black and white.[3] The problematic relationship of slavery to race – which came first? – has also contributed to a tendency to banish race to the imperial margins of eighteenth-century British history.[4] Recently, however, historians have come to recognise the importance of empire for understanding the British Isles in the

[3] This tendency has been recently critiqued by Roxann Wheeler, whose narrow source base and continued use of the term 'race' to describe religious and sartorial difference greatly weakens her argument. Her view that skin colour became the primary signifier of race after 1770, although shared by Marcus Wood, requires qualification, as chapter 1 will show. See Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race* (Philadelphia, 2000); Marcus Wood, *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography* (Oxford, 2002), 142. For a scathing critique of Wheeler, see Benjamin Braude, review of *The Complexion of Race*, *W&MQ*, 3rd ser., 59 (2002), 742-6. More sympathetic is Isaac Land, 'Bread and Arsenic: Citizenship from the Bottom up in Georgian London', *Journal of Social History*, 39 (2005), 89-110 at 90-93. For historians guilty of this Manichaean perspective, see Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1968); Duncan J. MacLeod, *Slavery, Race, and the American Revolution* (Cambridge, 1974); Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY, 1995); Harold E. Pagliaro (ed.), *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, iii: *Racism in the Eighteenth Century* (Cleveland, OH, 1973). Peter Fryer is a British historian who takes the same perspective. See his *Staying Power* (1984). On the renewed interest in the eighteenth century empire, see Linda Colley, *Britons* (1994); James Walvin, *Fruits of Empire* (1997); P. J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, ii: *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1998); Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1998); ead., *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (2003); ead. (ed.), *The New Imperial History* (Cambridge, 2004); Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern (eds.), *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* (Philadelphia, 1999); David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2002).

[4] See references in n. 3, above, and Eric E. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1944); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY, 1966); id., *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (1975); Jordan, *White over Black*; MacLeod, *Slavery*; Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in the Making of New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, 2004).

period.[5] Notwithstanding the loss of America, the British Empire grew exponentially over the course of the century, particularly after 1759. More people were travelling to more places, trading more goods, meeting more people, and publishing more texts describing their experiences than had been the case in previous centuries.[6] In addition, the gradual professionalization of science – especially medicine – and the separation of intellectual endeavour into disciplines also proceeded apace.[7] By the end of the eighteenth century, naval expeditions including scientists as part of the ships' company were being despatched with supposedly no other end in sight than the acquisition of knowledge.[8] As chapter four will show, this imperial circulation of knowledge was of great moment for the elaboration of models of racial difference.

Understandably, race is a concept with a troubled past. Treated as a relatively straightforward biological entity by historians until the 1980s, it has

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[5] Kathleen Wilson is the preeminent historian in this regard. See esp. her *Sense of the People*, and *Island Race*.

[6] For example, over fifty collections of travel accounts appeared over the course of the eighteenth century, compared to none between 1625 and 1704. See Anthony J. Barker, *The African Link: British Attitudes to the Negro in the Era of the African Slave Trade* (1978), 21-2. On travel literature, see also P. J. Marshall and Glyndwr Williams, *The Great Map of Mankind: British Perceptions of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (1982); Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (Berkeley, 1962); Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840* (Oxford, 2002).

[7] See Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (1996); id. and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump* (Princeton, 1985); John Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1994); G. S. Rousseau, 'Science and the Discovery of the Imagination in Enlightened England', *ECS*, 3 (1969), 108-35; id., 'Science Books and their Readership in the Eighteenth Century', in Isabel Rivers (ed.), *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Leicester, 1982), 197-255, reprinted in G. S. Rousseau, *Enlightenment Borders* (Manchester 1991), ch. 12; Roy Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (2000); id. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Science*, iv: *Eighteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge, 2003); id. and Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *The Scientific Revolution in National Context* (Cambridge, 1992); Roy Porter and William F. Bynum (eds.), *William Hunter and the Eighteenth-Century Medical World* (Cambridge, 1985); Andrew Wear, *Health and Healing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 1998); Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science, and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* (Oxford, 2005); Adrian Wilson, *The Making of Man-Midwifery* (1995).

[8] See ch. 4, below.

remarkably quickly come to be viewed as a cultural construct.[9] The production of histories of race over the course of the twentieth century highlighted its artificiality, at the same time as it became politically expedient to reject race as a biological characteristic.[10] Once race was firmly situated in the cultural domain, scholars in the 1990s began to examine its construction in locations beyond its traditional habitat – the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – finding it in such diverse places and times as China, India, classical antiquity, and medieval and early modern Europe.[11] In support of these analyses, some scholars have defined race in such a way as to de-emphasise biological and highlight cultural factors. For example, Roxann Wheeler's catch-all term

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[9] See Jordan's 'Note on the Concept of Race', in *White over Black*, 583-5, and Kathleen Brown's acute discussion of Jordan's use of 'race' in her essay 'Native Americans and Early Modern Concepts of Race', in Daunton and Halpern (eds.), *Empire and Others*, 79-100. See also her *Good Wives*, 109-16; Land, 'Bread and Arsenic', 90-93. This recognition was roughly coterminous with the deprectation of 'negro' as a term for people originating in Sub-Saharan Africa.

[10] See Eric Voegelin, *The History of the Race Idea*, tr. Ruth Hein, ed. Klaus Vondung (vol. iii of *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*) (Baton Rouge, LA, 1998 [1933]); Voegelin, 'The Growth of the Race Idea', *Review of Politics*, 2 (1940), 283-317; Hannah Arendt, 'Race-Thinking Before Racism', *Review of Politics*, 6 (1944), 36-73; Thomas F. Gossett, *Race: The History of an Idea in America* (New York, 1965); Jordan, *White over Black*; Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, tr. Edmund Howard (1974); MacLeod, *Slavery*; Michael Banton, *The Idea of Race* (1977); id., *Racial Theories*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1998); George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (1978); Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800-1960* (1982); Ivan Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Baltimore, 1996); Hannah Franziska Augstein (ed.), *Race: The Origins of an Idea, 1760-1850* (Bristol, 1996); Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, rev. edn. (New York, 1996); Wheeler, *Complexion*; Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races* (Cambridge, 2006).

[11] Frank Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (1992); Mark Harrison, *Climates and Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India, 1600-1850* (Oxford, 2002); Peter Robb (ed.), *The Concept of Race in South Asia* (Oxford, 1997); Shruti Kapila, 'Race Matters: Orientalism and Religion, India and Beyond c.1770-1880', *Modern Asian Studies*, 41 (2007), 471-513 (I am grateful to Chris Bayly for this reference); Jonathon Glassman, 'Slower than a Massacre: The Multiple Sources of Racial Thought in Colonial Africa', *AHR*, 109 (2004), 720-54; Alain Froment, 'Race et Histoire: la recomposition idéologique de l'image des Égyptiens anciens', *Journal des africanistes*, 64 (1994), 37-64; Martin Bernal, *Black Athena* (3 vols., 1987); id., *Black Athena Writes Back*, ed. David Chioni Moore (2001), 23, 28; S. O. Y. Keita, '*Black Athena*: "Race," Bernal and Snowden', *Arethusa*, 26 (1993), 295-314; Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (1967); special issue on 'Race and Ethnicity in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 31, 1 (2001); Hall, *Things of Darkness*; Jordan, *White over Black*; Richard H. Popkin, 'Medicine, Racism, Anti-Semitism: A Dimension of Enlightenment Culture', in G. S. Rousseau (ed.), *The Languages of Psyche: Mind and Body in Enlightenment Thought* (Oxford, 1990), 405-42; Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton (eds.), *Race in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2007).

'multiplicity' seeks to incorporate both biological and cultural components of race, which leads her to treat religion and clothing as racial attributes.[12] While it is important to distinguish between the scientific racialism (discussed below) of the nineteenth century and the more protean and inchoate notions of race which subsisted prior to this time, such a definition of race risks divesting the concept of all analytical value. There is, therefore, scope for a notion of race sufficiently capacious to include cultural elements, but which must remain based on the flesh-and-blood reality of the human form for the sake of clarity, comparability, and accuracy. However, no prescriptive definition of the concept is offered here. An understanding of the conception should become clear over the course of this thesis which itself acts, in part, as a history of the idea of race in the period, focused on the physical body and on race's epistemological and ontological prerequisites.[13]

The focus of this thesis on racial theory, as opposed to more pervasive 'racism' or 'race prejudice', will assist this clarification. There are two main reasons for this focus. First, 'racism' comes with significant conceptual baggage. It represents a branch of ethnocentric prejudice, foregrounding the permanence and innateness of characteristics, but which nevertheless does not require a fully fledged and coherent racial theory to do its work.[14] Racism is of much greater vintage than 'racialism', which (after Kwame Anthony Appiah) denotes a belief in distinct races, based on such shared and heritable characteristics as fuel

[12] Roxann Wheeler, '"My Savage", "My Man": Racial Multiplicity in *Robinson Crusoe*', *ELH*, 62 (1995), 821-61; ead., *Complexion*.
[13] Colin Kidd also resists the temptation to define race in his *Forging of Races*, 2.
[14] Nancy Leys Stepan, 'Race, Gender, Science and Citizenship', *Gender and History*, 10 (1998), 26-52 at 37; Peter J. Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter* (Basingstoke, 2007), 11-12; George M. Fredrickson, *Racism* (Oxford, 2002), 5-6. Cf. David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (2002), 13, which claims that racism cannot occur without a supporting ideology of race.

racism.[15] Where racism does not require racial theory, racialism does, but the nineteenth-century connotations of racialism would make its use, certainly in discussions of the earlier eighteenth century, somewhat anachronistic.[16] Racial theory is therefore preferable, as the body of thought which constitutes the key precondition for racialism. Second, the longevity and pervasiveness of racism would impose severe restraints on any study of its links with sex. To limit its study to Britain in the eighteenth century would not only be to impose somewhat artificial constraints, it would be unfeasible for a thesis-length treatment.[17] Racial theories form a body of texts, the production of which both began in the period under investigation, and took place overwhelmingly but not exclusively in the metropole. This means that they are sufficiently few to permit analysis of continuity and change over a longer period. Those racial theories produced in Britain or which were particularly influential for British thinkers are studied, and this geographical limit is due both to the fact that race in the Americas has been well studied, and because a wider scope would result in a

[15] Kwame Anthony Appiah, 'Racisms', in David Theo Goldberg (ed.), *Anatomy of Racism* (Minneapolis, 1990), 3-17 at 4-5. See also Peter J. Kitson, '"Candid Reflections": The Idea of Race in the Debate over the Slave Trade and Slavery in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century', in Brycchan Carey, Markman Ellis, and Sara Salih (eds.), *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition: Britain and its Colonies, 1760-1838* (Basingstoke, 2004), 11-25 at 12.

[16] George Boulukos makes a distinction between the 'theory' and 'practice' of race in the eighteenth century, analogous to that between racialism and racism. See George Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (Cambridge, 2008), 95-6.

[17] On race relations in eighteenth-century Britain, see James Walvin, *Black and White: The Negro and English Society, 1555-1945* (1973); Folarin Shyllon, *Black People in Britain, 1555-1833* (1977); Gretchen Gerzina, *Black England* (1995); Norma Myers, 'The Black Presence Through Criminal Records, 1780-1830', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 7 (1988), 292-307; David Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth-Century English Art* (Manchester, 1987); Douglas A. Lorimer, 'Black Slaves and English Liberty: A Re-Examination of Racial Slavery in England', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 3 (1984), 121-50.

proliferation of contexts.[18] Such a comparative analysis would be extremely valuable, but is beyond the scope of a thesis-length study.

Sex has been given more even treatment by historians of eighteenth-century Britain. Apart from pioneering studies of sexuality and relations between the sexes dating from the inter-war period, serious historical interest in eighteenth-century sex only emerged with women's history in the 1960s and 1970s.[19] Following the turn to gender in the 1980s and the concurrent development of the history of sexuality, accounts of sex in the eighteenth century appeared with increasing frequency.[20] Nonetheless, older myths of the century as a period of comparative sexual abandon, sandwiched between early modern rambunctiousness and Victorian austerity, have proven difficult to eradicate.[21] The focus of most histories of sexuality on aberrant and illegitimate sexualities has greatly contributed to a notion of eighteenth-century

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[18] See, for example, George Fredrickson's argument that racism is nationally specific: Fredrickson, *Racism*, 75.

[19] See Iwan Bloch, *Sexual Life in England*, tr. William H. Forstern (1938); Alice Clark, *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century* (1919). The foundational work on sex in the eighteenth century is Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (1977).

[20] See Paul-Gabriel Boucé (ed.), *Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Manchester, 1982); Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (1982); Robert Purks Maccubbin (ed.), *'Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorised Sexuality During the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1985); Roy Porter and G. S. Rousseau (eds.), *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1987); Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality* (Oxford, 1990); Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science: The History of Attitudes to Sexuality* (Cambridge, 1994); Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (1995); Ruth Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England', *ECS*, 2 (1996), 204-34; Tim Hitchcock, *English Sexualities, 1700-1800* (Basingstoke, 1997); Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus (eds.), *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England* (1997); eaed. (eds.), *Women's History, 1700-1850* (Abingdon, 2005); Robert B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850* (1998); Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720* (Oxford, 1998); Randolph Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, i: *Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (1998); Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (2003).

[21] See the work of the late Roy Porter, esp. his 'Mixed Feelings: The Enlightenment and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in Boucé (ed.), *Sexuality*, 1-27; Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (1982); id. and Lesley Hall, *The Facts of Life: The Creation of Sexual Knowledge in England, 1650-1950* (1995). On (the impropriety of) Victorian austerity, see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, i: *The Will to Knowledge*, tr. Robert Hurley (1998); Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality* (Oxford, 1994).

exceptionalism.[22] Demographic change is one basis for this myth: the last half of the eighteenth century witnessed a rapid rise in population size without a commensurate drop in mortality, suggesting an increase in conceptions.[23] At the same time, ideals of maternity and domesticity were increasingly at work to confine women within the so-called 'domestic sphere', as industrialisation gathered momentum and the sexual division of labour became more pronounced.[24] By the early nineteenth century, homekeeping and childbearing had become the only legitimate form of women's work, at least for the middle classes.[25] From the mid-1990s, historians such as Amanda Vickery have strongly challenged elements of this account, and the early nineteenth century now appears far less bleak for women, even if their 'confinement' remained a middle-class ideal.[26] Unlike histories of race, those of sex and gender have been sensitive to issues of class differentiation, although there remains little work on the sexual lives of women from the lower classes in the eighteenth century.[27]

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[22] See, for example, Porter and Rousseau (eds.), *Sexual Underworlds*; Maccubbin, *'Tis Nature's Fault*; Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. i; William Naphy, *Sex Crimes: From Renaissance to Enlightenment* (Stroud, 2002); Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality and its Discontents* (1985).

[23] E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871* (Cambridge, 1989), 417-20; Douglas Hay and Nicholas Rogers, *Eighteenth-Century English Society* (Oxford, 1997); Porter, *English Society*; E. A. Wrigley, 'British Population During the "Long" Eighteenth Century, 1680-1840', in Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain* (2 vols., Cambridge, 2004), i. 57-95.

[24] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (1987). Cf. Amanda Vickery, 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History', *HJ*, 36 (1993), 383-414; ead., *The Gentleman's Daughter* (1998), 1-12. See also Shoemaker, *Gender*, *passim*.

[25] See esp. Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast'; Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*; Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter*.

[26] See Vickery, 'Golden Age', *passim*.

[27] Faramerz Noshir Dabhoiwala, 'Prostitution and Police in London, *c.*1660-*c.*1760' (University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1995); Tony Henderson, *Disorderly Women in Eighteenth-Century London: Prostitution and Control in the Metropolis, 1730-1830* (1999); Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, vol. i; Bradford K. Mudge, *The Whore's Story: Women, Pornography, and the British Novel, 1684-1830* (Oxford, 2000); Vern L. Bullough, 'Prostitution and Reform in Eighteenth-Century England', in Maccubbin (ed.), *'Tis Nature's Fault*, 61-74; Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*.

Conceptually, sex is complicated by at least two factors: its relation to gender, and its sheer ambiguity. Since the 1970s, feminist critics have commented on the undesirability of the sex/gender binary, as the notion of a purely biological 'sex' which forms the basis of a purely cultural 'gender' misrepresents both concepts.[28] In the face of assertions that cultural differences were really biological, feminists attempted to evacuate 'sex' of its significatory power by making all apparently biological differences fundamentally cultural.[29] By the late 1980s/early 1990s, scholars such as Joan Scott and Judith Butler acknowledged the real differences that subsisted in the human body, but argued that the human abstraction, 'sex', was discursively constituted even if it was more anchored to a corporeal reality than 'gender'.[30] An important manifestation of these ideas was Thomas Laqueur's seminal *Making Sex* (1990). In this text, discussed in more detail below, Laqueur historicised the sex/gender relationship by inverting its modern configuration for the period before the eighteenth century. What has emerged from this debate is a concept of 'sex' which remains fundamentally based on the physical body, but which has far less prescriptive power than it had hitherto.[31] This thesis builds on these ideas by demonstrating the structural equivalence of sex and race, pointing to their

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[28] Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York, 2000); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (1990); ead., *Bodies that Matter* (1993); Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (1992); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, rev. edn. (2008); Sherry B. Ortner, 'Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?', *Feminist Studies*, 1 (1972), 5-31; ead. and Harriet Whitehead (eds.), *Sexual Meanings* (Cambridge, 1981).

[29] See Linda Nicholson, 'Interpreting Gender', *Signs*, 20 (1994), 79-105.

[30] Butler, *Bodies that Matter*; Joan Wallach Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *AHR*, 91 (1986), 1053-75; ead., *Gender and the Politics of History*, rev. edn. (New York, 1999).

[31] Nicholson, 'Interpreting Gender', 83; Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1989).

constructed nature but emphasising their historical basis in the reality of the body.

The ambiguity of the word 'sex', as both sexual difference and sexual intercourse, is a second complicating factor. However, such homonymy is an advantage, since this thesis will address both sexual difference *and* sexual intercourse. As shown by several chapters below, sexual intercourse was fundamental to the creation and definition of racial difference. The interrelation between sex and race, established in part one of the thesis, therefore implies that sexual intercourse was also crucial to the emergence of opposite sexes, as argued by Laqueur.[32] This implication is not definitively established, being beyond the scope of this thesis, but it should be recognised that the use of the word 'sex' in its title is homonymous.

II

Unlike the relationship between race and sex, that between race and gender has been widely discussed. A lively scholarship has emerged which explores the connections between them in slavery,[33] in the representation of non-European women in travel literature, science, art, fiction, and drama,[34] and

[32] See also Michael McKeon, 'Historicising Patriarchy: The Emergence of Gender Difference in England, 1660-1760', *ECS*, 28 (1995), 295-322.
[33] Hilary McD. Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (1989); Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (1990); Morgan, *Laboring Women*; Henrice Altink, *Representations of Slave Women in Discourses on Slavery and Abolition, 1780-1838* (2007); Brown, *Good Wives*; Wood, *Slavery*; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Acculturation* (1992).
[34] See, for example, Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts* (Oxford, 1995); Londa Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science* (1993); Catherine A. J. Molineux, 'The Peripheries Within: Race, Slavery, and Empire in Early Modern England' (Ph.D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University, 2005); Wheeler, *Complexion*; Hall, *Things of Darkness*.

in the histories of empire and nationalism.[35] However, much of this work focuses on social practice in the form of sexism and racism. Where scholarship on gender and race discusses more biological matters, such as the genital structure of 'Hottentots' – widely perceived in the period to signify an aberrant sexuality – it has tended to reinforce the construction of the racial, rather than sexual body.[36] Historians have recognised that notions of non-European sexuality were naturalised in the human body, but in being associated more with the creation of racial categories, the interrelation of sex and race remains understudied by the rich literature on race and gender.

This problem has not gone unnoticed. From the outset, the history of sexuality has acknowledged a close affinity between sex and race.[37] However, works in this field have been content largely to hint at this linkage without developing a sustained account of it. Laqueur stated that scientific race 'developed at the same time and in response to the same sorts of pressures as

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[35] Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire* (Oxford, 2004); Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality* (Manchester, 1990); Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (1995); Ross Forman, 'Race and Empire', in H. G. Cocks and Matt Houlbrook (eds.), *Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality* (Basingstoke, 2006), 109-32; Wilson, *Island Race*; ead., 'Thinking Back: Gender Misrecognition and Polynesian Subversions Aboard the Cook Voyages', in ead. (ed.), *New Imperial History*, 345-62; Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore, 1995); ead., *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2003); Joanna De Groot, '"Sex" and "Race": The Construction of Language and Image in the Nineteenth Century', in Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall, *Sexuality and Subordination* (1989), 89-128; George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality* (New York, 1985).

[36] Nicholas Hudson, '"Hottentots" and the Evolution of European Racism', *Journal of European Studies*, 34 (2004), 308-32; id., '"Hottentot Venus"'; Sander L. Gilman, 'Black Bodies: White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature', *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1985), 204-42, reprinted in Henry Louis Gates, Jr., *"Race," Writing, and Difference* (Chicago, 1986), 223-61; Londa Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?* (Cambridge, MA, 1989); ead., 'The Anatomy of Difference: Race and Sex in Eighteenth-Century Science', *ECS*, 23 (1990), 387-405; ead., *Nature's Body*. Another typical example, although dealing with African-Americans in particular, is Robyn Wiegman, *American Anatomies: Theorizing Race and Gender* (Durham, NC, 1995).

[37] Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. i; Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995); ead., *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (2002).

biological sex,' but refrained from discussing this in any greater depth.[38] This is typical of the treatment of race in much gender history, which has lately incorporated race as a supplement to its primary focus, the analysis of sex and/or gender.[39] A more balanced approach has characterised works of cultural criticism, older examples of which tended to focus on social practice in the same manner as the scholarship on race and gender.[40] More recent work pays greater attention to the conceptual realm, but is of limited use for historians thanks to its detailed – and ultimately prescriptive – theorisations of the concept of race, which emphasise the existing presentist perspective of such scholarship.[41]

There do exist significant exceptions to the historiographical picture painted thus far. Several scholars have recognised the importance of the interrelation of sex and race and have treated it in an historical framework. Two of the most notable are the historians of science, Londa Schiebinger and Nancy Stepan. Both approached the relationship of sex and race in a similar fashion in the 1980s. Their view that these shared an analogic relationship has proven influential, even if it ultimately frustrates a more immediate connection between sex and race by interposing 'metaphor' or 'analogy' as a mediating factor in their relationship.[42] In the 1990s, however, they moved closer to the

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[38] Laqueur, *Making*, 155. See also Karen Harvey, *Reading Sex in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2004), 78-9, 139-45; ead., 'The Substance of Sexual Difference: Change and Persistence in Representations of the Body in Eighteenth-Century England', *Gender and History*, 14 (2002), 202-23.

[39] See, for example, Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, ch. 8; Karen Harvey, 'Sexuality and the Body', in Barker and Chalus (eds.), *Women's History*, 78-99.

[40] Paul Hoch, *White Hero Black Beast* (1979); Calvin C. Hernton, *Sex and Racism* (1970); Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis, *Racialised Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour, and Class in the Anti-Racist Struggle* (1992), ch. 1.

[41] Naomi Zack, *Race/Sex: Their Sameness, Difference, and Interplay* (1997); ead., *Philosophy of Science and Race* (2002); Joane Nagel, *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality* (Oxford, 2003).

[42] Nancy Stepan, 'Race and Gender: The Role of Analogy in Science', *Isis*, 77 (1986), 261-77; Schiebinger, 'Anatomy of Difference'; ead., *The Mind Has No Sex?*, 211-13. For an example of the influence of this analogic relationship, see Wiegman, *American Anatomies*, ch. 2.

perspective offered here. In *Nature's Body* (1993), Schiebinger provided an account of how gender influenced the study of race in the eighteenth century, but acknowledged 'one could also demonstrate how race influenced the study of sex, but not within the confines of a book primarily about gender.'[43] This thesis aims to eschew the dichotomous question of mutual influence, preferring instead to examine shared epistemological foundations, and the implications of these for the subsequent development of both categories. If the thesis tends to discuss racial more than sexual ideas, this is because sexual ideas have been thoroughly addressed in scholarship on the period, and also for reasons of producing a feasible study. This approach is indebted to Stepan's essay, 'Race, Gender, Science and Citizenship' (1998), which called for the abandonment of appeals to nature and the body in framing political rights and subjectivities. In doing so, Stepan pointed to the construction of racial and sexual difference through a process of 'ontologising via embodiment.'[44] The emphasis of this formulation, on the corporeal basis for racial and sexual identity, is at the heart of the argument put forward in this thesis.

III

Central to the argument of this thesis is the notion, which has enjoyed broad agreement, that a change took place in the concepts of sex and race over the eighteenth century.[45] Despite the lingering belief that 'the modern concept of race … did not exist until the mid-nineteenth century', most historians would agree that it emerged earlier, probably in the last decades of the eighteenth

[43] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body*, 116.
[44] Stepan, 'Race, Gender, Science and Citizenship', 29.
[45] This is shared by almost all works on both race and sex. See nn. 10 and 20, above.

century.[46] This was manifested, in part, by a growing clarity of the meaning of the word 'race' and cognates, such as 'nation'.[47] Among the most common reasons given by historians for this development are the campaigns against slavery,[48] the existence of modern biological sciences,[49] the emergence of modern aesthetics,[50] and the role of political and imperial developments.[51] Others focus on the importance of particular philosophers for ideas of race, especially David Hume and Immanuel Kant, contributing to the revisionist picture of the Enlightenment as productive of discrimination and cruelty.[52] While there is broad agreement that the turn to modern scientific racialism took

[46] Marius Turda, 'New Perspectives on Race and Eugenics', *HJ*, 51 (2008), 1115-24 at 1116. See also Kidd, *Forging of Races*; Barker, *African Link*; Philip Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780-1850* (1965); Jordan, *White over Black*; Popkin, 'Medicine, Racism, Anti-Semitism'; id., 'The Philosophical Basis of Eighteenth-Century Racism', in Pagliaro (ed.), *Studies*, iii. 245-62; Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*; Hannaford, *Race*; Nicholas Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race": The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *ECS*, 29 (1996), 247-64; MacLeod, *Slavery*; Kitson, *Romantic Literature*; Walvin, *Black and White*; Shyllon, *Black People*; Fryer, *Staying Power*; Emanuel Chukwudi Eze (ed.), *Race and the Enlightenment* (Oxford, 1997), 1-9; Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*; Frederickson, *Racism*, 52-3. Works that argue for the nineteenth-century invention of race include Banton, *Racial Theories*; Stepan, *Idea of Race*; Gould, *Mismeasure of Man*; Waltraud Ernst, 'Introduction' in ead. and Bernard Harris (eds.), *Race, Science and Medicine, 1700-1960* (1999), 1-28. Siep Stuurman has argued that modern race emerged at the end of the seventeenth century. See his 'François Bernier and the Invention of Racial Classification', *HWJ*, 50 (2000), 1-21.

[47] Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race"'; Banton, *Racial Theories*, 1-16; Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (1988), 248-9.

[48] See, for example, Augstein, 'Introduction', in ead. (ed.), *Race*, pp. ix-xxxiii at p. x; Barker, *African Link*, 155-200; Williams, *Capitalism*, 7; Fryer, *Staying Power*, 165-90. Cf. Boulukos, *Grateful Slave*, which disputes the claim in much of this scholarship that race was created when slavery was under threat.

[49] See, for example, Stepan, *Idea of Race*, ch. 1; Schiebinger, *Nature's Body*; ead., *Mind Has No Sex?*; ead., 'Anatomy of Difference'; Frederickson, *Racism*, 56-9; Gould, *Mismeasure of Man*, ch. 1.

[50] Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*; Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 1-16.

[51] MacLeod, *Slavery*, ch. 4; Wilson, *Island Race*, chs. 2, 4; see also the works in n. 4, above.

[52] Few recent histories of race have omitted either Hume or Kant. The following have devoted most attention to these and other philosophers: Eze, *Race*; id., 'Hume, Race, and Human Nature', *JHI*, 61 (2000), 691-8; Popkin, 'Philosophical Basis'; id., 'Hume's Racism', *The Philosophical Forum*, 9 (1977-8), 211-26; Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore (eds.), *The German Invention of Race* (Albany, NY, 2006); Andrew Valls (ed.), *Race and Racism in Modern Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY, 2005); Robert Bernasconi (ed.), *Race* (Oxford, 2001). The revisionist picture of the Enlightenment was originally and perhaps most polemically expressed in Adorno and Horkheimer. See their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1997 [1944]).

place during the 'age of revolutions', there is less agreement on what it came to replace and whether this replacement was total.

Indeed, race was not the only means of describing human populations, or even the most important. Religion had long been a crucial register of difference.[53] Broad ethno-religious prejudice saturated early modern accounts of human difference, and continued to feature well into the nineteenth century.[54] The state of religion also contributed to the more secular categories of civilisation and savagery. This latter category came in 'noble' and 'ignoble' forms, pointing to an ambivalence at the heart of the notion of savagery that was neatly encapsulated by the problematic relationship of stadial theory to race.[55] Stadial theory, the belief that all human societies passed through a set number of stages, usually characterised by the mode of subsistence, on their unstoppable movement from savagery to civilisation, was an innovation of French and Scottish political economists after 1750.[56] This totalising interpretation of human history appeared to leave little scope for modes of thought which posited absolute and unbridgeable difference, such as race.

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[53] See Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1999); id., *Forging of Races*; Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1964), 207-51; Adam Lively, *Masks: Blackness, Race, and the Imagination* (1999), 13-54; Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, pp. xi-xvi, 1-16. Roxann Wheeler's problematic account is based on the existence of alternatives to 'race'. See n. 3, above.

[54] For two examples from the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, respectively, see Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East India* (1655), 17, 23; James Cowles Prichard, *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, 2nd edn. (2 vols., 1826), ii. 422-4.

[55] On the 'noble savage', see Hoxie Neale Fairchild, *The Noble Savage: A Study in Romantic Naturalism* (New York, 1928); Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage* (2001); Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore, 1978), 183-96; Christopher Fox, 'Introduction: How to Prepare a Noble Savage: The Spectacle of Human Science', in id., Roy Porter, and Robert Wokler (eds.), *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains* (1995), 1-30. For the transition from noble to ignoble savagery, see p. 234, below.

[56] Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge, 1976); Silvia Sebastiani, '"Race", Women, and Progress in the Late Scottish Enlightenment', in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (eds.), *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* (Basingstoke, 2005), 75-96; Sylvana Tomaselli, 'The Enlightenment Debate on Women', *HWJ*, 20 (1985), 101-24.

However, as Wheeler has recently shown, racist assumptions permeated the cultural anthropology of stadial theorists.[57] Race appears to lurk in the shadows of such seemingly universal models after all.

In addition to the range of alternatives for race, elements of later racial thought were clearly present before 1775. Sixteenth-century Iberian ideas concerning hereditary Jewishness had a wide impact, especially in the extra-European world, that arguably led to the elaborate system of racial gradations in Britain's Caribbean colonies, discussed in chapter five.[58] Even Biblical ethnology, which explained human diversity through a genealogical model traceable to Noah's three sons, Ham, Shem, and Japhet, placed emphasis on the importance of a notion of heredity.[59] This was especially the case with Ham, whose curse was, as unconvincingly argued by enthusiastic exegetes and apologists of slavery, the cause at once of blackness and of its inferiority.[60] This genealogical schema was also used to support nascent English or British nationalism, and fed into movements such as Gothicism and, later, Anglo-Saxon racialism, as the mixture of concepts which composed eighteenth-century racial thought were applied to intra-European diversity.[61]

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[57] Wheeler, *Complexion*, 181-92; Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, 5.
[58] See esp. Popkin, 'Medicine, Racism, Anti-Semitism'; Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, pp. xi-xvi; Hannaford, *Race*, ch. 4; Frederickson, *Racism*, 31-5.
[59] Kidd, *British Identities*, ch. 2; Popkin, 'Medicine, Racism, Anti-Semitism'.
[60] On Ham's curse see Gen. ix. 20-28. Thomas Brown, Robert Boyle, and Morgan Godwyn all complained against these unwarranted claims in the seventeenth century, testifying to their popularity. See Browne, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica: or, Enquiries into Very many received Tenents, And commonly presumed Truths* (1646), 322-34; Boyle, *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (1664), 159-60; Godwyn, *Negro's and Indian's Advocate* (1680), 14-18.
[61] Kidd, *British Identities*, *passim*; Reginald Horsman, 'Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850', *JHI*, 37 (1976), 387-410, reprinted in Maryanne Cline Horowitz (ed.), *Race, Gender and Rank: Early Modern Ideas of Humanity* (Rochester, NY, 1992), 77-100; Hugh A. MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History* (Hanover, NH, 1982); Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism* (New York, 1987), 115-19.

The survival of religious explanations of difference points to the incompleteness of the triumph of modern scientific racialism *after* 1775. Monogenism, a belief in the Mosaic account of creation, remained of vital importance in Britain, where the Enlightenment was far less anticlerical than in France.[62] Monogenism's heterodox counterpart, polygenism, held that more than one act of creation had taken place, and that all human races were attributable to either these originally distinct groups or their intermixture. It is important to recognise that monogenism was no less racist than polygenism – slavery existed within a monogenist paradigm – but it was less conducive to the sense of permanent difference espoused by racialism. (Equally, it was quite possible to be a thoroughgoing racialist and yet opposed to slavery.) The marginality of polygenism did not obviate the need for monogenists to explain all human diversity from a single couple.[63] The influence of the climate became the chief explanation of diversity. Food was a significant component of climatic explanations. Cannibalism was prominent in travel literature and racial theories, and some of the more sophisticated climatic theories placed nutrition at the heart of biological change.[64] The shortcomings of a straightforward one-to-one correspondence with the sun and blackness led to accounts which

[62] See Roy Porter, *The Enlightenment* (1990), 32-41; id., *Enlightenment* (2000), 481-4; Kidd, *Forging of Races*, esp. 83-4.

[63] Peter Kitson has recently claimed that polygenism was probably more influential than many historians admit (Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, 21). However, this influence appears to have been limited, before the mid-nineteenth century, to France and the US, where powerful anticlericalism and the need to uphold slavery (respectively) led to a depreciation of scriptural authority.

[64] Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge, 1990), 80-90; Daniel Cottom, *Cannibals and Philosophers: Bodies of Enlightenment* (Baltimore, 2001), chs. 1, 5; Claude Rawson, 'Savages Noble and Ignoble: Natives, Cannibals, Third Parties, and Others in South Pacific Narratives by Gulliver, Bougainville, and Diderot, with Notes on the *Encyclopédie* and on Voltaire', *ECL*, 18, 3 (1994), 168-97; Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, ch. 4; C. Richard King, 'The (Mis)uses of Cannibalism in Contemporary Cultural Critique', *Diacritics*, 30 (2000), 106-23; Gananath Obeyesekere, *Cannibal Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas* (2005).

emphasised the effect of the sun on vegetation, and then on the human population as these effects were distributed through the food chain.[65] Climatic explanations were losing their explanatory power by 1750, as an expanding network of imperial commerce showed that transportation across the world made little difference to skin colour. However, climatic influence on human difference remained a powerful notion well into the nineteenth century.

As with race, the problem of reconciling manifest continuity with change has bedevilled historians of the concept of sex. Here too, there has been broad agreement that a change took place, but there is little consensus on its scope, nature, or timing. Most influential in this regard is Laqueur's *Making Sex*, which argues nothing less than that 'sometime in the eighteenth century, sex as we know it was invented.'[66] This invention consisted of the replacement of one model of sexual difference by another. The first of these, the 'one-sex' model, is based on Galenic medicine and imagines 'male' and 'female' as points on a spectrum rather than opposites. It inverts the traditional ordering of sex and gender by placing sex as the cultural category and gender as the corporeal entity: 'sex before the seventeenth century,' Laqueur writes, 'was still a sociological and not an ontological category.'[67] This was supplanted by the 'two-sex' model, 'in or about the late eighteenth [century].'[68] Laqueur attributes this change to the political need to confine women within the 'private sphere': a scientific justification for their confinement was, consciously or not, invented. Laqueur's book has been enormously influential, and has set the agenda for studies of the history of the body for the past two decades.

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[65] This account is particularly associated with Buffon. See p. 70, below.
[66] Laqueur, *Making*, 149.
[67] Ibid., 8.
[68] Ibid., 5.

It has, however, been subjected to stiff criticism. Several scholars have argued that his models are reductive and totalising, ignoring clear differences between the sexes in Aristotelian thought, medieval medicine, and Renaissance skeletal anatomy.[69] Others have pointed out that concentration on the genitals is misplaced, as seventeenth-century anatomists identified sex differences particularly in the brain and nervous systems.[70] Other gender historians have argued for a more uneven and lengthier transition from 'one-sex' to 'two-sex', emphasising continuity rather than rapid change.[71] Notwithstanding these critiques, and the fact that Laqueur ignores the physical and experiential side of sexual difference,[72] his account has been justly viewed as influential: 'perhaps more than any other historian … [Laqueur] has created a history of the body.'[73] Most criticism of Laqueur has taken the form of modifying rather than destroying his argument, and his earliest critics (Katherine Park and Robert Nye) admit that there is something to his claims, arguing that the period 1600-1900 saw 'a dramatic, if gradual, transformation in thinking about sex and sex difference, *rooted in a biologistic and medicalizing terminology* that slowly supplanted the earlier metaphysical language.'[74]

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[69] Katharine Park and Robert A. Nye, 'Destiny Is Anatomy', *The New Republic*, 18 Feb. 1991, 53-7 at 54; Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1993). For an account of medieval views of sex difference, see Nancy G. Siriasi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine* (Chicago, 1990), 91-6, 110-13. On skeletal anatomy see Michael Stolberg, 'A Woman Down to Her Bones: The Anatomy of Sexual Difference in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries', *Isis*, 94 (2003), 274-99. See also the responses to this piece in the same issue of *Isis* by Laqueur ('Sex in the Flesh', 300-306) and Schiebinger ('Skelettestreit', 307-13).

[70] Robert Martensen, 'The Transformation of Eve: Women's Bodies, Medicine and Culture in Early Modern England', in Porter and Teich (eds.), *Sexual Knowledge*, 107-33.

[71] Harvey, 'Substance of Sexual Difference'; Shoemaker, *Gender*, 1-14; Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*, 45-7; Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2004), 12-13, 248.

[72] Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (1994), 16-17.

[73] Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*, 46.

[74] Park and Nye, 'Destiny Is Anatomy', 57 (emphasis mine).

The eighteenth century appears to be particularly rich in turning points for the history of sex. But for each assertion of rapid change, others stress continuity. Historians of homosexuality, who have often exerted an undue influence on the study of masculinity,[75] continue to emphasise change. Randolph Trumbach, for example has been at the forefront of an influential movement to argue for the emergence of a homosexual (or 'molly') identity in the decade after 1700.[76] As several critics have argued, however, such a sudden and radical change can only with difficulty be supported from the historical record.[77] Other historians have interpreted the demographic changes of the eighteenth century to argue for the development of a distinctly 'phallocentric' model of sexual relations. These claim that the increase of the illegitimacy rate and reconfiguration of femininity around maternity led to a growth in the 'popularity' of heterosexual intercourse.[78] Despite enthusiastic support from some quarters,[79] other historians have queried the suddenness of any change,

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[75] Philip Carter, 'Mollies, Fops, and Men of Feeling: Aspects of Male Effeminacy and Masculinity in Britain, c.1700-1780' (University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1995); id., *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society* (2001), 7-8, 144-8; id., 'Men About Town: Representations of Foppery and Masculinity in Early Eighteenth-Century Urban Society', in Barker and Chalus (eds.), *Gender*, 31-57.

[76] Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, i. 3-22. See also id., 'Modern Prostitution and Gender in *Fanny Hill*: Libertine and Domesticated Fantasy', in Porter and Rousseau (eds.), *Sexual Underworlds*, 69-85 at 73-5; id., 'Sodomitical Subcultures, Sodomitical Roles, and the Gender Revolution of the Eighteenth Century: The Recent Historiography', in Maccubbin, *'Tis Nature's Fault*, 109-21; id., 'Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity in Modern Culture: Male Sodomy and Female Prostitution in Enlightenment London', *JHS*, 2 (1991), 186-203; id., 'London's Sodomites: Homosexual Behaviour and Western Culture in the 18th Century', *Journal of Social History*, 11 (1977), 1-33. Amongst historians who agree with Trumbach are George Rousseau and Alan Bray. See G. S. Rousseau, *Perilous Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1991), ch. 5; Bray, *Homosexuality*.

[77] Rictor Norton, *Mother Clap's Molly House: The Gay Subculture in England, 1700-1830*, 2nd edn. (Stroud, 2006), 168-9 n. 73; id., 'Introduction' in id. (ed.), *Eighteenth-Century British Erotica II*, v: *Sodomites, Mollies, Sapphists and Tommies* (2004), pp. vii-xxiii; Naphy, *Sex Crimes*, 87-106; Thomas Laqueur, review of Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution* (vol. 1), *AHR*, 106 (2001), 1456-7. I am grateful to Faramerz Dabhoiwala for this last reference.

[78] Tim Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex in Eighteenth-Century England', *HWJ*, 41 (1996), 73-90; id., *English Sexualities*; Henry Abelove, 'Some Speculations on the History of "Sexual Intercourse" During the "Long Eighteenth Century" in England', *Genders*, 6 (1989), 125-30.

[79] See esp. Perry, 'Colonizing the Breast'.

arguing that heterosexual intercourse had been 'popular' prior to the eighteenth century, and was to remain so afterwards.[80] In addition, several historians of masculinity have argued that the century as a whole was a watershed between masculinities of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, likewise challenged of late by others emphasising continuity.[81]

The most significant work arguing for rapid change to have emerged in recent years is Dror Wahrman's *Making of the Modern Self* (2004). This describes the overthrow of an 'ancien régime of identity' (characterised by fluidity and playful ambiguity), in place for most of the eighteenth century, by the 'modern' concept of the 'self', an essentialised form of identity which brooked no boundary transgressions. Supposedly, the transition took place suddenly in the 1780s as a result of a crisis of identity provoked by the American Revolution. Wahrman attempts to describe change across a range of identities – including race, class, and the human/animal divide – but primarily focuses on gender. He elongates the transition described by Laqueur by describing two moments of transformation, rather than one.[82] According to Wahrman, 'one-sex' turns to 'two-sex' at the end of the *seventeenth* century, but 'two-sex' retains a degree of gender 'play' before gender 'panic' sets in

[80] Hera Cook, 'Sexuality and Contraception in Modern England: Doing the History of Reproductive Sexuality', *Journal of Social History*, 40 (2007), 915-32 at 918; Shoemaker, *Gender*, 59-86.
[81] Michèle Cohen and Tim Hitchcock, 'Introduction', in eid. (eds.), *English Masculinities, 1660-1800* (1999), 1-22; Alexandra Shepard, 'From Anxious Patriarchs to Refined Gentlemen? Manhood in Britain, circa 1500-1700', *JBS*, 44 (2005), 281-95; Karen Harvey, 'The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800', *JBS*, 44 (2005), 296-311. On the links between masculinity and race in the period, see Andrew Wells, 'Masculinity and Its Other in Eighteenth-Century Racial Thought', in Heather Ellis and Jessica Meyer (eds.), *Masculinity and the Other* (Cambridge, 2009), 85-114.
[82] He is arguably able to do this because of Laqueur's haziness regarding chronology.

during the 1780s and boundaries ossify.[83] He acknowledges the difficulty of applying this model to race, which he argues changes much later than gender.

His bold argument ultimately creaks under the strain of its own ambition. The emphasis on sudden change, in particular, has drawn criticism from historians.[84] In addition to obvious problems deriving from the monocausality of his account, four further major issues can be adduced. The first is that his source base, although expansive, nevertheless tends to emphasise those elements of culture, such as the theatre and fashion, in which identities are deliberately manipulable. This leads to an unrealistic picture of the earlier period in which fluidity is taken to be the norm. Second, his argument is logically flawed. Wahrman deduces a pattern of change common to the categories of identity he observes but proceeds to establish a causal link between the abstraction based on these categories – 'identity' – and the categories themselves. Rather than similar causes operating on analogous categories of identity to produce a comparable change, Wahrman commits the logical error of affirming the consequent. He makes the unwarranted claim that the American Revolution forced a recognition of 'the inadequacies of the notion of identity itself,'[85] thereby attributing the change he describes in gender, race, and other categories to disenchantment with identity qua identity. Third, he does not deal with arguments which produce a more convincing account of change than his own, such as those describing the need to deny women and

[83] Wahrman, *Making*, 42-4.
[84] Lawrence Klein, review of Wahrman, *Making*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 37 (2007), 610-12; Hannah Barker, 'Soul, Purse and Family: Middling and Lower-Class Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Manchester', *Journal of Social History*, 33 (2008), 12-35.
[85] Wahrman, *Making*, 227.

black peoples[86] political and human rights, respectively, in the face of (industrial and American) revolutionary change.[87] Finally, Wahrman's account is simply too ambitious. In attempting to deal with all categories of identity (rather than simply the corporeal, as addressed here), he raises questions of the synchronicity and scope of the alleged transformation. Also, by attempting to locate change in a sudden moment, he leaves his argument vulnerable to the criticism that it is insensitive to continuity. This is avoided in this thesis by locating change in the conjunction of long-term epistemological, and short-term ontological developments.

IV

Before proceeding to describe the sources and structure of the thesis, it is important to discuss 'empiricism' in more detail. Its basic tenet, *nihil in intellectu nisi prius in sensu* ('nothing in the intellect unless first in sense'), is of venerable pedigree and was, prior to our period, accepted in some form by both Aristotle and his medieval disciple, Aquinas.[88] It has always competed with other forms of knowledge, rational and revealed, not least because of the

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[86] A note on terminology: many of the texts discussed in the course of this thesis use terms which were either deliberately offensive or are so now on account of a different cultural context. Such obviously inappropriate terms appear in the following text either in quotation or inverted commas. However, when discussing these texts, other terms (such as 'black' and 'white') which are themselves (often gross) generalisations, and bear the mark of racial thought, do not appear within sanitising punctuation. It is difficult to discuss concisely elements of these texts without such terms (which are often the only way to glimpse the mental universe of their authors), and given their frequency within the thesis it would be unsightly to place them all within inverted commas to highlight their impropriety. Where terms which may be viewed as unacceptable are deployed, this is not due any lack of sensitivity or because the author feels they are appropriate, rather it is for ease of understanding a set of texts which were produced by a culture with very different sensitivies than our own.

[87] The clearest statements of these arguments regarding sex and race, respectively, are Laqueur, *Making*, 152 and MacLeod, *Slavery*, 10-12.

[88] Aristotle, *On the Soul*, tr. J. A. Smith in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (2 vols., Oxford, 1984), i. 641-92 at 686 (Bk. 3 $432^{a}4$-$^{a}9$); Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, lib. 1 d. 3. (ed. English Dominicans, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1934), 5).

Western tradition which privileged the mind (and hence soul) over the body.[89] From the Renaissance, the authority of empiricism grew vis-à-vis these alternative knowledges. This was particularly the case in England, where the 'experimental method' was first advocated by Bacon in the early seventeenth century, institutionalised in the Royal Society after the Restoration, and canonized in the work of Newton. Religion was also an important part of what made 'English natural philosophy … fundamentally empirical in a way that set it apart from other European countries.'[90] Protestantism placed the Bible at the centre of faith, enshrining the principle of interpreting sources of knowledge for oneself. In addition, the debate amongst historians about Puritanism and its role in inaugurating a new culture of scientific discovery, points towards the close linkage of religious developments and empiricism.[91] Empirical thought was expressed on the Continent, for instance by John Locke's erstwhile companion, François Bernier, in what has been described by one historian as the first modern racial theory.[92] But the warmth of Voltaire's admiration for Locke in the *Lettres philosophiques* (1734) testifies to the stranglehold of Cartesian rationalism in France.[93]

Locke's epochal *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) was the most powerful statement of empiricism to be produced in the seventeenth

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[89] Roy Porter, 'Bodies of Thought: Thoughts about the Body in Eighteenth-Century England', in Joan H. Pittock and Andrew Wear (eds.), *Interpretation and Cultural History* (Basingstoke, 1991), 82-108.
[90] John Henry, 'The Scientific Revolution in England', in Porter and Teich (eds.), *Scientific Revolution*, 178-209 at 182.
[91] Henry, 'Scientific Revolution', 182. See also the debate in *Past and Present*, 28-33 (1964-6) between H. F. Kearney, Christopher Hill, and Theodore Rabb, reprinted in Charles Webster (ed.), *The Intellectual Revolution of the Seventeenth Century* (1974).
[92] Bernier was the protégé of Gassendi, whose philosophy was influential on Locke, but there is some dispute as to Gassendi's empiricist credentials. See L. W. B. Brockliss, 'The Scientific Revolution in France', in Porter and Teich (eds.), *Scientific Revolution*, 55-89 at 65 cf. Stuurman, 'François Bernier', 1.
[93] Voltaire, *Letters on England*, tr. Leonard Tancock (1980), 64.

century, and its publication marks the beginning of the period under discussion.[94] The *Essay* proved controversial in the eighteenth century, especially when adapted by thinkers such as Hume, but nonetheless it was impossible for any respectable author to ignore.[95] The details of Locke's epistemology are well known: the human mind is a blank slate, a *tabula rasa*, at birth, and the only way in which knowledge of the external world is obtained is through the senses. This knowledge comes in the form of 'ideas', defined by Locke as 'whatsoever is the object of the understanding.'[96] The mind has two primary operations: sensation, by which ideas of the external world are formed, and reflection, which is a means of the mind thinking about itself and its own operation. There are no innate ideas: the first sensation of an infant is the first idea they have. Ideas are of two kinds, simple and complex. Simple ideas are those of properties or qualities in an object which, although united in that object, are separate and indivisible ideas when they come through our senses. For example, a snowball is, amongst other things, white and cold. Our sight perceives the whiteness and our touch senses the cold, so although these properties are united in the same object (the snowball), they are discrete ideas when they enter our understanding through our senses. Complex ideas are formed through the combination, relation, or abstraction of two or more simple ideas.

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[94] On Locke's empiricism, see esp. John W. Yolton, *John Locke and the Way of Ideas* (Oxford, 1956); id., *Thinking Matter: Materialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 1984); id., 'Locke's Man', *JHI*, 62 (2001), 665-83; Douglas Odegard, 'Locke as an Empiricist', *Philosophy*, 40 (1965), 185-96; Michael Ayers, *Locke: Epistemology and Ontology*, 2 vols. in 1 (1993).

[95] See Roy Porter's account of Locke's influence in his *Enlightenment*, 66-71.

[96] Locke, *Essay*, I.i.8 (p. 59).

Although this summary cannot do justice to the sophistication of Locke's thought, it outlines the essential concept of empiricism deployed here. Two elements of this are worthy of note. Sight was the sense Locke felt was 'the most comprehensive of all our senses.'[97] For Locke, a friend of Newton, the purpose of sight was to convey the ideas of light and colours, by which notions of space, dimension, motion, and so on were conveyed.[98] In other words, vision is based on light and colours, and knowledge of the dimensions and shape of an object are derived from differences in colour.[99] For Locke, sight was most important sense, and colour its most important component.[100] The second noteworthy element of empiricism concerned the existence of ideas. Empirical evidence of these within the mind of an individual was provided by their language. Language had long acted as proof of a rational soul – and hence humanity – and it effectively policed the human-animal boundary throughout the early modern period. In the eighteenth century, at the point where its role as proof of intellectual activity was being codified by Locke, doubts began to arise about language's ability unerringly to distinguish human from animal. This was due, as chapter three will show, to the ability to manipulate language. Chapter one will argue that the ambivalent status of language was a component of racial discourses throughout the century. While it is argued that empiricism is crucial to the emergence of embodied identities, this is not a case for the racism of

[97] Ibid., II.ix.9 (p. 145).
[98] Ibid., II.ix.9 (p. 145).
[99] Ayers, *Locke*, i. 40.
[100] On a later controversy about colour, see Dennis L. Sepper, *Goethe contra Newton: Polemics and the Project for a New Science of Color* (Cambridge, 1988).

empiricism.[101] It is, however, an argument that empiricism was necessary (but not sufficient in and of itself) for racialism to exist.

V

Almost all of the evidence deployed in this thesis is based on printed material. The range of texts used is wide, in both genre and subject, and a different balance is struck in the two halves of the thesis, which, as mentioned above, have distinct methodologies. The first part of the thesis, which establishes the interconnection between sex and race, draws widely from printed texts on these subjects. The second part focuses more narrowly on three case studies to explore the emergence of a concept of a stable human body. Here, the range of sources deployed is dictated by the type of material produced relating to these cases. Despite considerable overlap, the material used can be grouped into six categories. First, there are the explicit racial theories used in chapter one, which came in the form of scientific and pseudo-scientific works, historical cum geographical texts, political polemic, and doctoral dissertations. In the second group are the works of conjectural history, which include stadial theory, linguistic treatises, and works of political economy based on a similar methodology, such as Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798). Third, there are the scientific and pseudo-scientific works of all levels, from the pamphlets distributed with quack medicines warning of the medical risks of masturbation, to expensive multi-volume natural histories, of which Buffon's is perhaps the most famous example. The fourth category contains travel and voyage literature, the great pool of data from which racial theorists extracted to

[101] Also made by Richard Popkin in 1978. See Popkin, 'Hume's Racism', 223-4.

form their theories. Included in this category are imaginary voyages, such as *Gulliver's Travels* which features in chapter three. Fifth, there are explicitly political texts, including sermons, which harangue the reader or hearer to adopt a moral or political stance. This includes many of the texts – on sex and slavery, respectively – which feature in chapters two and five. Finally, there is the ephemera and newspaper journalism produced as a consequence of the phenomena studied in part two of the thesis.

As can be expected from such a wide array of texts, they were produced by a range of authors and publishers and consumed by a no less diverse readership. Doctors, academics, journalists (including hack journalists), teachers, travellers, virtuosi, slave owners, philanthropists, and clergy all produced these texts. Most were aimed at a middling audience, but the 'middling sort' is a capacious grouping and it cannot be ruled out that many texts were available to a more plebeian readership.[102] This is especially the case given that many expensive texts were excerpted and serialised in newspapers and popular journals, such as the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[103] However, it remains the case that much of the material deployed throughout this thesis was geared to a middling audience.

Fashion, or at least chronology, is another important feature of the texts deployed in this thesis. Texts containing self-evidently racial theories, for example, are rare before the 1760s. This does not mean that such theories cannot be found prior to this decade, and chapter one discusses a number of these texts. But there is a noticeable increase in texts which discuss race

[102] On the capaciousness of the 'middling sort' see esp. Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class* (1989).
[103] James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (Cambridge, 1986), 35; Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* (1987), 178.

explicitly during the final third of the eighteenth century, and two important points must be raised. First, the extent to which racial speculation is concentrated in the period after 1760 depends somewhat on the particular definition of race employed. By both avoiding a prescriptive definition, and by arguing for a long- as well as short-term cause for the emergence of 'race', it is possible to identify a range of racial thought in the years before 1760. As a result, this thesis discusses the Mary Toft case of 1726, an event as yet unexamined by historians of race. Second, a possible reason for the proliferation of texts on race after 1760 is the derivative nature of several of them. For example, Oliver Goldsmith's *History of the Earth and Animated Nature* (1774) is little more than a compilation of paraphrased excerpts from Buffon's *Histoire naturelle* (1749-1804), with occasional interpolations from Goldsmith. Part of the discussion (particularly of racial theory) will pay attention to the circulation, borrowing, and downright plagiarism of popular ideas.

VI

As discussed earlier, this thesis is structured around two thematically and methodologically distinct halves. These correspond to the two main components of the argument: that race and sex share a sophisticated connection on the basis of their common epistemological foundation, and that concepts of the human body become more stable over the period. The first part establishes the linkage between sex and race in several ways. Chapter one focuses on this relationship from the racial side, and finds racial theory to be saturated with interest in sex. Discourses of reproduction are deployed alongside often lurid

descriptions of sexual characteristics and behaviours of those described in racial theories. These features are treated in common with other racialised characteristics in being assessed through contemporary aesthetic categories. The judgements of 'aesthetics' produced attempts to measure and classify beauty and ugliness, giving rise to crude craniometrical and physiognomic techniques. Parallel with this was the use of other empirical markers to denote inner worth, such as language, which was used as a conduit to assess intellect. Starting with an assessment of the place of sex in racial theories, this chapter ends by recognising the fundamental importance of empiricism for the project of grounding identity in the body.

The gaze is then shifted in chapter two, to a focus on the sex-race interconnection from the sexual side. The focus throughout is on the human body, collectively and individually, as a primary site of the sex-race interrelation. The first section discusses one way in which the collective body hosted this interrelationship: philoprogenitivism (the desire to increase the population by reproduction). This cultural imperative of the eighteenth century appeared to give way rapidly to Malthusian argument after 1800, but its ultimate logic – that the size of a population is an index of its happiness – remained intact, if qualified. One way in which the individual body hosted the sex-race interrelation was the naturalisation (or embodiment) of sexual behaviours or attributes in the human form. Sexual identities, such as the sodomite or the onanist (masturbator), were created as a result of the pathologisation and biologisation of deprecated behaviour. Sensible physical markers of these immoral behaviours were thought to exist on the body, which could also be shaped by the unpredictable power of the mother's imagination.

Although belief in this waned across the period, it acts as a powerful reminder of the importance of the senses, and of an empiricist epistemology as a whole, for the physical shape of the body and for the moral and intellectual outlook of its inhabitant.

The second part of this thesis moves beyond the sex-race interrelationship and its situation in the human body to tackle the implications of this linkage for the emergence of sex and race. Through three case studies, it shows that both epistemological and ontological conditions must be met before modern embodied identities could be created. The gradual, long-term, domination of empiricism is met, by the 1770s, with a shorter-term emergence of a stable human body. The case studies, which are spaced throughout the period, focus in depth on three key episodes in the cultural history of eighteenth-century Britain which bear directly on the sex-race relationship as sketched in part one. Emphasising continuity as well as change, they demonstrate conceptions of the body before, during, and after the emergence of ontological stability.

Chapter three examines three events which took place in 1726: the presentation of a Hanoverian feral child – Peter 'the wild boy' – at court; the reproductive hoax of Mary Toft, who claimed to give birth to rabbits; and the publication of Jonathan Swift's masterpiece, *Gulliver's Travels*. The instability of the body in this period is amply demonstrated by Toft's ability to fool even the highest surgeons in the land into believing her tale. By exploiting an area of medicine about which there was little agreement – the influence of the maternal imagination on the body of a foetus – Toft undermined the credibility of the medical establishment at the same time as hastening the demise of one of its

more egregious and misogynistic errors. However, this was not to come until later, and where Toft undermined the ability of the human form to divide humans from animals, Peter frustrated attempts to use language to that end. His lack of speech prompted serious reflection on his humanity – whether or not he had a soul – and both he and Toft demonstrated that the body could not be relied upon as a repository of human identity, despite a widespread commitment to empiricism. What is even more remarkable is that the body was deemed so unreliable at the same time as elements of later racial theorising, including genocide, eugenics, and ethnographic description, were available to Augustan culture. This is shown through an analysis of book four of *Gulliver's Travels*, in which Swift utterly undermined human pretensions to reason at the same time as radically resituating human identity in the body. Swift demonstrated the conceivability of corporeal notions of difference which, given the denunciation of his Yahoos as a portrayal of all humans and not just (for example) Africans, were not yet widely deployed. Thus the conceivability of such notions of difference as well as a continuing commitment to empiricism in the 1720s serves to isolate the instability of the body as a key reason why modern racial and sexual identities were not yet enshrined.

By the 1770s, however, this picture was different, as chapter four will show. This chapter examines the representation of the voyages of Captain Cook to the Pacific. James Cook's three voyages, in 1768-71, 1772-5, and 1776-81, were a source of boundless imperial pride for eighteenth-century Britons, and became the stuff of legend as Cook himself, 'martyred' by Hawai'ians in 1779, entered the pantheon of British heroes. These voyages enabled Britons to take pride in their achievements, to keep faith in themselves during the dark days of

the American crisis and also to judge other ethnic groups more precisely and to bolster gender norms at home. The voyages brought back a wealth of ethnographic data, in which the public reposed an unprecedented degree of trust. The chapter begins with a discussion of the prior unreliability of voyage accounts and the change wrought by the Cook voyages. The ethnographic data compiled was used as source material for racial theorists, who were either participants in the voyages or correspondents with those who were. The provision of the materia medica for racial theories in the eighteenth century is perhaps the most significant contribution made by the British to the elaboration of human races. Simultaneously, such data demonstrated the range of sexual practices and moral orders in the Pacific. Authors attempted to locate a bourgeois sexual order amongst the peoples living there, and by so doing they naturalised (created 'male' and 'female', according to Laqueur) that which they sought to establish at home. They also marginalised other sexualities, and this marginalisation was based on the sexualities of discrete populations in the Pacific. It came to be used, therefore, to support the elaboration of a lasting and influential bipartite racial division of Pacific peoples. Thus the naturalisation of the metropolitan gender order contributed to the creation of races as to that of the sexes. All of these activities would have been meaningless had it not been for a stable concept of the human body, and a sense that identities grounded therein have a privileged ontological, moral, and epistemological status.

The extent to which this was the case is clear from the final case study, which explores discourses of slavery in the years after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. Chapter five introduces a causal element to the sex-race interrelationship, arguing that sex made race in the British Caribbean in two

ways: first, interracial sex between 'blacks' and 'whites' produced the 'coloured' population – a series of racial groups inhabiting a system of racial gradations. Faith in the body to signify identity was so de rigeur by this time that this system of gradations became so overloaded as to cease to function properly. Second, intra-racial sex within the slave community contributed to the view of sexual customs as a racial characteristic. The reproductive failure of slaves' sexual habits was a source of frustration for planters and fodder for abolitionists who, *pace* Malthusians, remained committed to the notion that the size of a population connoted its wellbeing. It is as a result of this reproductive dimension that the chronological focus of this chapter was chosen. It was the only period in the history of British slavery where any growth in the slave population would be overwhelmingly due to sexual reproduction. Its resounding failure to increase is partly a result of planter apathy in promoting increase, as marriage continued to be viewed as essential for regular and healthy propagation. With marriage came Christianity and baptism, to which planters – with near unanimity – refused to countenance. As this chapter will conclude, the overall argument of the thesis may be encapsulated within the early-nineteenth-century discourse on slavery: the linkage of sex and race and the progressive stabilisation of the human body both reach their apogee in the cultural systems and norms which fed into the sexual creation of race.

PART I

RELATING RACE AND SEX

1 Racial Theory in Eighteenth-Century Britain

Introduction

Traditionally, scholarship on race in the eighteenth century has, somewhat anachronistically, concentrated on a nineteenth-century dichotomy. As with much of the vocabulary used by modern scholars to discuss the history of race, the terms 'monogenism' and 'polygenism' are later neologisms. We have already met these concepts in the introduction, and hinted at the challenges each faced in the eighteenth century.[1] Monogenism – the orthodox account of creation – resorted to climate to explain human difference, an approach which reached its fullest expression in Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* (1748), arguing that laws should be relative to the characters of peoples, themselves dependent on the climate.[2] Under pressure from the failure of skins to lighten or darken upon transplantation to a different environment, more sophisticated mechanisms were sought, although the limits of these were clear by the end of the century. The problem facing polygenesis, on the other hand, was its sheer heterodoxy. Dating from antiquity (especially the arguments of Julian the Apostate), but more recently revived by Paracelsus and Giordano Bruno in the sixteenth century and the Huguenot Isaac de la Peyrère in the seventeenth, this argued that there was more than one creation of man.[3] Some, such as Peyrère argued that this creation dated before Adam, so that Cain could have a wife

[1] See p. 18, above.
[2] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, tr. and ed. Anne M. Cohler, Basia Carolyn Miller, and Harold Samuel Stone (Cambridge, 2004 [1748]), 231.
[3] See Thomas Bendyshe, 'The History of Anthropology', in *Memoirs read before the Anthropological Society of London, 1863-4* (1865), 335-458.

once he was sent to wander the earth following his fratricide.[4] Others, such as the anonymous author of *Co-Adamitæ* (1732), stated that this creation took place at the same time.[5] Overt polygenism, particularly to which an author would attach his name, was rare before the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and, as Colin Kidd has argued, most eighteenth-century theologians refused to accept the existence of races, for fear of inadvertently encouraging others to engage in this heresy.[6]

The purpose of this chapter is to establish one half of the sex-race interrelationship: the use of sex in race. No discussion of race in the period has yet focused on the part played in racial theories by biological sex, nor on the nature of the epistemological link between the two. By offering an alternative account of racial theory to that above, this chapter will demonstrate the importance of an empiricist epistemology as the basis for the sex-race interrelationship. The main body of its argument follows a section discussing important contexts of racial theory, such as the geographical and intellectual environment in which they were framed, and which attends to a crucial term rarely clarified in historical work on race: 'species'. The argument will proceed in two main sections. The first of these will discuss one component of the sex-race relationship: the use of sex within racial theories. Reproduction is perhaps the most obvious facet of this, and this section will first establish a rough correspondence between racial and embryological theories of the time, before discussing the consequences of this. It then moves from physiology to anatomy, and examines the use of sexual characteristics within racial theories. The

[4] Isaac la Peyrère, *Prae-Adamitae* (Leiden, 1655), translated as *A Theological Systeme Upon that Presupposition That Men were Before Adam* (1655).
[5] Anon., *Co-Adamitae* (1732).
[6] Colin Kidd, *The Forging of Races* (Cambridge, 2006), 26.

discussion then broadens from a close focus on sex within racial discourses to other features of these discourses which share the same epistemological foundations. The topics are similar – rather than discussing breasts and genitals the subject is now skin colour and sweat – but the discussion of these seemingly asexual features bears on the linkage of sex and race, albeit in a different (i.e. epistemological) register. Briefly dealing with a spurt of polygenist theorising in the 1770s and the religious response, this section proceeds to establish the importance to racial theories of colour. At the same time, it emphasises the significance of the relocation of racial identity beneath the skin towards the end of the century. The final part of this section concentrates on the importance of an empiricist epistemology to the foregoing by exploring the interpretation of the body through physiognomy and craniometry.

The second section will demonstrate the importance of language for racial theorists. Language came to be used as a means of racial differentiation, but was never as successful at this as at policing the human-animal boundary. Language faced challenges throughout the century, particularly from the sciences of the body, and it came to be an increasingly ambivalent source of empirical fact. It did, however, contribute to genealogical explanations of different human groups and, thereby, to the elaboration of racial distinctions.

A wide range of evidence is used throughout this chapter. Part of the reason for this is the sheer heterogeneity of materials which comprised racial theories. Although diverse in terms of genre, they nonetheless tended to aim for a middling readership, as discussed in the introduction.[7] Some of the academic racial theories were written in Latin, and many of the scientific works, linguistic

[7] See p. 29, above.

treatises, conjectural histories, and medical texts discussed in this chapter were inaccessible to few but the most affluent and educated. While other texts were cheaply and widely available, such as sermons and popular medical texts, the overall balance remains heavily on the side of a well-to-do readership. This forms a contrast with the material deployed in the following chapter, which is far less exclusive. But the different weighting of material in these two chapters is deliberate: the connection between sex and race is convincing since it ranges across the textual spectrum.

Contexts of Racial Theory

Racial theories were compiled in a range of geographical and socio-economic locations. Many European countries hosted racial theorists, and the work of several of these is included here because of their influence on British thinkers. Foremost amongst these was Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, professor of medicine at the University of Göttingen from 1776 until his death in 1840. As will be discussed in chapter four, Blumenbach held a wide correspondence with racial thinkers and other key individuals, including Sir Joseph Banks, from whom he frequently solicited materials to study and collect.[8] Perhaps as important was the position of the University itself. Founded in 1737 by George II, Göttingen was the only university within the Electorate of Hanover, and it quickly acquired a reputation for excellence in medicine and theology (under Albrecht von Haller and Johann David Michaelis, respectively). It was also superbly placed to exploit the opportunities that the Hanoverian Succession

[8] See p. 240ff., below. See also Frank William Peter Dougherty, *The Correspondence of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach*, rev. and ed. Norbert Klatt (2 vols., Göttingen, 2006-7).

offered. Through Britain's navy and empire, Blumenbach was able to acquire cranial and anthropological specimens which might otherwise have been impossible to obtain.[9] In the other direction, Göttingen was able to provide access to German markets for British booksellers. Its ties to Britain made it the largest importer of English books in Germany, and it was barely a hundred miles away from Leipzig, home to Europe's largest book fair in the period.[10] Thus, Göttingen was the hub of a Europe-wide network of intellectuals all interested in questions of human difference,[11] and consequently Blumenbach's work on race was better known and used by British writers than was Immanuel Kant's. This was influential and provocative within Germany itself, but Königsberg had fewer and weaker links (but by no means none) with Britain than did Göttingen, where three of George III's sons and Samuel Taylor Coleridge attended lectures given by Blumenbach in the 1780s and 1790s, respectively.[12]

Within Britain itself, Scotland was far more central to nascent anthropological study than England.[13] Two reasons for this stand out. First, the state of Scottish education, particularly medical education, was far in advance of that in England. Medical education at Oxbridge seems to have been as

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[9] John Gascoigne, 'The German Enlightenment and the Pacific', in Larry Wolff and Marco Cipolloni (eds.), *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA, 2007), 141-71 at 142; Thomas Biskup, 'The University of Göttingen and the Personal Union, 1737-1837', in Brendan Simms and Torsten Riotte (eds.), *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714-1837* (Cambridge, 2007), 128-60 at 148-53.

[10] See Bernard Fabian, 'The Importation of British Books into Germany in the Eighteenth Century', *SVEC*, 193 (1980), 1780-82.

[11] For a recent argument that the traffic between Göttingen and Britain was not one way, see Biskup, 'University of Göttingen'

[12] K. F. H. Marx, *Zum Andenken an Johann Friedrich Blumenbach* (Göttingen, 1840), reprinted in Bendyshe, *Treatises*, 1-45; Biskup, 'University of Göttingen', 140-41; Gascoigne, 'German Enlightenment and the Pacific', 142.

[13] For a useful summary of Scottish engagement with a non-European population, see Troy Bickham, *Savages within the Empire* (Oxford, 2005), ch. 5.

hidebound as it was in Paris for most of the eighteenth century, but Edinburgh forged links with Leiden (where Boerhaave acquired legendary status) and instituted a series of reforms in the early eighteenth century that resulted in it becoming Europe's leading medical faculty by 1800.[14] It was as Edinburgh was moving towards continental dominance that several of the racial theorists discussed in this chapter completed studies there. The second reason for the centrality of Scotland to early anthropology is the enthusiastic engagement of Scots with empire.[15] Following the Union of 1707, but more particularly after the '45, Scots seized the opportunities for commerce and aggrandizement presented by overseas imperial adventures. Hopes for independent Scottish colonies had been dashed with the Darien débâcle, and the ubiquity of Scots throughout the empire soon became a matter for satirists and social commentators.[16] The ongoing presence of the extra-European world within Scottish culture and society was a likely influence for authors, who were able to take advantage of the excellent Library of the Faculty of Advocates, a copyright

[14] See the essays by Laurence Brockliss and William Clark in Roy Porter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Science*, iv: *The Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2003), 44-86 and 211-237 (respectively); T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation. 1700-2000* (2000), ch. 4; Ian Maxwell Hammett, 'Lord Monboddo's *Origin and Progress of Language*: Its Sources, Genesis, and Background, with Special Attention to the Advocates' Library' (Edinburgh University Ph.D. thesis, 1985); Kathleen Wellman, *La Mettrie* (1992); G. S. Rousseau, *Enlightenment Borders* (Manchester, 1991), ch. 5.

[15] Linda Colley, *Britons* (1994), 127-32; Devine, *Scottish Nation*, 115, 122; David Armitage, 'The Scottish Vision of Empire: The Intellectual Origins of the Darien Venture', in John Robertson (ed.), *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the Union of 1707* (Cambridge, 1995), 97-118. The involvement of Scots with the British empire is a persistent theme of the essays in P. J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, ii: *The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1998): see James Horn, 'British Diaspora: Emigration from Britain, 1680-1815', 28-52 at 40-46; Jacob M. Price, 'The Imperial Economy, 1700-1776', 78-104 at 91-3; Ian K. Steele, 'The Anointed, the Appointed, and the Elected: Governance of the British Empire, 1689-1784', 105-27 at 106; Boyd Stanley Schlenther, 'Religious Faith and Commercial Empire', 128-50 at 139-40; Richard Drayton, 'Knowledge and Empire', 231-52 at 240.

[16] Armitage, 'Scottish Vision of Empire'; id., *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), 157-63; Colley, *Britons*, 117-32.

library after 1709, and which boasted David Hume and Adam Ferguson amongst its Keepers.[17]

The development of Scottish stadial theory is another important context for racial theorising in the last third of the eighteenth century. Stadial, or 'four-stages' theory was a developmental model for all human societies. Developed simultaneously (although not completely independently) in France and Scotland from the 1750s, this totalising theory stipulated that as human societies developed, they passed through four stages, each characterised by a mode of subsistence. The earliest and most primitive societies were based on hunting wild animals and gathering fruits, nuts and wild plants. Following this, societies domesticated animals and engaged in husbandry. Organised agriculture was the third stage, and this was followed by modern, commercial society.[18] Stadial theory was important for racial theory for several reasons. First, it was quite simply ubiquitous in racial literature from the 1770s. Second, the milieu in which the theory was most debated and elaborated was that of Scotland's leading intellectuals. Third, the theory rendered all societies comparable on the same axis of comparative civilisation or savagery. As we shall see later in this chapter, this was to happen with language, rendering mental capacity similarly comparable. Finally, some versions of it actively foregrounded the role of sexuality in society. John Millar's *Observations Concerning the Distinction of Ranks* (1771) began with a chapter charting the progress of women in savage society. As the links between stadial and racial theories have recently been

[17] Hammett, 'Monboddo's *Origin and Progress of Language*', chs. 1, 3.
[18] For a thorough – and Marxist – account of stadial theory, see Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge, 1976). See also Silvia Sebastiani, '"Race", Women, and Progress in the Late Scottish Enlightenment', in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (eds.), *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* (Basingstoke, 2005), 75-96; Sylvana Tomaselli, 'The Enlightenment Debate on Women', *HWJ*, 20 (1985), 101-24.

discussed by Silvia Sebastiani, this chapter will not attend directly to stadial theories, but they are an important context for racial thought in the period.[19]

In large part, the significant works on race in Kant's oeuvre will also remain unexplored in this chapter.[20] This is mostly due to his relative insignificance for British racial thought in the period.[21] Kant's work on race was only made directly available in the form of an idiosyncratic set of extracts from one of his first essays, published in Johann Caspar Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy*.[22] Indirectly, Kant was an influence on Blumenbach (although there exists some debate about this), but their relationship was to develop only once Blumenbach had completed the work that was most significant for British thinkers, the third (1795) edition of his *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa* (*On the Natural Varieties of Mankind*).[23] A sense of the influence his works on

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[19] Sebastiani, '"Race", Women, and Progress'.

[20] Kant's most significant works on race include his 'Definition of the Concept of 'Race'' (1785), 'On the Different Races of Man' (1775), 'On National Characteristics' in his *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764), and 'Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View' (1798). On the complexity of Kant's concept of 'race', see Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, 'The Color of Reason: The Idea of 'Race' in Kant's Anthropology', in Katherine M. Faull (ed.), *Anthropology and the German Enlightenment: Perspectives on Humanity* (Lewisburg, PA, 1995), 200-241; Naomi Zack, *Philosophy of Science and Race* (2002), esp. 18-24. For Kant's use of race and his aesthetics see David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (2002). On Kant in relation to proto-evolutionary thought see John C. Greene, *The Death of Adam: Evolution and Its Impact on Western Thought* (Ames, IO, 1959), 232-235.

[21] See Giuseppe Micheli, *The Early Reception of Kant's Thought in England, 1785-1805* (Bristol, 1993).

[22] See p. 95, below.

[23] Although they were corresponding by 1790, there is no evidence to suggest that Kant and Blumenbach were even aware of one another in 1775, when they both wrote their first works on race. Blumenbach only incorporated elements of Kant's racial thought (and, notwithstanding Blumenbach's *bildungstrieb*, there remained significant differences between them) in the 1798 German translation of the third edition of *De Generis*. Peter Hanns Reill has argued that Kant's contributions to physical anthropology and natural history legitimised viewpoints already expressed, and his influence on Blumenbach was questionable. Blumenbach's works remained unavailable to readers in English until 1865, when their translator, Thomas Bendyshe, reflected the ubiquity of the concept of race by using that word as the translation for Blumenbach's more neutral (and Linnaean) *varietate*. See the essays in Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore (eds.), *The German Invention of Race* (Albany, NY, 2006): John H. Zammito, 'Policing Polygeneticism in Germany, 1775: (Kames,) Kant, and Blumenbach', 35-54 at 43; Robert Bernasconi, 'Kant and Blumenbach's Polyps: A Neglected Chapter in the History of the Concept of Race', 73-90 at 75-6, 88 n. 13 cf. Peter Hanns Reill, *Vitalizing Nature in the Enlightenment* (2005), 304-5 n. 28.

race enjoyed in Britain in the early nineteenth century can be provided by his entry in John Aikin and others' *General Biography* (1799-1815). Kant's biography takes up eight pages of quarto text, and his racial works are despatched in two sentences of mere citation. The four pages devoted to explaining his thought do not mention his racial work at all, concentrating instead on his more famous 'Critiques'.[24]

Slavery might seem to be a surprising omission from a chapter dedicated to racial theory. However, the connection between slavery and race is neither simple nor inevitable. As early as 1944, Eric Williams warned that slavery was too closely identified with the African, and that a racial twist had been given to what was effectively an economic phenomenon. He further argued that slavery was not born of racism, rather racism from slavery.[25] Despite other problems with Williams's arguments, this stands out as unusually prescient.[26] Indeed, as Peter Kitson has shown, most racial theorising took place not at the hands of pro-slavers in the debates of the last quarter of the eighteenth century, but at those of the abolitionists. As he writes, 'it is in the writings of the abolitionists that the ideas of 'scientific racism' are probably most apparent, albeit under pressure of refutation.'[27] The relationship between slavery and race is clearly

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See also Peter J. Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter* (Basingstoke, 2007), 25-32; id., 'Coleridge and "the Ouran utang Hypothesis": Romantic Theories of Race', in Nicholas Roe (ed.), *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Sciences of Life* (Oxford, 2001), 91-116 at 106.

[24] John Aikin, Thomas Morgan, and William Johnston, *General Biography* (10 vols., 1799-1815), vi. 3-11.

[25] Eric E. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), 7. See also Michael Banton, *Racial Theories*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1998), 17-43.

[26] For a summary of these, see Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006), 12-15.

[27] Peter J. Kitson, ''Candid Reflections': The Idea of Race in the Debate over the Slave Trade and Slavery in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century', in Brycchan Carey, Markman Ellis, and Sara Salih (eds.), *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition: Britain and its Colonies, 1760-1838* (Basingstoke, 2004), 11-25 at 21.

not straightforward, and although this chapter will treat works which themselves contributed to the debate on slavery and the slave trade, they are discussed in relation to their contributions to discourses on race, not slavery. Chapter five will deal more closely with the manifestation of sexual and racial discourses in the pro- and anti- slavery literature of the years after 1807.

'Species'

One particularly ambiguous term – 'species' – must be clarified before we can explore eighteenth-century racial thought. Historians of eighteenth-century ideas of race have paid careful attention to the different meanings of 'race', 'nation' and other words without also discussing 'species'.[28] This section will briefly outline one problem of eighteenth-century usage of the term, and describe the most popular test for species in the period, which is of great weight for the subsequent discussion of race.

The anchoring of the word 'species' to its modern, biological meaning was an eighteenth-century development, brought about by the popularisation of Linnaean taxonomy. In the first Boyle lecture, delivered in 1692, Richard Bentley exemplified the traditional use of 'species' in an argument against the notion that animal species were produced from the earth.[29] 'Atheists' who make such an argument, he stated, 'derive all sorts of Animals from single Originals of each kind, which should be the common Parents of all the Race: yet surely

[28] On the fluidity of the concept of 'race' see Nicholas Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race": The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *ECS*, 29 (1996), 247-64; Collette Guillaumin, *Sexe, Race et Pratique du pouvoir: L'idée de Nature* (Paris, 1992), 209-210; Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race* (Philadelphia, 2000); Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1968), esp. 489-490; Kidd, *Forging of Races*, ch. 1; Banton, *Racial Theories*, ch. 1.
[29] See also p. 219, below.

even in this account they must necessarily allow Two at least, Male and Female, in every Species.'[30] In this context it is clear that Bentley here means to use 'race' as synonymous with 'species', rather than the former being a subset of the latter (as has recently been argued).[31] The two words never precisely map onto one another, as 'species' always retained a less explicitly biological or zoological meaning. Both meanings of 'species', as a metaphysical and zoological concept, had been present in Aristotle, but it is clear from his *Categories* and *History of Animals* that his zoological uses of 'species' and 'genus' were simply applications of these analytical concepts.[32] Their concrete binding to Linnaean taxonomic categories took place from the 1730s with the publication of Linnaeus's *Systema naturae* (1735).

The gradual deprecation of the metaphysical meaning of 'species' was nevertheless a very slow and uneven development. Examples of the traditional use of 'species' can be found in even zoological works of the nineteenth century. William Lawrence, for example, used both in his *Lectures on Physiology* (1819).[33] Early in the work he defined species in an exclusively zoological sense: 'we may define a species as a collection of all the individuals which have descended one from the other, or from common parents, and of all those which

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[30] Richard Bentley, *The Folly and Unreasonableness of Atheism*, 4th edn. (1699), 156.
[31] Cristina Malcolmson, '*Gulliver's Travels* and Studies of Skin Color in the Royal Society', in Frank Palmeri (ed.), *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Aldershot, Hants, 2006), 49-66 at 62.
[32] Aristotle, *History of Animals*, tr. D'Arcy W. Thompson in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (2 vols., Oxford, 1984), i. 774-992 at 774 (Bk. 1 $486^{a}15$-$486^{b}4$); Aristotle, *Categories*, tr. J. L. Ackrill in Barnes (ed.), *Complete Works*, i. 3-24 at 4 ($2^{a}13$-$2^{a}18$). John Locke, however, argued that Aristotle's use of the terms was ambiguous, as his precise meaning of species depended on the text in which it appeared. See Jacques Roger, *Buffon*, tr. Sarah Lucille Bonnefoi, ed. L. Pearce Williams (Ithaca, NY, 1997), 314.
[33] On Lawrence, see Hugh J. Luke Jr., 'Sir William Lawrence: Physician to Shelley and Mary', *Papers on English Language and Literature*, 1 (1965), 141-152; Kentwood D. Wells, 'Sir William Lawrence (1783-1867): A Study of Pre-Darwinian Ideas on Heredity and Variation', *Journal of the History of Biology*, 4 (1971), 319-61.

resemble them as much as they resemble each other.'[34] However, he later used what can only be interpreted as the traditional meaning of species when he wrote that 'in obedience to that principle by which the properties of the offspring depend on those of the parents, we have the power of changing one species into another by repeated intermixture.'[35] In arguing for the potential to change from one *human* 'species' into another, Lawrence *must* be using 'species' in its older sense. His double use of 'race' reinforces the point that great care must be taken when analysing racial texts and the key words 'race' and 'species'. The potential to mislead of the earlier, neutral, meaning of 'species' is enormous, especially given its prominence in racial texts and the scholarly discussion of these.[36] Nevertheless, it appears that a simplistic take on 'species' has actually led to few such problems, not least because of the fact that it is scientific literature, which tends to be the main source material for historians of race, that sees the most thorough adoption of the new meaning of 'species'.

Most eighteenth-century debates concerning 'species' relate to its newer zoological definition, and whether or not this can accurately map onto the real world. The most influential definition of 'species' was contained in John Ray's

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[34] William Lawrence, *Lectures on Physiology, Zoology, and the Natural History of Man* (1819), 98.
[35] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 297.
[36] See esp. Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, tr. Edmund Howard (1974), 155-182; Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800-1960* (1982), 29-35; Jordan, *White over Black*, 231-6, 304-9, 482-511; Julia V. Douthwaite, *The Wild Girl, Natural Man, and the Monster: Dangerous Experiments in the Age of Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2002), 14-21; Andrew Valls, '"A Lousy Empirical Scientist": Reconsidering Hume's Racism', in id. (ed.), *Race and Racism in Modern Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY, 2005), 127-149; Adam Lively, *Masks: Blackness, Race, and the Imagination* (1999), 49-52; Hannah Franziska Augstein, 'Introduction', in ead. (ed.), *Race: The Origins of an Idea, 1760-1850* (Bristol, 1996), pp. ix-xxxiii; Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, MA, 1964), 228-231; Robert Wokler, 'Tyson and Buffon on the orang-utan', *SVEC*, 155 (1976), 2301-2319; Wokler, 'Apes and Races in the Scottish Enlightenment: Monboddo and Kames on the Nature of Man', in Peter Jones (ed.), *Philosophy and Science in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, 1988), 145-168; Wokler, 'Perfectible Apes in Decadent Cultures: Rousseau's Anthropology Revisited', *Dædalus*, 107, 3 (1978), 107-134.

Wisdom of God (1692). In this, he stated what came to be known as the interbreeding criterion, namely, that the key criterion for membership of the same species is that two animals can copulate, reproduce, and that their offspring is capable of doing the same *ad infinitum*.[37] This was advocated most strongly by Buffon in the eighteenth century (indeed, more so than Ray), and it was because of this that Buffon in 1753 emphasised that 'species' was the only taxonomic category that existed in nature.[38] The interbreeding criterion came some way to being uniformly accepted, but for the fact that it could not cope with the problem of hybrid reproduction. Strictly, of course, any two animals which can produce fertile offspring must be of the same species, but instances came to light throughout the eighteenth century of animals of different species doing exactly that. The anatomist John Hunter, a supporter of the interbreeding criterion, explained this possibility when he attributed the fertility of the tiny proportion of mules which conceived following a coupling with a horse to a 'degree of monstrosity' in their sexual organs.[39] The reality of fertile hybrid offspring was thus denied: they were the product of one individual parent. Few other thinkers of the late eighteenth century were as zealous in their advocacy of the interbreeding criterion, however. Blumenbach, in the 1795 edition of *De Generis*, wrote that the interbreeding criterion was undermined by 'domesticated' animals. These animals, 'domesticated' through their close association with man – the most domesticated animal of them all – were capable of producing fertile offspring. This led Blumenbach away from the

[37] John Ray, *The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Works of the Creation*, 2nd edn. (1692), 7.
[38] Roger, *Buffon*, 313-15; Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, *Barr's Buffon. Buffon's Natural History*, v (1792). 187-9.
[39] John Hunter, *Observations on Certain Parts of the Animal Œconomy*, 2nd edn. (1792), 143.

interbreeding criterion as the test for species.[40] Rather, he preferred to look to morphological similarities: he identified the specific consanguinity of African and Asian elephants in their dental configuration, for example.[41]

Blumenbach's move away from the interbreeding criterion was not universally followed. After all, the interbreeding criterion held a good deal of potential. As John Gregory wrote in 1765, advocating the art of selective breeding, 'it is amazing that this Observation was never transferred to the Human Species, where it would be equally applicable.'[42] He was not quite right in stating that this idea had never been applied to humans, as there exist several examples of eighteenth-century works which argued for exactly this. Only a few of these are optimistic texts which emphasise the means by which it is possible to improve humanity. One conspicuous example of this type is Charles Vandermonde's *Essai sur la manière de perfectionner l'espèce humaine* (1756), which advocated selective breeding to alter nature's plan, albeit in keeping with its general blueprint.[43] However, it is important to note the linkage between species and sexual reproduction inherent in the eighteenth-century emphasis on the interbreeding criterion.

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[40] *De Generis*$_3$, 190.
[41] See Stefano Fabbri Bertoletti, 'The Anthropological Theory of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach', in Stefano Poggi and Maurizio Bossi (eds.), *Romanticism in Science: Science in Europe, 1790-1840* (Dordrecht, 1994), 103-125.
[42] John Gregory, *A Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with those of the Natural World* (2 vols., 1774), i, 27. This edition was posthumously published.
[43] Kathleen Wellman, 'Physicians and Philosophes: Physiology and Sexual Morality in the French Enlightenment', *ECS*, 35 (2002), 267-277. See also Charles Augustin Vandermonde, *Essai sur la manière de perfectionner l'espèce humaine*, (2 vols., Paris, 1756); Lawrence, *Lectures*, 459.

The Epistemology of Sex and Race

Race and Sexual Reproduction

The most obvious place to start an exploration of the interrelation of sex and race is with the presence within racial theories of sexual reproduction. This subsection will show how sexual reproduction was central to both schools of racial thought, either in a positive manner as with monogenism, or as a cynical means of asserting the incommensurability of human groups, as with polygenism. The reorientation of the interbreeding criterion so as to operate on the level of genus as opposed to species, implemented to deal with the vexed problem of hybrid reproduction, allowed polygenists to assert a distinct species identity for different racial groups. However, another concept introduced to shore up monogenetic theories – degeneration – is proof that monogenetic concepts were far from benign, notwithstanding the original neutrality of this idea. Questions of the transmission of racial characteristics clarify the relationship of racial and embryological theories, although theological commitments cut across their most likely partnerships (monogenism with epigenesis, and polygenism with preformationism) to render such relationships more complicated. Finally, the role of the maternal imagination in the production of racial difference will be explored, and the place of defective or monstrous births, such as black albinos, are shown to play an important role in racial theorising.

The interbreeding criterion makes clear the linkage of sexual reproduction with species. It was also strongly and closely associated with race. Both schools of racial thought emphasised the importance of sexual reproduction, but in different ways. Monogenetic theories had an implicit role

for sexual reproduction, as they emphasised a shared origin and accretive change over time. Responses to the shortcomings of these theories were also built around sexual reproduction, which provided a mechanism to explain the retention of skin colour across generations irrespective of environment. Polygenism's use of sex was more cynical, as there was simply no need for sexual intercourse to figure in a polygenist theory: different races were different from the moment they were created, so sex had no place in the explanation of difference. Although some argued that black people were the result of sexual intercourse between whites and apes, this argument offended both scientific and religious beliefs, and was almost universally discredited.[44] Sex was used by polygenists to explain 'hybrid' populations, such as 'mulattoes', but these were not the groups whose origins racial theorists sought to explain: they were more interested in their parent groups.

The cynical use of sex by polygenists took the form of abusing the ever-more authoritative scientific discourses of sex to prove their accounts of human difference. The Jamaican planter and judge, Edward Long, engaged with the interbreeding criterion to argue that mulattoes were sterile, with obvious implications. Long was unable to state that this was unequivocally the case, as it was plain that mulattoes were born, and were themselves fertile. Rather, he argued that inter-'mulatto' sex was sterile, and that 'mulattoes' 'seem in this respect to be actually of the mule-kind, and not so capable of producing from one another as from a commerce with a distinct White or Black.'[45] Long used this supposed sterility to argue for the separate species identity of white and

[44] See [Pieter Camper], *The Works of the Late Professor Camper*, tr. T. Cogan (1794), 32.
[45] Long, *History*, ii. 335.

black peoples. As a result of fertile offspring being born to what was thought were originally distinct species, monogenists also modified their original conception of species. Linnaeus did exactly this when, in the 1758 edition of *Systema Naturae*, he argued that the interbreeding criterion was in fact not a determinant of species, but of genus. Buffon did the same, although his conception of a genus was restricted solely to domesticated animals.[46] Long quickly incorporated this shift within his own work, asking 'when we reflect on the nature of these men [black Africans], and their dissimilarity to the rest of mankind, must we not conclude, that they are a different species of the same *genus?*'[47]

The resituation of the interbreeding criterion from species to genus was an attempt to prevent it from being totally undermined by the phenomenon of fertile hybrid offspring. Although some thinkers declared fertile hybrids 'monstrous', others, such as Blumenbach, moved away more completely from the interbreeding criterion. One who struggled to maintain his commitment to the criterion was Buffon, who pioneered the notion that domestication was a form of degeneration.[48] By domesticating animals, man had changed the diet and habits of them such that they not only interbred, but they also had no repugnance against doing so.[49] By 1761, Buffon has redefined species to include not merely the interbreeding criterion, but also considerations of climate and

[46] Phillip R. Sloan, 'The Impact of Buffon's Taxonomic Philosophy in German Biology: The Establishment of the Biological Species Concept', in E. R. Forbes (ed.), *Human Implications of Scientific Advance: Proceedings of the XVth International Congress of the History of Science, Edinburgh, 10-15 August 1977* (Edinburgh, 1978), 531-8 at 533-4; Roger, *Buffon*, 325.
[47] Long, *History*, ii. 356. See Anthony Barker, *The African Link: British Attitudes to the Negro in the Era of the African Slave Trade* (1978), 46-53.
[48] See Roger, *Buffon*, 300-308; Michèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et Histoire au siècle des lumières* (Paris, 1971), 246.
[49] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 97.

nature, narrowing it significantly.[50] A mechanism to limit inter-species sex, 'repugnance', became part of an animal's 'nature', and this sort of self-definition of species became increasingly part of the aesthetics of race, as discussed below.

Degeneration became the central theoretical construct of racial theory in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. As Nancy Stepan has noted, it was originally a benign idea, simply arguing that certain groups had moved away from the primordial form of a unified humanity.[51] Blumenbach's concept of the 'formative drive' [*bildungstrieb*] attempted to explain this phenomenon. Degeneration was also deployed as a nebulous explanation for all the ways in which a given society differed from European standards.[52] Again, degeneration did not *necessarily* entail a value judgement about the worth of those whose skin had thus degenerated, but in couching the development as a *de*generation, it was unlikely to remain neutral for very long.[53] The very title of Pierre Barrère's 1741 pamphlet bespeaks the popularity of the notion even at this early date: *Dissertation sur la Cause Physique de la Couleur des Negres, de la Qualité de leurs Cheveux, et de la Dégénération de l'un et de l'autre*.[54] That degeneration occupied such a key position in later eighteenth-century racial theory is both a consequence and a cause of the popularity of monogenism, and its diachronic and reproductive emphasis.

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[50] Roger, *Buffon*, 328.
[51] Nancy Stepan, 'Biological Degeneration: Races and Proper Places', in J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman (eds.), *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress* (New York, 1985), 97-120 at 97.
[52] J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman, 'Degeneration: An Introduction' in eid. (eds.), *Degeneration*, pp. ix-xiv at xiii-xiv.
[53] Stepan, 'Biological Degeneration', 97; Barker, *African Link*, 96.
[54] (Paris, 1741). Barrère was more widely known in Britain than another French author on skin colour, Le Cat. See G. S. Rousseau, 'Le Cat and the Physiology of Negroes', in Harold E. Pagliaro (ed.), *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, i: *Racism in the Eighteenth Century* (Cleveland OH, 1973), 369-86 at 385 n. 16.

The prominence of sexual reproduction highlighted a corresponding interest in the transmission of racial characteristics from one generation to the next. The central debate in eighteenth-century reproductive theory was between two theories which can be roughly characterised as epigenesist and pre-formationist. The former argued for the creation of an embryo in the womb at the time of conception, formed by the mixing of male and female semen. The latter stated that a fully formed human already existed in either the male or female semen (branches of the theory known as animalculism or ovism, respectively). In the animalculist case, it was necessary for the pre-formed germ to be housed in the womb for development to start, whereas for ovism, the male semen was required to provide the impetus for embryonic development to begin. Epigenesis obviously had no problems in explaining the difference of children from their parents. On the other hand, pre-formationism, the more popular theory for the first half of the eighteenth century, had struggled to counter the objection that it left unexplained the resemblance of children to their parents. In any event, it appears that the vast majority of racial theorists bucked the trend that 'most eighteenth-century Europeans embraced preformation.'[55] This is hardly surprising, for racial theories quite closely mapped onto those on reproduction and embryology. Original types, unwavering through the years, could be an equally accurate description of both polygenism and preformationism. Likewise, the notion of change through the

[55] Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science, and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* (Oxford, 2005), 243. Buffon typically fudged the issue by creating a 'general mould' that was pre-formed, but susceptible to environmental change. See Roger, *Buffon*, 124-5.

results of sexual intercourse is just as valid a summary of epigenesis as it is of monogenism.[56]

However, racial and embryological theories did not correspond exactly. Although logically polygenesis and preformation theories appear ideally matched, it did not automatically follow that preformationists were polygenists, or vice versa. Indeed, given the fact that polygenesis was a minority and heterodox viewpoint, most preformationists preferred monogenesis as an answer to diversity, despite the metaphysical mismatch this entailed. Conversely, it is quite clear from the few polygenist accounts from the eighteenth-century that embryology, when spoken of, was conceived in epigenetic terms. For example, Norris Saakwa-Mante has shown how John Atkins's *Navy Surgeon* (1734) was polygenist. Saakwa-Mante has argued that by eliminating traditional and 'sexual-generation' monogenism, the only resource Atkins had left to explain the colour of black people was polygenism.[57] However, Atkins never actually eliminated the idea of sexuality effecting change. Rather, climatic monogenism was insufficient to explain the creation of black peoples from a white archetype: 'no *European* totally changes by length of Cohabitation with them, neither in Generation begets a Black, but a Mulatto, not a woolly, but hairy Race, which ever remain so.'[58] Atkins's point was that, although sexual intercourse between '*European*' and 'Black' parents would produce a race in between, the differences between these parents were such that

[56] This account of embryological theories is indebted to Elizabeth B. Gasking, *Investigations into Generation, 1651-1828* (1967); Eve Keller, 'Embryonic Individuals: The Rhetoric of Seventeenth-Century Embryology and the Construction of Early-Modern Identity', *ECS*, 33 (2000), 321-48; ead., *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves: The Rhetoric of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (2007).
[57] Norris Saakwa-Mante, 'Western medicine and racial constitutions: Surgeon John Atkins' theory of polygenism and sleepy distemper in the 1730s', in Waltraud Ernst and Bernard Harris (eds.), *Race, Science and Medicine, 1700-1960* (1999), 29-57 at 38.
[58] John Atkins, *The Navy-Surgeon: or, a Practical System of Surgery.* (1743), appendix at 23-4.

there had to have existed 'different Protoplasts' in the beginning.[59] This argument gets to the heart of why, despite the seeming compatibility of preformationism and polygenesis, polygenists remained epigenecist: sexual intercourse between 'white' and 'black' regularly took place, and the result was offspring that physically differed from its parents. But, in the beginning, there still required originally distinct parents to start this racial mixing. By keeping open the possibility that sexual intercourse could affect change, if only in offspring, Atkins was clearly not subscribing wholesale to the inviolability of a preformed seed.

One explanation for how children differed from or resembled their parents was that the mother's imagination played a significant role in shaping the unborn foetus. This was yet another means by which sexuality and racial theory were intertwined.[60] Although most literature about the power of the maternal imagination mentioned a variety of 'monstrosities', it is significant that the notion of producing a black child consistently numbers among them. In one frequently quoted example, Hippocrates himself is described hearing of a woman who, 'beholding the picture of a blackamore, conceived and brought forth an Ethiopian.'[61] The presence of such examples among catalogues of monstrosities is an instance of how an unexpected skin colour – Mary Fissell reminds us that such stories also occur of white children born to non-white parents – was seen as a bodily deformation.[62] Many thinkers, including Buffon,

[59] Atkins, *Navy-Surgeon*, appendix at 24.
[60] Barker, *African Link*, 86.
[61] *Aristotle's Master-Piece Compleated* (Glasgow, 1781), 32; see also *The British Apollo, containing two thousand answers to curious questions in most arts and sciences…*, 3rd edn. (3 vols., 1726), ii. 467.
[62] Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2004), 207.

categorically rejected the maternal imagination as a cause of differences, but this did not mean that they were any less 'monstrous'.[63]

Racial theorists used the phenomenon of seemingly white children born to black parents to demonstrate truths about the origin of mankind. In 1745, Paris was astir about the presence of a 'nègre blanc' or black albino.[64] This young boy was the occasion for Maupertuis's book, *Venus Physique*, an extended meditation on the phenomenon of black albinism which concluded that white was the original colour of man and that albinos were atavistic eruptions of man's original coloration.[65] The evidence thus provided by black albinism worked to bolster the arguments of monogenists, by demonstrating an ancestral relationship between white and black peoples, at the same time as emphasising white superiority on the basis of its supposedly greater antiquity. However, the flaw in this argument was not hard to spot, and in the notes for the second edition of his *History of Jamaica*, Long strenuously criticised its restatement by Oliver Goldsmith in 1774.[66] Long pointed out that commitment to a monogenist view and a belief in whiteness as the primitive colour of mankind could not explain how blackness ever came to be. This is exactly the same point that Atkins had made in 1734, and Long drew the same conclusion: the only explanation for the existence of black people was an original black ancestor.[67] Only such committed monogenists as John Hunter were prepared to think the unthinkable and argue for the original blackness of humanity, on the

[63] Buffon, *Natural History*, iii (1807). 293-4.
[64] See Mary Terrall, *The Man Who Flattened the Earth: Maupertuis and the Sciences in the Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2002), 207-26.
[65] [Pierre Louis Moreau de Maupertuis], *Venus Physique* (Paris, 1745), 160-1.
[66] Oliver Goldsmith, *A History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, 2nd edn. (8 vols., 1779), ii. 239-40.
[67] Edward Long, 'On the Different Races of Mankind' (after 1787), BL Add. MS 12438 (Long Papers), f. 5.

basis that many black animals will breed white ones accidentally, but not the other way round.[68] James Cowles Prichard, the Bristol-based physician and pioneer anthropologist, argued for precisely the same thing in the first edition of his *Researches into the Physical History of Man* (1813), linking physiology and stadial theory by stating that 'whenever we see any progress towards civilization, there we also find deviation towards a lighter colour and a different form, nearly in the same proportion.'[69]

Sexual Characteristics

A further zone of interconnection between sex and race was provided by the place of sexual characteristics in racial discussion. After a brief consideration of the part played by mothers in the post-partum shaping of racial features, such as skulls, noses, and lips, the sexual characteristics of the mother herself will be analysed. Pendulous breasts had an intrinsic relationship with the wonted ease of parturition enjoyed by non-European women. Her sex organs were also seen to correspond to a lascivious sexuality, and African populations were the *locus classicus* of such arguments. In particular, the labia of African women (especially the 'Hottentot apron') were taken as the marker of untrammelled sexual desire. By contrast, the place of men within such discourses was more limited. Some consideration of the penis did take place, but this mostly focused on arbitrary minutiae concerning the organ used as a means of differentiating racially between groups. However, male and female genitals were accorded a privileged status as repositories of 'true' colour:

[68] Charles White, *An Account of the Regular Gradation in Man* (1799), 100.
[69] James Cowles Prichard, *Researches into the Physical History of Man*, ed. George W. Stocking, Jr. (Chicago, 1973 [1813]), 236-7.

unexposed to the environment, the scrotum and areolae provided a more certain guide than the rest of the skin to the colour of the individual.

Women could shape the race more directly than just through their imaginations.[70] Accounts abound from the early modern era of women physically manipulating their children's features in order to produce a particular skull shape, or the flatness of the nose. Buffon, who used a vast corpus of travel literature as source material, stated that 'in all savage nations this caprice of altering the natural figure of the head is very frequent.'[71] Blumenbach limited the efficacy of parental shaping of features when he wrote in 1795 that 'the natural conformation of the nose can only be exaggerated by this violent and long continued compression of the nose when soft, but can in no way be made thus originally, since it is well known that the racial face may be recognised even in abortions.'[72] Rather than creating the flatness of a nose, maternal action now merely exaggerated an extant feature. Lawrence wrote to the same effect in 1819, showing that within the space of seventy years, from Buffon to Lawrence, the consensus moved from maternal agency in creating this feature to it being innate and visible even in the unborn.[73]

Another explanation for the shaping of flat noses by mothers was as an involuntary action, while the child was carried on its mother's back. Blumenbach explained that the thick lips and flat noses of African children were pounded whilst suckling as the mother worked.[74] They were able to suckle

[70] Londa Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Sexual Politics and the Making of Modern Science* (1993), 136; see also Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies*, 207-8; Cody, *Birthing*, 33.
[71] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv (1792). 318.
[72] *De Generis*$_3$, 233.
[73] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 392.
[74] *De Generis*$_3$, 232; Londa Schiebinger, 'The Anatomy of Difference: Race and Sex in Eighteenth-Century Science', *ECS*, 23 (1990), 387-405; ead., *Nature's Body*, 135.

whilst on their mother's back because of one of the most extraordinary racial commonplaces of the early modern period, the notion that African women had breasts so large that they were able to suckle their children over their shoulder.[75] Hardly particular to Africans, this pendulosity was even attributed to men in Mandeville's *Travels* and Irish women in the seventeenth century: William Lithgow had written that the breasts of Irish women were so large that they would make an ideal money bag.[76] Lawrence in 1819 mentioned the same thing being spoken of regarding 'Hottentot' (Khoikhoi) women in southern Africa, although he did believe that it bore 'an evident air of exaggeration.'[77] The attribution of such large breasts to women of other races, particularly Africans, symbolised their savagery and cannibalism.[78]

Opinion was divided on the cause of large breasts. Some, such as the German naturalist Johann Reinhold Forster, treated them as a matter-of-fact corollary of the environment.[79] Others linked them to the process of childbirth.[80] The Manchester man-midwife Charles White was more racial in tone:

> long flabby breasts … are not the effect of relaxation in a warm climate, but are found with people of colour in the frigid as well as torrid zone. No European

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[75] Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in the Making of New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, 2004), 16-17; ead., '"Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder": Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770', *W&MQ*, 3rd ser., 54 (1997), 167-192. For a typical statement of this in the eighteenth century, see Goldsmith, *History*, ii. 228.

[76] William Lithgow, *The Totall Discourse, Of the rare Adventures, and painefull Peregrinations of long nineteene yeares Travailes from Scotland* (1640), 436; reprinted in J. Morgan, *Phœnix Britannicus* (1731), 214 and *GM*, 46 (1776), 73. See *The Voyages and Travels of Sir John Mandevile, Knight* (1705), 76.

[77] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 418; Nicholas Hudson, '"Hottentots" and the Evolution of European Racism', *Journal of European Studies*, 34 (2004), 308-32; id., 'The "Hottentot Venus," Sexuality, and the Changing Aesthetics of Race, 1650-1850', *Mosaic*, 41 (2008), 19-41.

[78] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body*, 161; Morgan, '"Some Could Suckle"'.

[79] Johann Reinhold Forster, *Observations Made during a Voyage round the World*, ed. Nicholas Thomas, Harriet Guest, and Michael Dettelbach (Honolulu, HI, 1996), 181.

[80] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 416.

> white woman, however, in any age or climate, was ever known to have a breast of such a description. The African, therefore, in this particular approaches to the simia.[81]

Although a few thinkers, notably Blumenbach, mentioned the techniques employed to increase breast size, White is here arguing for the innateness of this characteristic, in a move similar to that stating that nose shape was not the product of external influence.[82] However, the lack of consensus on this issue is a demonstration of how attribution of a certain characteristic as innate depended much on the characteristic itself.

The ability to suckle whilst working contributed to a view of black peoples as beasts of burden, for whom childbearing was an instinctual, unthinking process.[83] As Londa Schiebinger has reminded us, even 'within Linnaean terminology, a female character (the lactating mammae) ties humans to brutes, while a traditionally male character (reason) marks our separateness from brutes.'[84] The same could be said of the treatment by racial theorists of childbirth among Africans. In 1794 the man-midwife Robert Bland wrote about the ease of non-European mothers in giving birth, tying it to the level of civilisation.[85] However, being also true of Livonian peasants, Bland was compelled to conclude that 'this facility of bringing forth, is not occasioned by the warmth of the climate.'[86] The observation that they found childbearing much easier than Europeans led dangerously to the conclusion that they were

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[81] White, *Regular Gradation*, 63.
[82] *De Generis*$_3$, 247-8.
[83] Not to mention essential to survival in savage societies. See Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, 235.
[84] Londa Schiebinger, 'Mammals, Primatology and Sexology', in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science: The History of Attitudes to Sexuality* (Cambridge, 1994), 184-209 at 191; ead., *Nature's Body*, 55.
[85] Robert Bland, *Observations on Human and on Comparative Parturition* (1794), 30.
[86] Bland, *Observations*, 31.

free from the curse pronounced on Eve in Genesis 3:16.[87] It does not appear, however, that this connection was explicitly made by any racial theorists, but it would have supported any conclusions regarding racial Otherness drawn on the basis of the supposed ease of parturition.

More attention was paid in the period, however, to the idea that the sexual organs – especially female – were peculiarly structured so as to reflect the bestial and lascivious nature of non-Europeans.[88] This principle was stated explicitly in 1824 by the French apothecary Julien-Joseph Virey, who also claimed that 'it is this temperament which is supposed to render them attractive in the eyes of Europeans, when the disgust which at first arises has worn off.'[89] Virey's optimism that white people would express at least initial disgust – equivalent to the inter-species 'repugnance' discussed earlier – at the notion of a sexual liaison with a black individual was not shared by Edward Long. Writing in 1772, Long equated interracial sex with bestiality when he wrote that 'the lower class of women in *England*, are remarkably fond of the blacks, for reasons too brutal to mention; they would connect themselves with horses and asses, if the laws permitted them.'[90] Expanding on this two years later, Long argued that bestiality was likely in Africa, as it had once occurred in England: 'if lust can prompt to such excesses in that Northern region, and in despight of all the checks which national politeness and refined sentiments impose, how

[87] On Eve's curse, see William Dodd, *A Sermon Preach'd in the Parish Church of St. Andrew, Holborn, On Friday, April 26, 1754* (1754), 2.
[88] See esp. Morgan, '"Some Could Suckle"'.
[89] Julien-Joseph Virey, *Natural History of the Negro Race*, tr. and ed. J. H. Guenebault (Charleston, SC, 1837), 88 (emphasis mine). On Virey see Claude Benichou and Claude Blanckaert (eds.), *Julien-Joseph Virey* (Paris, 1988); Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 180-1.
[90] [Edward Long], *Candid Reflections Upon the JUDGEMENT lately awarded by the Court of King's Bench* (1772), 48-9.

freely may it not operate in the more genial soil of Afric, that parent of everything that is monstrous in nature.'[91]

Notwithstanding the almost pathological violence of Long's denunciations – extreme even in their own day – Africans were largely seen as indulging in an uninhibited and bestial sexuality. Buffon stated, in his survey of African nations that 'as for the girls, nothing in the whole country is so rare as to find one who remembers the period at which she ceased to be a virgin.'[92] Although all 'savage' women were guilty of this to varying degrees,[93] it was Africans whose sexual natures were most closely linked to their bodies, and female Africans, in particular, were seen to be as enamoured of white men as they were of apes. In a collection of 1732 they were described as having a 'temper hot and lascivious, making no scruple to prostitute themselves to the *Europeans* for a very slender profit, so great is their inclination to white men.'[94] The contradictory tastes of black women – for apes and Europeans – were part of the paradoxical calculus that portrayed them as simultaneously dangerous and inferior.[95]

After breasts, the sexual organ attracting the most attention from racial theorists was the *nymphæ*, or labia. These were linked to the supposed 'natural apron' of 'Hottentot' women. Some even thought that this organ was of such dimensions as to provide a defence against rape.[96] Following the same logic that Long used in explaining bestiality in Africa (if it occurs only occasionally in

[91] Long, *History*, ii. 383.
[92] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 286.
[93] See, for example, Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 240.
[94] Jean Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea*, reprinted in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (6 vols., 1732), v. 34.
[95] See Morgan, '"Some Could Suckle"'.
[96] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 423.

Europe, it is bound to take place there), Blumenbach minimised the significance of this organ, stating that in Africa 'the nymphæ are a little more turgid and prominent, a defect the less to be astonished at in that country, because it is certain that it sometimes occurs in this.'[97] Others felt that these organs were the direct result of living in a hot country.[98] Irrespective of its cause, the linkage of this organ with an insatiable and animalistic sexuality was unmistakable, given the description of the sexual nature of the possessors of this organ. Some authors made this linkage explicit: Buffon stated that 'Hottentot' women have no shame: 'certain it is that all the female natives of the Cape are subject to this monstrous deformity, and which they expose to such persons as have the curiosity to see it.'[99] In fact, the first thorough examination of this organ was conducted by the zoologist and comparative anatomist Georges Cuvier who dissected Saartje Baartman, the 'Hottentot Venus', on her death in Paris in 1815.[100] Lawrence explained away the 'apron' by stating that 'a considerable development of these organs is more common in warm climates, and has been noticed in the Negroes, Moors, and Copts, among whom it has been the practice for females to be circumcised.'[101] Even if no longer restricted to 'Hottentots', these organs were still perceived as common to peoples who had already been noticed for their sexual appetites and behaviour.

Difficult to spot in these debates linking sexual organs to propensity for sexual behaviour are men. Mentions of the penis were rare and equivocal. If

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[97] *De Generis*$_3$, 384.
[98] Abraham Rees et al, *Cyclopædia* (45 vols., 1802-20), s.v. 'Generation' [by William Lawrence].
[99] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 296.
[100] Schiebinger, *Nature's Body*, 170-1. Anne Fausto-Sterling, 'Gender, Race, and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of 'Hottentot' Women in Europe, 1815-1817', in Jennifer Terry and Jacqueline Urla (eds.), *Deviant Bodies: Critical Perspectives on Difference in Science and Popular Culture* (Bloomington, IN, 1995), 19-48.
[101] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 425; Hudson, '"Hottentots"'.

Blumenbach and White used the size of the (African) penis to demonstrate their virility – which appears to be the case at least with Blumenbach who acknowledged that 'it is said that women when eager for venery prefer the embraces of Negroes to those of other men'[102] – then the opposite was true in the case of the abbé Cornelius de Pauw. His *Recherches philosophiques sur les américains* (1768) drew a direct link between hairlessness, small genitals, and a lack of virility, on the basis of the fact that eunuchs did not develop either bodily hair or larger genitals, and that they were sterile.[103] Even more particular was White's attention to the *frænum præputii* (the membranous fold that attaches the foreskin, or prepuce, to the underside of the penis) as the feature by which to establish the fact that black people were an intermediate group between Europeans (humans) and apes. Concentration on this tiny feature shows how the penis resisted an agreed interpretation in a way the nymphae did not.[104]

The sexual organs of black men were used as a means of arguing for or against the role of climate as a direct cause of skin colour. In 1775, Blumenbach described how the scrotum of a black man was considerably darker than the rest of the skin, 'for it is well known that some parts of the human body become more black than others, as, for example, the genitals of either sex, the tips of the breasts, and other parts which easily verge towards a dark colour.'[105] Virey used the example of dark areolae to prove that 'such a conformation is not the effect of heat alone (though it contributes much to it) but the natural

[102] *De Generis*$_3$, 249.
[103] [Cornelius de Pauw], *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* (2 vols., Berlin, 1768), i. 42, 145. For an English translation of these sections, see also [Daniel Webb], *Selections from* Les recherches philosophiques sur les Americains *of M. Pauw* (Bath, 1789), 47.
[104] White, *Regular Gradation*, 62.
[105] *De Generis*$_1$, 109.

conformation of those races, in whatever climate they live.'[106] The colour of male genitals was used as a more stable marker than overall skin colour, which could change. White wrote that 'we are informed that the children of negroes, when first born, are of the same ruddy colour as European children; but that the *scrotum* and the *glans penis* are black; and that they have a black or brown thread or circle on the extremity of the nails.'[107] Genitals and fingernails are used as markers for black identity, even when skin colour was unable to do so. Opposing this view was John Hunter, an army surgeon not to be confused with his more famous namesake, whose 1775 Edinburgh MD thesis was a strongly environmentalist account of human races.[108] In asserting that the sun directly caused skin colour, Hunter claimed that all children are born of one colour before turning into their particular varieties. White did so too, he and Hunter sharing the same method of proof: the genitals again provided the key to skin colour. In Hunter's case, those parts of the body shielded from the sun and air do not lose their original white colour, 'as is observed in those blacks who have the gland covered with the prepuce.'[109] Despite the seeming equality preached by Hunter's environmentalism, there remained the ethnocentrism of the assertion that white is the original colour.

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[106] Virey, *Negro Race*, 6.
[107] White, *Regular Gradation*, 115. This notion of neonatal ruddiness was very common. See, for example, Boyle, *Experiments*, 164-7; [Henry Home, Lord Kames], *Sketches of the History of Man* (Edinburgh, 1774), i. 15; Thomas Jarrold, *Anthropologia: or, dissertation on the form and colour of man* (1808), 243, cited in Kidd, *Forging of Races*, 30-31, 279 n. 12.
[108] On Hunter see Lise Wilkinson, '"The Other" John Hunter, M.D., F.R.S. (1754-1809): His Contributions to the Medical Literature, and to the Introduction of Animal Experiments into Infectious Disease Research', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London,* 36 (1982), 227-41.
[109] John Hunter, *Disputatio Inauguralis Quaedam de Hominum Varietatibus, et harum Causis, exponens* (Edinburgh, 1775), reprinted in Bendyshe, *Treatises*, 357-394 at 373.

Other('s) Characteristics

This subsection moves the discussion of the sex-race interrelationship to a different level, based on epistemology. Sex may not be foregrounded in discussions of skin colour, hair, or bodily odour, but these features are equally reliant on the power of an empiricist epistemology to convey meaning. Sex was far from absent in other ways too: older genealogical accounts of racial difference implicitly had a place for sex in the form of reproduction. The problems facing the climatic theories which came to replace these accounts also carved a niche for reproduction, by necessitating the construction of defensive mechanisms such as degeneration. Buffon's theory, for example, established a close relationship with his own embryological theories to establish a sophisticated racial/sexual economy of the body. Empirical markers of difference, such as skin colour, were also applied to class identities. This was widely influential, ultimately feeding back into racial theories which were sensitive to the differences of rank in the populations they described. Skin colour, arguably the chief repository of racial identity prior to the 1780s, was much debated as a potential signifier of species difference. Much of this took place during a brief flurry of polygenist thought in the mid-1770s. A good deal of the literature attacking these ideas was religious in nature, but did point to the paramount importance of colour in discussions of race. Other features discussed were the hair and bodily odour, both intrinsically related to the skin. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the skeleton began to gain ground over skin colour as a repository of racial identity. Centred on the skull, the skeleton was a more permanent and reliable source of racial identity, pointing

to the need for a more stable signifier to be 'read' via an empiricist epistemology.

Eighteenth-century explanations of skin colour were a mixture of environmental and theological factors.[110] The key theological argument concerning skin colour was based on the curse pronounced on Ham for looking at his father, Noah, naked and drunk in the latter's tent (Genesis 9: 20-9). The story did not explicitly mention skin colour and inventive exegesis was required for it to act as an explanation for this.[111] A sermon of 1754 agreed, using the story of Ham as an exemplar of overstretching one's reading of scripture.[112] The popularity of the Hamite thesis, at its height in the seventeenth century, was beginning to wane by the early eighteenth century. One author of 1726 stated of blackness that 'to say that it was a punishment inflicted on *Cham* and his posterity, is a very groundless supposition.'[113] Another example from 1728 supports this view by pointing to the fact that Ham's progeny settled throughout Africa and Asia, and the difference in colour between the inhabitants of these invalidated a genealogical explanation.[114] Notwithstanding the flaws which were to be laid bare in the environmentalist model later in the century, during the 1720s it was in the ascendant against the dwindling Hamite thesis. This latter thesis died hard, however, limping on into the nineteenth

[110] Representing the interdependence of religion and science, particularly in Britain. See Kidd, *Forging of Races*, 56.
[111] Jordan, *White over Black*, 19.
[112] Thomas Newton, *Dissertations on the Prophecies…* (1754), 30. Newton was Chaplain to the Princess Dowager of Wales.
[113] *British Apollo*, 2.
[114] *The Athenian Oracle. Being an Entire Collection of All the Valuable Questions and Answers in the Old Athenian Mercuries*, 3rd edn. (4 vols., 1728), iii. 383.

century and remaining sufficiently popular (at least in France) to warrant a rebuttal by the abbé Grégoire in 1810.[115]

It was as a result of its shortcomings that environmentalism as a cause of black skin colour soon became more sophisticated than the simple attribution of the effect of the sun or air as a cause of blackness.[116] Buffon's system was perhaps the most complicated environmentalist account.[117] In this, climate and geography *directly* affected food, and thence man, through a process Buffon called 'intussusception'. This was his name for a process of assimilation, by which the organic molecules (*molécules organiques*) in food were absorbed by the human body. This then affected man's interior mould (*moule intériure*): a totally nebulous concept that Albrecht von Haller, in his preface to the German translation of the *Histoire Naturelle*, freely admitted that he did not understand.[118] Buffon's embryological theory showed how changes to the body wrought by the environment became hereditary, as material which formed sperm was gathered from all parts of the body in a reverse of the 'intussusception' process. Tellingly, Buffon likened this to the transmission of disease: 'varieties have been perpetuated from generation to generation, in the same manner as deformities and diseases pass from parents to their children, … and have been confirmed and rendered permanent by time.'[119] Blackness and albinism were discussed by Buffon in such terms. He stated that white is the primitive colour of humanity, from which other colours have degenerated, and

[115] Henri Grégoire, *An Enquiry Concerning the Intellectual and Moral Faculties, and Literature of Negroes*, trans D. B. Warden (Brooklyn, NY, 1810), 25.
[116] Perhaps the best example of this is John Arbuthnot, *An Essay Concerning the Effects of Air on Human Bodies* (1733).
[117] Sloan, 'The Idea of Racial Degeneracy', 302.
[118] Roger, *Buffon*, 194.
[119] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 352.

explained that albinism is an instance of accidental reappearance of the original whiteness.[120] Indeed, albinism is the result of men being 'reduced to the last stage of adulteration.'[121] Black is thus the most degenerate colour, resulting in the occasional reversion of black people's skin colour to white. The instances of albinism among white people or other animals that Buffon himself mentions are forgotten. A previously benign understanding of 'degeneration' is thus imbued with a value judgement rendering black the worst colour.

In keeping with the emergence of degeneration as the central theoretical construct for analysing those differences which did not constitute a difference in species, it was used to account for skin colour. As with most eighteenth-century thinkers, Blumenbach argued in 1775 that skin colour was located in the *reticulum mucosum*[122] and explained the development of white and black from a ruddy newborn using degeneration.[123] By 1795 he had modified his model somewhat, now arguing that the two uppermost layers of skin (the *reticulum* and epidermis) were the seat of colour, and he drew attention to the link between the thickness of skin and its colour. This echoes the influential theory of John Mitchell, a Virginia physician who wrote in 1744 that 'the Skins of Negroes are of a thicker Substance, and denser Texture, than those of white People, and transmit no Colour thro' them.'[124] Rather than view the *reticulum* as the site of colour, Mitchell's argument viewed this layer of the skin as membrane of greater or lesser opacity through which the whiteness of the

[120] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 324-5.
[121] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 325.
[122] In modern medicine this is the *stratum mucosum*, an intermediate level of the *epidermis*.
[123] *De Generis*$_1$, 108
[124] John Mitchell, 'An Essay upon the Causes of the different Colours of People in different Climates … Communicated to the Royal Society by Mr. Peter Collinson, F.R.S.', *Phil. Trans.*, 43 (1744-45), 102-150 at 107.

corium (dermis) was transmitted. Notwithstanding these echoes, Blumenbach posited his own explanation for the cause of dark skin: the retention of carbon. Utilising Scheele's and Priestley's independent discoveries of oxygen, only published after the first edition of *De Generis*, Blumenbach stated that carbon embedded in the skin would 'precipitate' in contact with atmospheric oxygen. Incorporating this new discovery within an existing paradigm, Blumenbach went on to explain why this affected only the atrabilious (those affected by black bile).[125] He also used his carbon thesis to explain why parts of a woman's body darkened during pregnancy, as at that time she not only had her own but also her child's share of carbon to respire. Likewise, positing menstruation as another means by which excess carbon is expelled, 'a similar blackness is also observable in women who never menstruate.'[126] Retention of carbon was seen by Blumenbach in the same light as Buffon's explanation about the transmission of colour: as a disease or at least a systemic flaw explained by degeneration.

Colour also constituted one way in which race and class were intertwined. Moving on from his comment about the colour of amenorrhœal women, Blumenbach clearly stated that this is also the case with atrabilious men, especially those of the lower sort. Indeed, he had written twenty years earlier that 'anatomists not unfrequently fall in with the corpses of the lowest sort of men, whose reticulum comes much nearer to the blackness of the Ethiopians than to the brilliancy of the higher class of European.'[127] This linkage of race and class had a wide influence.[128] When Johann Reinhold Forster explained the difference of colour between the two races he identified in

[125] *De Generis*$_3$, 211.
[126] *De Generis*$_3$, 221.
[127] *De Generis*$_1$, 108.
[128] See also Boyle, *Experiments*, 152-3.

the South Pacific in 1778, he used the case of 'common labourers' to emphasise the effect of exposure to the air on the colour of the individual.[129] The corrosive effect of the air was a mainstay of environmentalist thought throughout the eighteenth century, and it remained a plausible explanation for scientific phenomena (although less so for skin colour) into the nineteenth century. An 1814 article by the physician Richard Cheston explained how, when a foetus was found in an old woman who had died, it had been preserved through the exclusion of atmospheric air.[130]

Class might be signified by colour for Blumenbach, but species never could be.[131] The chorus of racial theorists who agreed with Blumenbach reached deafening proportions in the fifty years after 1775.[132] The immediate cause for this glut of argument against polygenism appears to have been the emergence of abolitionism. The beginnings of the British antislavery campaign were clear by the late 1760s, and the landmark 1772 Somerset judgement was a significant advance.[133] Lord Mansfield's judgement provoked pamphlets from two authors, Samuel Estwick and Edward Long, who both offered the first polygenist explanations of human difference to have been published in Britain since the 1730s.[134] Such heterodox arguments, in favour of an institution which was beginning to lose moral credibility, were bound to attract a chorus of opposition.

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[129] Forster, *Observations*, 175-7.
[130] Richard Browne Cheston, 'The History of a Child Retained in the Mother, Fifty-Two Years after the Usual Period of Utero-Gestation … Communicated by W. Lawrence, Esq. F.R.S.', *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions*, 5 (1814), 104-128.
[131] *De Generis*$_1$, 113.
[132] For two typical examples, see Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, 25; William Charles Wells, *Two Essays … with Some Observations on the Causes of the Differences [in] Colour and Form Between the White and Negro Races of Men* (1818), 431.
[133] See Brown, *Moral Capital*, 96-101.
[134] [Long], *Candid Reflections*, p. iii; 'A West Indian' [Samuel Estwick], *Considerations on the Negroe Cause* (1772) and 2nd edn. (1773); *Co-Adamitæ*.

However, it would be unwise to associate this brief spell of polygenist theorising in the 1770s too closely with slavery. For instance, the Scottish critic and jurist Henry Home, Lord Kames, drew a polygenist conclusion in the account of human difference contained in his *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774), which aimed to confute the extreme environmentalism espoused by his colleague on the Scottish bench, James Burnett, Lord Monboddo.[135] Both were to pass judgement in the case of *Knight* v *Wedderburn* (1778), the Scottish equivalent to the Somerset case. Somewhat counterintuitively, it might be thought, the polygenist Kames voted in favour of the slave Knight, against the monogenist Monboddo.[136] This clearly shows that it was as possible to be polygenist and opposed to slavery, as it was to be thoroughly monogenist and defend the institution. The claims of some polygenists (White, for example) to hold antislavery views thus appear less disingenuous than some historians have been apt to assume.[137] Although provoked by the Somerset case, this flurry of polygenism was not solely intended to justify slavery once the first blow against it had been struck.

The attack against polygenists was conducted on religious grounds. Polygenism's most outspoken opponent was Samuel Stanhope Smith, president of Princeton from 1795 to 1812. In various editions of his *Essay on the Causes of the Varieties of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species* (1787) he

[135] Kames, *Sketches*, i. 38-9. On Kames see Arthur E. McGuinness, *Henry Home: Lord Kames* (New York, 1970); Ian Simpson Ross, *Lord Kames and the Scotland of His Day* (Oxford, 1972); Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Honourable Henry Home of Kames* (2 vols., 1993 [1807]).
[136] Ross, *Kames*, 145-6.
[137] White, *Regular Gradation*, 136-8. Cf. Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, ch. 8.

excoriated Kames and White for their irreligion.[138] Slightly later, another individual accused of sneering at revelation was the physician to the Shelleys, William Lawrence. Denied the copyright protection of the Court of Chancery for his dangerously materialist *Lectures* in 1822, Lawrence lost his job as a result of helping his radical publisher friends pirate copies of the work.[139] He was reinstated a month later, but even in his strongly deist text the notion of the difference of colour constituting separate human species was strongly questioned. Lawrence was influenced by the deployment of the concept of gradation in White's text, and argued that skin colour did not 'prevail so universally in all the individuals of that race, as to constitute an invariable character, as we should expect if it arose from a cause so uniform as an original specific difference.'[140]

In sum, colour was clearly at the centre of debates on the unity of the human species. It also appears clear why this should be the case. Lawrence stated this cause when he stated that 'the different tints and shades of the skin, *offering themselves so immediately to observation, and forcing themselves, in a manner, on the attention of the most incurious*, have always been regarded by the generality of mankind as the most characteristic attribute of the various races.'[141] This view that skin colour was the most immediate and obvious of racial characteristics was to have lasting consequences, even as its dominance

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[138] Samuel Stanhope Smith, *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species* (Edinburgh, 1788), 203-4, 169-217; also 2nd edn. (New Brunswick, NJ, 1810). See also David Doig, *Two Letter on the Savage State* (1792).
[139] Luke, 'Sir William Lawrence', 141-152; Edward William Grinfield, *Cursory Observations upon the "Lectures…by W. Lawrence, F.R.S."*…, 2nd edn. (1819); *Lawrence* v. *Smith* (1822) All ER 37, 928-9. See also Peter G. Mudford, 'William Lawrence and *The Natural History of Man*', *JHI*, 29 (1968), 430-36; Sharon Ruston, *Shelley and Vitality* (Basingstoke, 2005).
[140] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 290-1.
[141] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 272 (emphasis mine).

was severely challenged by the tendency to search beneath the skin for these characteristics.

Closely allied to discussions of skin colour were those about hair. Descriptions of skin and hair were almost always adjacent to each other, and the colour and features of hair were seen to derive from the same cause as that for the colour of skin. Francis Moore in 1738 described those he met in Africa by stating that they, 'by the Intenseness of the Heat and Burning of the Sun, are of a Black Colour, and have their Hair curling.'[142] Oliver Goldsmith in the 1770s differentiated between peoples by their hair, an approach echoed by Blumenbach, who argued that hair and skin colour were environmentally acquired, but also that there was a remarkable correspondence between the hair and the whole constitution and temperament of the body: for example, he directly associated black hair and lunacy.[143] Others were more focused in their assessment of hair. Prichard, a staunch monogenist, treated the question anatomically, and agreed that the basis of skin colour was identical to that of hair.[144] For him, hair was dissociated from inner temperament and anchored more precisely to skin colour, which operated as a primary racial signifier.[145] Commentators throughout the period devoted attention to the (facial) hairlessness, and hence lack of virility, of native Americans, but it is arguable that this was due to the fact that their skin colour was less legible in racial

[142] Francis Moore, *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* (1738), 7.
[143] *De Generis*$_1$, 124; *De Generis*$_3$, 224.
[144] Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, 163; George W. Stocking, Jr., 'From Chronology to Ethnology: James Cowles Prichard and British Anthropology, 1800-1850', in Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, pp. ix-cx at xvii.
[145] See Smith, *Essay*, 47 for another linkage of skin colour and hair.

terms.[146] In other words, attention to the hair was retained where skin colour was a more ambivalent marker. De Pauw's *Recherches philosophiques* contains a chapter devoted to skin colour, of which by far the largest section is devoted to Africans rather than Americans. He concluded that 'the Americans of the north, exposed to the inclemencies of … all the changes of the seasons have a heavily tanned face, but it would be much less black if they did not rub medicines and grease into it.'[147] Also associated with Hottentots, this custom – rather than nature – produced skin colour, which can help to explain the continuing interest in Amerindian hair.

Another oft-discussed racial characteristic in the eighteenth century was odour. Buffon introduced this by citing one of his many sources, François Pyrard de Laval (1570-1621), when he wrote that 'it is remarkable…that the sweat of the Indian men, or women, has no disagreeable smell; whereas of the negroes of Africa, the stench, when they are in any degree over-heated, is insupportable.'[148] Thomas Jefferson, in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1782), offered an explanation which at once explains why perspiration was linked to odour, and demonstrates how this could only happen in a racial Other: 'they secrete less by the kidnies, and more by the glands of the skin, which gives them a very disagreeable odour.'[149] This explanation was used later by Virey.[150] Samuel Stanhope Smith ascribed the odour of black peoples and the curl of their hair to the same cause: heat and sweat, with the smell attributed to

[146] On the importance of beards for racial and sexual identity, see Schiebinger, *Nature's Body*, 120-25.
[147] 'Les Américains du Nord, exposés à l'inclémence … à tous les changemens des saisons, ont aussi le visage fort hâlé; mais ils seroient beaucoup moins noirs, s'ils ne se frottoient avec des drogues & des graisses.' [De Pauw], *Recherches philosophiques*, i. 202.
[148] Cited in Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 242; for an early translation of Pyrard, see Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (4 vols., 1625), ii. 1646-71.
[149] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia, 1794), 201.
[150] Virey, *Negro Race*, 31.

the presence of volatile salts.[151] Lawrence, writing in 1819, went further than Jefferson, Virey, and Smith and completely disconnected the odour from perspiration, pathologising this characteristic. The odour, he wrote 'is said by those, who are well acquainted with this race, to be very characteristic, and to be transmitted to the offspring, as well as their other peculiarities, in the mixed breeds. It has also been observed that they sweat much less than Europeans.'[152] Odour was such a key characteristic by 1799 that White (after Buffon) used it as a means of establishing a gradation in living creatures.[153] Indeed, the description of Australian aborigines in such terms, as well as William Wells's denial that it is universal to all black peoples testified to the importance of odour as a racial characteristic.[154]

Notwithstanding the prominence of these intuitive characteristics in racial theories, thinkers became progressively less prepared to accept things at face value. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, racial thinkers began to move to the skeleton, and particularly the skull, as a means of explaining racial difference.[155] This was in response to the problems with explaining black albinism, the apparent lack of colour change when black and white peoples moved around the world, and with environmentalism as a whole. A measure of the ambivalence of skin colour is provided by the need to seek the 'authentic' colour in the genitals, as described above.[156] This development was not especially new, as Aristotle and Buffon had used the skeleton as a means of

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[151] Smith, *Essay*, 54-9.
[152] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 461.
[153] White, *Regular Gradation*, 56-7.
[154] Watkin Tench, *A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson* (1793), 179; Wells, *Two Essays*, 430.
[155] Schiebinger, 'Anatomy of Difference', 396; ead., *Nature's Body*, 140-2.
[156] See p. 66, above.

comparing species.[157] The most significant contributor to racial theory in this regard was the Göttingen anatomist, Dr. Samuel Thomas von Sömmerring, whose 1785 *Über die körperliche Verschiedenheit des Negers vom Europäer* (*On the Bodily Differences of the Negro and European*) was a landmark in the history of comparative anatomy.[158] Although never translated into English, both Virey's translator and White excerpted large sections of this text and published them as appendices to their own.[159] Sömmerring's observations followed the contours of the skeleton, starting at the head and moving to the extremities before finishing with conclusions on the brain.[160] Georges Cuvier also devoted attention to the skeleton when outlining the distinguishing features of humans in his *Le Règne Animal* (1817).[161] White was engaged in a similar project, although more concerned with the similarities of black humans to apes, and embarked upon a long mathematical examination of the ratio of forearm lengths in order to demonstrate that their forearms are longer than those of white people, and that they therefore approach closer to apes.[162]

Thanks to this 'skeletal turn', the skull became one of the most important parts of human anatomy for the delineation of races.[163] The skull – or more precisely its size – was viewed as an indicator and a limit on brain size, and hence intelligence. This issue closely links with the treatment of those

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[157] Roger, *Buffon*, 293-7.
[158] Londa Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex?* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), 211-13.
[159] The near identity of the two appendices and the absence of extracts from Sömmerring in the 1824 French original suggest that Guenebault (Virey's translator) copied his from White, rather than extracting them from Sömmerring. See White, *Regular Gradation*, pp. cxxxix-clxvi and Virey, *Negro Race*, 57-75.
[160] White, *Regular Gradation*, pp. cxxxix-clxvi.
[161] Georges Léopold Nicolas Frédéric Dagobert de Baron Cuvier, *Le Règne Animal* (4 vols., Paris, 1817), i. 81-8; see also id., 'Cuvier's Animal Kingdom…(1840)' in Peter J. Kitson (ed.), *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation: Writings in the British Romantic Period*, viii: *Theories of Race* (1999), 341-51.
[162] White, *Regular Gradation*, 41-56.
[163] Schiebinger, 'Anatomy of Difference', 399; ead., *Nature's Body*, 156-8.

societies which deliberately modified the head shape of their newborns, discussed above.[164] Blumenbach and Sömmerring argued that, as well as social custom, an involuntary process of constraint shaped the skull, with head muscles making an impression on the bones beneath. This provided a mechanism by which the environment could penetrate the skin and shape the skeleton.[165] This could work the other way round and Blumenbach noted that the interior of the skulls of older people were moulded to the brain they surrounded.[166] Indeed, White's interest in two craniofacial features in particular are dictated by this principle. As he wrote, 'all the nations of Africa, and the inhabitants of the southern isles [Polynesia] have either very narrow skulls…or they have a flat receding forehead, and hind-head: and the bony sockets which contain the eyes, are more capacious than those of Europeans.'[167] White is here emphasising both limited cognitive power (from the limited space available for the brain) and superior sensory ability (from the greater space available for the eyes), both on the basis of the anatomy of the skull. Nor was he alone in this endeavour. As Virey argued a quarter of a century later on the basis of the bones of black people hardening sooner than those of white, the former are less intellectually developed, 'undoubtedly, because the ossification is completed too soon, and prevents the perfect development of the brain.'[168]

[164] See page 61 above.
[165] *De Generis*$_3$, 239; White, *Regular Gradation*, p. cxlvi.
[166] *De Generis*$_3$, 239.
[167] White, *Regular Gradation*, 63-4.
[168] Virey, *Negro Race*, 25.

Aesthetics and Racial Hermeneutics

Previous subsections have established the centrality of sex in racial discourses, and the importance of an empiricist epistemology both to this relationship and to these discourses per se. This subsection will move beyond the basic fact that such an epistemology *could* read the body to consider *how* it did so. Aesthetic categories, such as beauty and ugliness, were deployed widely within racial texts in the period.[169] Colour was a prominent component of such analyses, and indeed came to act – thanks to 'repugnance' and the interbreeding criterion – as a guarantor of racial integrity. Nonetheless, establishing exact rules by which to judge facial peculiarities proved difficult. William Hogarth attempted to reduce beauty and ugliness to a single line, a technique which had a lasting impact amongst prominent racial theorists. The eccentric spokesman of physignomic activity in the later part of the century, Johann Caspar Lavater, participated in the same 'skeletal turn' characteristic of racial theorising after 1780, and was perhaps most important for pointing to the importance of the interpretive act at the heart of racial discourse.[170] Such an act is exemplified by the dual meaning of 'complexion' throughout the century, pointing to exterior skin colour and internal moral temperament. Colour itself was interpreted in light of the optical advances of the late seventeenth century, which had a lasting impact in asserting blackness as a privation or absence.

The body and what it represented came together in eighteenth-century speculations on physiognomy. This now-discredited intellectual project was popular throughout the early modern period, as testified by the comments of

[169] Hudson, ' "Hottentot Venus"; George M. Fredrickson, *Racism* (Oxford, 2002), 59-60.
[170] See Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*.

Montaigne: 'there is nothing more likely than the conformity and relation of the body to the spirit.'[171] The categories of 'beauty' and 'ugliness' were at the heart of physiognomy, and non-Europeans were judged in these terms throughout the period. Beauty or ugliness were accorded on the basis of colour and body/facial shape, but it is generally the case that colour was foregrounded before other considerations could be weighed. This is due on no small part to the nomenclature of the parties being considered: 'blacks', and 'whites', the first of which had already become a noun by the 1720s, if not earlier.[172] Buffon's colour-blind introduction to physiognomy – 'we are so habituated to judge by external appearances that we too often decide on men's talents by their physiognomy' – soon gave way to an aesthetic critique encircled by issues of colour.[173]

Colour was a powerful indicator of beauty or ugliness. Oliver Goldsmith's discussion of white and black eunuchs demonstrates this clearly. Black eunuchs, he stated, were highly prized in Islamic countries, and the uglier they were the better. Indeed, 'the thicker the lips, the flatter the nose, the more black the teeth, the more valuable the eunuch.'[174] Contemporary accounts of Africans often mentioned their teeth, which apparently appeared whiter by contrast with their skin, making their teeth 'their only beauty.'[175] Whiteness rather than regularity of teeth is most important. Rather simplistic colour contrasts were part of the fabric of racial discourse in this period. As a

[171] Michel de Montaigne, 'Of Physiognomy', in Donald M. Frame (ed.), *The Complete Works of Montaigne* (1957), 809. See also Martin Porter, *Windows of the Soul: Physiognomy in European Culture, 1470-1780* (Oxford, 2005); John Graham, *Lavater's Essays on Physiognomy* (Bern, 1979); Kevin Berland, 'Outward Sign and Inward Condition: Recent Studies in Physiognomy, Anthropometry, and Related Sciences', *ECS*, 36 (2003), 266-269.
[172] Wheeler, *Complexion*, 98.
[173] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 65.
[174] Goldsmith, *History*, ii. 73; see also Millar, *Distinction of Ranks*, 1-78.
[175] Goldsmith, *History*, ii. 72-3.

commentary on the Song of Songs put it in 1776, 'a person that is not of a fair complexion, being in the company of one that is, looks abundantly worse than if viewed alone.'[176] The aesthetic judgement here is unmistakable: the person 'not of a fair complexion' does not look *darker* by the comparison, but *worse*. In addition, the very variability of colours in white populations, as opposed to the 'monotony' of their 'gloomy' black counterparts, was used as an argument for their superior beauty.[177] As Virey asked in 1824, 'are not the fine mixtures of red and white, the expressions of every passion, by greater or less suffusions of color in the one, preferable to the eternal monotony which reigns in the countenances, that immovable veil of black, which covers all the emotions of the other race?'[178]

Colour was seen in an aesthetic sense as a means by which populations controlled their racial integrity, and was understood as a way the 'repugnance' that helped species define themselves worked in human scenarios. The roots of this can be seen in early modern reflections on the relativity of colour-based aesthetics. In 1646, the physician Thomas Browne set about debunking the 'vulgar error' that blackness was a curse. One reason for this was because of relativistic aesthetic standards: black peoples 'esteeme deformity by other colours, describing the Devill, and terrible objects White.'[179] The notion that black people viewed the devil as white was popular throughout the eighteenth century, and this aesthetic relativism reinforced the notion that each community

[176] John Gill, *An Exposition of the Book of Solomon's Song, commonly called Canticles* (1776), 61 .
[177] See Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (Oxford, 1998), 106; White, *Regular Gradation*, 135. See also Meg Armstrong, '"The Effects of Blackness": Gender, Race, and the Sublime in Aesthetic Theories of Burke and Kant', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 54 (1996), 213-36.
[178] Virey, *Negro Race*, 30.
[179] Thomas Browne, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica: or, Enquiries into Very many received Tenents, And commonly presumed Truths* (1646), 332.

of humans either does or should prefer its own kind.[180] This was always more pronounced amongst polygenists, who shared a commitment to a notion of purity of racial origin. Virey's assertion of the aesthetic superiority of whites was laden with sexual implications: 'The circumstance of superior beauty, is thought worthy of attention in the propagation of our horses, dogs, and other domestic animals; why not in that of man?'[181] Echoing those notions of a eugenic perfection of mankind mentioned earlier in this chapter, Virey's comments on colour directly correlate to aesthetic appreciation, and thence to sexual desire.[182] White's lavish encomiums on the superiority of white beauty reinforced this point.[183]

Colour was a signifier of such clarity that no sophisticated hermeneutic apparatus was required to interpret it. In this light, it is significant that 'colour' itself was described in eighteenth century racial theory most often as 'complexion', a multifaceted term. The synonymity of 'colour' and 'complexion' was commonplace within racial texts throughout the century, and was enshrined in Johnson's definition of 'complexion': 'the colour of the external parts of any body.'[184] However, an older sense of complexion as 'the temperature [temperament] of the body according to the various proportions of the four medical humours,' remained current well into the nineteenth century.[185]

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[180] See Hudson, '"Hottentots".
[181] Virey, *Negro Race*, 30-1.
[182] See page 50 above.
[183] White, *Regular Gradation*, 135.
[184] Johnson, *Dictionary*, s.v. 'Complexion'. For examples of this use of 'complexion', see *Athenian Oracle*, i. 436; John Bigland, *An Historical Display of the Effects of Physical and Moral Causes on the Character and Circumstances of Nations* (1816), 94-5.
[185] Johnson, *Dictionary*, s.v. 'Complexion'; Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (1967), 12.

Colour, thanks to the dual meaning of 'complexion', thus signified both the external colour and the internal constitution of an individual.[186]

The important scientific work undertaken by Newton, Hooke, and Boyle in the seventeenth century on colour was soon adopted by racial theorists. Boyle's *Experiments and Considerations Touching Colours* (1664) dealt explicitly with blackness in Africans.[187] His was a standard monogenist account of colour, relatively advanced for its time in its denial of any direct influence of heat on colour, its refusal to accept the Hamite thesis as the sole cause of blackness, and its relativism regarding the aesthetics of blackness. What makes his work stand out, however, is the fact that it was the first to recognise that the colour white reflects light, and that, conversely, black absorbs it.[188] The conception of black as a privation (of light) was to prove significant. The most influential account of skin colour to borrow directly from this work was produced by John Mitchell. We have already seen how Mitchell's account attributed the thickness of skin rather than any humoral substance as the source blackness. In his paper, Mitchell clearly acknowledged his debt to Newton,[189] and his argument can be related directly to Boyle's conclusions regarding blackness: the epidermis does not reflect light, rather it acts as a medium for the transmission of the colour of the skin underneath. This lower layer of skin is white in all humans (this was believed uniformly amongst racial theorists), and correspondingly the lightness or darkness of an individual was dependent on the thickness of the epidermis above. If it was too thick, then no colour from

[186] On the relation between skin colour and complexion, see Wheeler, *Complexion*, 22-8.
[187] Boyle, *Experiments*, 151-67.
[188] Boyle, *Experiments*, 120. See also [Isaac Newton], *Opticks: or, A Treatise on the Reflexions, Refractions, Inflexions and Colours of Light* (1704), 69.
[189] Mitchell, 'Essay', 103.

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Figure 1.1 – Detail from frontispiece, William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753).

beneath could be transmitted, and the individual must be black. Indeed, 'where-ever there is a Privation of Light or Colour, there, of course, ensues Darkness or Blackness.'[190]

However true, the application of these tenets to the body constitutes a woeful misuse of scientific data. It goes without saying that black people are not *actually* black in the sense that their colour is identical to that which absorbs all light. But Mitchell argued for just this point: 'as most solid Bodies…do generally reflect some Colour, which we know no black Body does, we shall next inquire into the particular Make of their Skins, *by which they are rendered incapable to reflect, as well as to transmit, the Rays of Light*.'[191] Mitchell actually conceived of black skin as incapable of reflecting light. Two other features of this (mis)use of Newton and Boyle are important. First, scientific work – especially that on light – foregrounded the emphasis on the importance of observation (and hence the observer) that had subsisted at least since

[190] Mitchell, 'Essay', 109.
[191] Mitchell, 'Essay', 109 (emphasis mine).

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Figure 1.2 – Comparison of ape, 'orang-outang' , Negro and Calmuck heads from [Pieter Camper], *The Works of the Late Professor Camper* (1794).

Bacon.[192] Although Bacon had warned against the dangers of drawing conclusions from unverified observation, the centrality of the observer for the modern philosophy of science was clear.[193] The second feature of the impact of work on colour was that notions of blackness and whiteness were changed. Explicitly, this meant that blackness was now viewed as an absence of light, a privation. It is plausible that, despite the argument of historians that colour-based racialism only really came into focus from the 1770s, seventeenth-century work on colour was playing a significant role to foreground visual aspects of racial identity much earlier.[194]

Unlike the intuitive simplicity of colour, it was more difficult to establish rules by which one could judge a particular face. Jews were particularly confusing for racial theorists, although they did demonstrate the importance of sexual reproduction. No accepted interpretation emerged regarding their

[192] See, for example, Bacon's 'Sylva Sylvarum' and 'Novum Organum'.
[193] *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon* ed. Peter Shaw (3 vols., 1733), ii. 393; Banton, *Racial Theories*, 8.
[194] See Wheeler, *Complexion*, *passim* and Wahrman, *Making*, 83-153.

colour: some theorists felt that, because they continued marrying within the same community, Jews preserved their ante-diaspora skin coloration; others thought that their colour changed according to the country of residence.[195] All, however, based their arguments on the notion that they were an endogamous people, allowing theorists to rule out interbreeding as a cause of racial characteristics. When they did interbreed Jewish characteristics appeared to be dominant, according to White, 'for the Jews have gained proselytes in every part of the world where they have resided, and they are at liberty to marry those proselytes. But the truth is, that the Jews are generally swarthy in every climate.'[196] This inability to successfully 'read' the colour of Jews fuelled interest in physiognomic speculations. Both Blumenbach and the Dutch anatomist Peter Camper independently discussed 'the Jewish face' with the artist and President of the Royal Academy, Benjamin West. According to Blumenbach, West 'thought that it above all others had something particularly goat-like about it, which he was of opinion lay not so much in the hooked nose as in the transit and conflux of the septum which separates the nostrils from the middle of the upper lip.'[197] Nonetheless, Blumenbach signified the confusion about Jews in stating that Jewish characteristics were a quintessential *je ne sais quoi*: they were 'remarkable for a racial character almost universal, which can be distinguished at the first glance even by those little skilled in physiognomy, although it is difficult to limit and express by words.'[198]

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[195] Two monogenists who sat on opposite sides of this debate were Stanhope Smith and Prichard. See Smith, *Essay*, 36, and Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, 181-7. Cf. Wahrman, *Making*, 93-6, 108-9.
[196] White, *Regular Gradation*, 104.
[197] *De Generis*$_3$, 234; White, *Regular Gradation*, 104; [Camper], *Works*, 20.
[198] *De Generis*$_3$, 234.

Several eighteenth-century thinkers were not disheartened by such difficulties, and sought a more concrete means of judging the face and body. William Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753) was a seminal work in British aesthetics and did much to endorse the reduction of facial peculiarities to simple lines. Hogarth believed there to be a deducible principle behind the human ability to distinguish between faces, and argued that faces conforming to a serpentine (or elongated 'S' shaped) line (see Figure 1.1 above) were the most beautiful. Those in which the curves of the 'S' were more pronounced were more ugly, as Hogarth argued when he wrote that 'human nature can hardly be represented more debased than in the character of the Silenus [a Satyr-like creature, usually represented as fat, old, bearded, and drunk from wine]… where the bulging-line figure… runs through all the features of the face, as well as other parts of his swinish body.'[199] Hogarth's reduction of the concept of beauty to a line is extremely important. Although deformations in that line represented ugliness, Hogarth believed that these were all too common. As he wrote, 'it is strange that nature hath afforded us so many lines and shapes to indicate the deficiencies and blemishes of the mind, whilst there are none at all that point out the perfections of it beyond the appearance of common sense and placidity.'[200] Such 'deficiencies and blemishes' managed to work their way to the skin's surface in a way analogous to Blumenbach and Sömmerring's conception of the muscular shaping of the skull: 'it is by natural and unaffected movements of the muscles, caused by the passions of the mind, that every man's character would in some measure be written in his face, by [the] … time he

[199] William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty* (1753), 128.
[200] Hogarth, *Analysis*, 131.

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Figure 1.3 – Table from Charles White, *An Account of the Regular Gradation in Man* (1799).

arrives at forty years of age, were it not for accidents which often, tho' not always prevent it.'[201] The subtext here is clear: beauty and ugliness map uncomplicatedly onto virtues and vices, respectively. This was not a particularly new idea, but Hogarth's application of it in his linear model was an innovation that had significant ramifications.

Perhaps the clearest of these was its influence on Camper, who sought a rule to standardise graphical representations of different types of humans.[202] His English translator explicitly linked Camper's work to that of other artists who 'have attempted to introduce certain principles, and to propose invariable rules, which they deemed conducive to the improvement of taste in the higher branches of painting, and precision in all.'[203] (The subtitle of Hogarth's work – *Written with a view of fixing the fluctuating Ideas of Taste* – suggests an

[201] Hogarth, *Analysis*, 126.
[202] [Camper], *Works*, 1-12; see also Miriam Claude Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics in the Anthropology of Petrus Camper, 1722-1789* (Amsterdam, 1999).
[203] [Camper], *Works*, pp. v-vi.

influence.) Camper's innovation was the facial angle, formed by the intersection of two lines, one horizontal and another connecting the foremost teeth to the forehead (see Figure 1.2 above). In humans, this angle ranged between seventy and a hundred degrees, 'from the negro to the Grecian antique; make it under 70, and you describe an ourang[-outang] or an ape.'[204] The relation of black peoples to apes in Camper's work was not just a case of mathematical or diagrammatical adjacency. He was explicit about the position of black humans in the animal kingdom: 'the lower jaw, as well as the upper, is also much forwarder in the negro, Caffre, and Calmuck; and therefore it is that these people approach nearer to the figure of an ape than either the European or the antique.'[205] However, Camper was no polygenist and he viewed as implausible tales of sex between black people and apes.[206] The seeming incongruity between monogenesis and such a schematised account of black animality can be explained by the fact that Camper's theory was, paradoxically, 'intended to correct the racial prejudices of Europeans concerning the naturalness/unnaturalness or beauty/ugliness of non-European physiognomies.'[207] Camper wanted to show how easy it was to transmute Negroid features into those of Europeans, and that 'the material variation of any one racial feature modified the mutually related parts, resulting in the characteristic national physiognomies, thereby disproving the then widespread belief that unfamiliar racial traits were derived from postnatal intervention.'[208]

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[204] [Camper], *Works*, 42.
[205] [Camper], *Works*, 45-6.
[206] [Camper], *Works*, 32.
[207] Miriam Claude Meijer, 'Petrus Camper On the Origin and Color of Blacks', *History of Anthropology Newsletter* 24, 2 (1997) (published online 20 September 2005) <http://anthropology.uchicago.edu/about/han/han242.htm>, accessed 11 March 2007.
[208] Meijer, 'Camper On the Origin and Color'.

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Figure 1.4 – Blumenbach's *norma verticalis*, showing the three 'primary' races (l-r Ethiopian, Caucasian, Mongolian). Plate 3 from Bendyshe, *Anthropological Treatises*.

By placing Europeans and black peoples on the same scale, and demonstrating human intervention was not responsible for racial traits, Camper was attempting to combat racism.[209] It demonstrates considerable naïveté that his technique for so doing was to introduce a scale which appealed directly to the empirical methodology of the new science.

Nor was Camper the last to do so. White's *Account of the Regular Gradation in Man* contained an elaborate table aiming to communicate the same principle as Camper: that there was a regular gradation in Nature, from ape to black to white. However, White's goal was to use this gradation to prove his polygenist account of human difference. [210] White's table (Figure 1.3) is a direct but expanded copy of Camper's. In addition to adding labels to each head-skull dyad, White has included the value of the Camperian facial angle. In

[209] [Camper], *Works*, 45-51; for a more negative assessment of Camper, see George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (1978), 21-4.
[210] White, *Regular Gradation*, 125.

addition, White depicts a logical consequence of Camper's argument to which Camper himself had alluded but not illustrated. In describing the range of the facial angle, Camper had explicitly mentioned the ability to produce a dog, or a snipe by making the angle ever more acute.[211] It is a measure of the derivative nature of White's text that he followed these instructions to the letter, the sequence running (from top-right to bottom left) in his table from humans to apes to dogs and finally a bird, the snipe. It is also very easy to tell which diagrams were interpolated by White, as the 'Orang-Outang' and 'Monkey' on the bottom row of White's table are exactly as they are in the two leftmost positions in Figure 1.2 above.

Somewhat more original and respectful to theology was Blumenbach's ranking. From the 1780s, Blumenbach argued that humanity was divided into five races formed of three primary (Caucasians, Ethiopians, and Mongolians) and two intermediary groups (Americans, between Caucasians and Mongols, and Malays, between Caucasians and Ethiopians).[212] Blumenbach was dissatisfied with Camper's method, which he thought was unevenly applied and too subject to variation, preferring his own vertical scale (*norma verticalis*). Blumenbach only provided a visual example of this for the three primary races. In Figure 1.4, the three skulls typical of the primary races (from left to right, Ethiopian, Caucasian, and Mongolian) are viewed from above, with a line drawn at the level of the cheek bones. From this angle, 'all that most conduces to the racial character of skulls, whether it be the direction of the jaws, or the

[211] [Camper], *Works*, 42.
[212] See the controversy between Stephen Jay Gould and Thomas Junker in *Isis*, 89 (1998) over a reworking of Blumenbach's illustration of his racial typology which appeared in Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, rev. edn. (New York, 1996), 409. See Junker, 'Blumenbach's Racial Geometry', 498-501 and Gould, 'On Mental and Visual Geometry', 502-504. I am grateful to George Newberry for this reference.

cheekbones, the breadth or narrowness of the skull, the advancing or receding outline of the forehead, &c. strike the eye … distinctly at one glance.'[213] Part of the significance of this project for Blumenbach is its creation of an instantly legible system of marking racial difference.

Attempts to reduce racial identity or beauty to a line were attempts to derive first principles by which one could quickly and easily recognise signifiers of identity. In the case of facial features, the eighteenth-century pioneer for this project was Johann Caspar Lavater, whose works, *Von der Physiognomik* (*On Physiognomy*, 1772), and *Physiognomische Fragmente* (*Essays on Physiognomy*, 1775-8) were phenomenally popular. From the outset, Lavater's concern was to use physiognomy to distinguish the peculiarities of the human as opposed to the animal. He did, though, divide the body into zones in accordance with the three faculties of man: moral, intellectual, and animal. The 'animal life' – 'the lowest and most earthly' – is located between the belly and the genitals; the moral life is seated in the breast, with the heart as its focal point; and the intellectual life is centred in the head, with the eye for its centre.[214] This schema hints at the simultaneous interest of racial theorists in the head and genitals of Africans, minimising the importance of the former and maximising that of the latter. Lavater's own interest in the head likewise penetrated more than skin deep. Like other racial theorists, he held that the bones of the skull were shaped by the influence of both muscles and the brain.[215] Comparing a range of skulls, Lavater concluded that the 'Calmuc' skull was the only one concave in shape, which to him signified 'weak powers

[213] *De Generis*$_3$, 237.
[214] Lavater, *Essays*, i. 16.
[215] Lavater, *Essays*, ii. 208.

of mind, which endeavour, as all natural weaknesses do, to supply and conceal their deficiencies by the strength of cunning.'[216]

The publication of *Physiognomische Fragmente* in the late 1770s marked the peak of Lavater's popularity. By the time it was translated into English in 1789, his programme was already falling into disrepute.[217] Lavater's contribution to racial theorising in Britain was twofold. On the one hand, he introduced the racial work of Kant to an English readership (parts of Kant's essay, *Von den Verschiedenen Racen der Menschen*, were translated for the first time).[218] Kant's direct impact on racial thinking in Britain was limited at least until Coleridge, but Lavater hereby indicated Kant's influence on his work, marking it as more racial than many critics have allowed.[219] The second, and more important, of Lavater's contributions was to make explicit the representative act that was at the heart of all racial theory. Physiognomy made prominent the semiotic, interpretive act at the heart of all racial theorising. Indeed, as Lavater asked about the human face, 'shall not the correspondence between the interiour and exteriour [*sic*], the visible and the invisible, the cause and the effect, be there apparent?'[220]

Language and Intellect in Racial Theory

In addition to the empiricist epistemology enshrined by Locke's *Essay*, this section shows that a second component of the *Essay* – language – was of

[216] Lavater, *Essays*, ii. 225-6.
[217] Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*, 92-122.
[218] *On the Different Races of Men* (1775), published in *Der Philosoph für die Welt*, 2 (1777), 125-64; Lavater, *Essays*, iii. 99-103.
[219] Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*, 92-122; Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 24; Tim Fulford, 'Theorizing Golgotha: Coleridge, Race Theory, and the Skull Beneath the Skin', in Roe (ed.), *Coleridge and the Sciences of Life*, 117-33.
[220] Lavater, *Essays*, i. 24.

particular importance for racial theorists over the course of the eighteenth century. Language had long been used as a marker of reason, and hence of a rational soul, in the policing of the human-animal boundary. With the emergence of racial thought, aimed at classifying peoples, language came to be used as a means of racial differentiation. It was, however, never as efficient in making fine discriminations between peoples as its simple presence or absence had been at establishing the human or animal identity of a given subject. Nonetheless, comment on the linguistic development of human groups continued to be made throughout our period, and in several cases the evidence provided by language was crucial to the final shape of racial boundaries. Ultimately, language was just one of several other characteristics which racial theorists could use to discriminate between peoples, and as the body became more stable over the century (a central theme of subsequent chapters) it came to appear better suited to the task of signifying identity than did language, which could be manipulated and falsified with relative ease.

This argument begins with a brief statement of the influence of Locke's essay, by establishing assent to its principles by racial theorists even outside Britain. Central to Locke's account and its importance for race was the view that language was not revealed but developed in an historical process. Accounts of the origin of language by Locke and others used 'savages' and racial others as conjectural guinea pigs in explaining the history of language. Such accounts, however, assumed a universal human nature in the same fashion as stadial theory. Some of these conjectural histories, such as those by Rousseau and Monboddo, went further and ultimately de-naturalised language, separating it from the existence of reason. With this manoeuvre, the external shape of the

body became a more reliable signifier of at least racial identity. This did not mean that consideration of language disappeared from racial theories, for it remained of use in establishing genealogical relationships between peoples, and in some cases therefore, in delimiting racial boundaries.

Locke's linguistic thought was as important to racial theory as the empiricist epistemology he symbolised. For Locke, proof of the existence of ideas was accessible through the senses in the form of spoken language.[221] As he put it, 'those who cannot distinguish, compare, and abstract, would hardly be able to understand, and make use of language, or judge, or reason to any tolerable degree: but only a little, and imperfectly, about things present, and very familiar to the senses.'[222] Those who have these intellectual faculties, it is implied, would demonstrate a degree of linguistic fluency. Buffon's comments on native Americans echo such views:

> as they have but few ideas, their expressions turn upon things the most general, and objects the most common; and, though the majority of their expressions were different, yet the smallness of their number renders them easily understood, and more easily, therefore, may a savage learn the languages of all other savages, than the inhabitants of one polished nation acquire a bare comprehension of the language of any other nation equally civilized.[223]

The notion that a lack of mental competence was signified by a commensurate lack of linguistic development was pervasive, and present in even sympathetic accounts of non-Europeans. For example, the Jesuit Joseph-François Lafitau, in a 1724 attempt to counter criticisms of native American intelligence, nonetheless felt compelled to admit that the 'lack of words on the one hand and ignorance of many things on the other, must make their languages less rich than

[221] Locke, *Essay*, II.xii.8-13 (pp. 155-7).
[222] Ibid., II.xii.12 (pp. 156-7).
[223] Buffon, *Natural History*, iv. 314.

ours.'[224] In this ineffectual defence Lafitau engaged with the same logic as the criticisms he sought to deflect, but merely quibbled about the scale of the problem.

It is important at this point to distinguish between 'intelligence' and that to which Locke was referring when he stated that those with poor languages or linguistic skills would be unable to 'reason to any tolerable degree'. As Stephen Jay Gould and Nancy Stepan have remarked, 'intelligence' and its anatomical corollary, the brain, only became primary foci of racial inquiry from the 1830s as a consequence of the 'skeletal turn', discussed above.[225] Locke's notion of rationality is more applicable to species rather than racial difference. His division of humans from animals was performed on the basis of mental faculties, and the ultimate proof of the ability of humans to form complex ideas is linguistic dexterity.[226] This is a more fundamental project than 'the abstraction of intelligence as a single entity, its location in the brain, its quantification as one number for each individual, and the use of these numbers to rank people in a single series of worthiness,' as described by Gould.[227] The Lockean paradigm shift may not have introduced a linkage between language and mental capacities – this had been done ever since the term 'barbarian' was coined in ancient Greece – but it certainly did bestow on this connection a legitimacy it had not enjoyed hitherto.[228]

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[224] Joseph-François Lafitau, *Customer of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, tr. and ed. William N. Fenton and Elizabeth L. Moore (2 vols., Publications of the Champlain Society, 48; Toronto, 1974-7), ii. 266.
[225] See p. 78, above.
[226] Locke, *Essay*, II.xi (pp. 152-9).
[227] Gould, *Mismeasure of Man*, 56-7.
[228] Hans Aarsleff, *The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860* (1983), 14-15; Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge, 1990), 15-26.

The most significant linguistic model for racial theorists of the period was that originating in Locke and built upon or modified by others such as Condillac, Adam Smith, and Monboddo. The most significant elements of this model were its refusal to accept language as revealed and its consequent account of linguistic development. Demonstrating the Lockean commitment to the non-existence of innate ideas and to the mind of a newborn as a *tabula rasa*, the most significant eighteenth-century account of the origin of language, that of Condillac, began with a hypothetical or conjectural scenario involving two infants, abandoned and without language. Even in the construction of this simple philosophical parable issues of race and sexuality are apparent, as the protagonists are male and female, which automatically engages with the centrality of sexual reproduction to the perpetuation of the family, race, and language, and demonstrates a commitment to a diachronic model of linguistic progress. Condillac first dealt with the problem of reconciling the revelation of language in Eden and his account of the origin and development of language, by supposing that the two infants were abandoned after the Flood. [229] Claiming that a Lockean account only became valid in a post-diluvian era proved to be a convenient way of reconciling sacred history with an account of the development of language that claimed scientific validity. Lord Kames recognised this when he disingenuously appealed to the story of Babel as a means of insincerely contradicting his polygenist account.[230]

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[229] Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, *An Essay On the Origin of Human Knowledge* tr. Mr. Nugent (1756), 169-70. On Condillac see Aarsleff, *Study of Language*, 13-43;Lieve Jooken, 'Lord Monboddo's "Of the Origin and Progress of Language" (1773-1792) and Condillac's "Essai sur l'origine des connoisances humaines" (1746): Two Distinct Views on Language and Thought', *Leuvense Bijdragen (Leuven Contributions in Linguistics and Philology*, 80 (1991), 307-27.

[230] Kames, *Sketches*, i. 40.

Condillac's conjectural scenario became a popular topos of Lockean argument, used throughout the eighteenth century by many different thinkers. Adam Smith's *Considerations Concerning the First Formation of Languages* (1767) is a key example. In his version, the protagonists are two savages, rather than two infants. This small change sidestepped theological problems with the timing of this event, exempting Smith from the requirement to specify at which point in Genesis his fable would have taken place.[231] It also engaged with stadial theory, and demonstrated a commitment to a universal human nature.[232] The use of savages in these philosophical fables worked both to highlight the process of language acquisition using the racial Other as a form of conjectural guinea pig, and to emphasise a common human nature, without which such conjectural histories would have been meaningless. Kames's *Sketches* actually acted as an exception to the view of a universal human nature in virtue of his advocacy of the authenticity of the Ossian poems. By arguing that Ossianic language was too refined for the first stage in society, he was arguing that Ossianic Scots were exceptional, and thus that human nature could not be universal. His engagement with this controversy may thus be viewed as part of his polygenism. Despite this, not only was a shared human nature emphasised by all serious conjectural historians, but the use of the earliest humans – be they biblical or modern-day savages – in a fable concerning the origins of language promoted the view that language was natural to man.

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[231] Jooken, 'Lord Monboddo and Adam Smith on the Origin and Development of Language' (1994)

[232] Lieve Jooken, 'Lord Monboddo and Adam Smith on the Origin and Development of Language', in Jan de Clercq and Piet Desmet (eds.), *Florilegium Historiographiae Linguisticae: Étuded d'historiographie de la linguistique et de grammaire comparée à la mémoire de Maurice Leroy* (Bibliothéque des Cahier de l'Institut de Linguistique de Louvain, 75; Louvain-la-Neuve, 1994), 263-76.

One very important exception to this school of thought was James Burnett, Lord Monboddo.[233] Writing in 1773, Monboddo's *Origin and Progress of Language* was an important text for many reasons. Designed as a neo-Aristotelian, scholastic attack against Enlightenment empiricism, Monboddo aimed to demonstrate that language was not natural to man.[234] Monboddo and Rousseau were the most famous proponents of this idea in the period, and they both contributed greatly to the supersession of language as the chief signifier of mental capacity. Part of this was inevitable given their respective arguments. Monboddo claimed that speech was acquired by man, not revealed to him, so society must therefore have been in existence for some time prior to the acquisition of language.[235] As an invention of man, language is not merely a sign of thought, but of advanced thought. Rousseau made explicit the implications of this view in his *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité* (1755): 'general ideas can only be introduced into the mind with the assistance of words; and the understanding can grasp them only by means of propositions.'[236] Language was thus essential for the formation of complex ideas, which had since Locke been the preserve of humans. Monboddo argued that only civilised men were in fact capable of ideas of reflection, stating categorically that

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[233] On Monboddo see E. L. Cloyd, *James Burnett: Lord Monboddo* (Oxford, 1972).
[234] On Monboddo and his work, see Iain Maxwell Hammett, 'Lord Monboddo and the Lockian Science of Man', *Bulletin of Hiroshima Jogakuin College*, 39 (1989), 63-80; id., 'Lord Monboddo's *Origin and Progress of Language*: Its Sources, Genesis, and Background, with Special Attention to the Advocates' Library' (Edinburgh University Ph.D. thesis, 1985); Wokler, 'Apes and Races in the Scottish Enlightenment'; id., 'From l'homme physique to l'homme morale'; Lieve Jooken, 'The Linguistic Conceptions of Lord Monboddo (1714-1799)', (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven Ph.D. thesis, 1996); id., 'Monboddo's "Of the Origin and Progress of Language"; id., 'Lord Monboddo and Adam Smith'; id., '"A Sound Like the Gaggling of Geese": Lord Monboddo's Discussion of Languages of the New World', in Keith Carlon, Kristin Davidse and Brygida Rudzka-Ostyn (eds.), *Orbis Supplementa: Perspectives on English* (Leeuven, 1994), 54-77.
[235] [James Burnett, Lord Monboddo], *Of the Origin and Progress of Language* (6 vols., Edinburgh, 1773-96), i. 12.
[236] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, tr. and ed. Maurice Cranston (1984), 95.

'savages have no such ideas.'[237] Ironically, since his arguments were prefaced with an appeal to examine savages in order properly to understand human nature, Monboddo and Rousseau were both arguing that it was not humans, but only mentally advanced humans that were capable of the full use of language. Indeed, Monboddo's definition of language ('*the expression of the conceptions of the mind by articulate sounds*')[238] completely ignored sign or gestural languages, thereby excluding the deaf and dumb. Correspondingly, language did not function as a concrete differentiator between human and animal for Monboddo and Rousseau as there were some humans who had not fully realised their linguistic potential.[239]

Provocatively, Monboddo and Rousseau both placed the orang-outang within the bounds of humanity.[240] They continued to believe that language was a quintessentially human characteristic, but if it was possible for some individuals commonly accepted as human to lack language, then why, they asked, should a creature commonly accepted as an animal but with the anatomical prerequisites for speech[241] not be accepted as human? This elaboration of the meaning of language dissociated it from proving the existence of reason. As the non-use of language was no longer concrete proof of the absence of reason, this contributed in the eyes of contemporaries to undermine language as a marker of humanity.[242] Unable to prove the humanity of the orang-outang from its supposed lack of non-humanity – the apes themselves did

[237] [Monboddo], *Origin and Progress*, i. 142-3.
[238] [Monboddo], *Origin and Progress*, i. 5 (emphasis in original).
[239] Both Rousseau and Monboddo made use of Peter the Wild Boy in this regard. On Peter see chapter 3, p. 194ff., below.
[240] Known nowadays as chimpanzees. See Alan Barnard, '*Orang Outang* and the definition of *Man*: The legacy of Lord Monboddo', in Han F. Vermeulen and Arturo Alvarez Roldán (eds.), *Fieldwork and Footnotes: Studies in the History of European Anthropology* (1995), 95-112.
[241] See p. 103, below.
[242] See, for example [Monboddo], *Origin and Progress*, i. 175.

nothing to help, stubbornly refusing to talk despite the offer of immediate baptism in one French text[243] – Rousseau and Monboddo based their claims on physical and behavioural characteristics, amongst which was the suggestive fact that 'they carry off negroe [*sic*] girls, whom they make slaves of, and use both for work and pleasure.'[244] By undermining language as a discriminatory tool, external form or behaviour were the only means remaining for distinguishing humans from animals.[245] As language shifted from policing the human-animal boundary to being an index of human mental sophistication, the importance of external form was emphasised, thus promoting the epistemological status of vision.

Initial moves in this direction had been made before either Rousseau or Monboddo were born. In 1699 the physician Edward Tyson dissected a chimpanzee in London. He found 'the whole Structure of [the larynx] … exactly as 'tis in *Man*.'[246] Robert Wokler has argued that Tyson's dissection clarified the linguistic division between humanity and animal species, as 'the limits of humanity were marked off by the orang-utan [*sic*], a creature which appeared to possess all the required organs of speech and yet had somehow not got the ability to put them to proper use.'[247] In one sense, this is quite correct: the continued speechlessness of these apes in spite of their anatomy reinforced the

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[243] Denis Diderot, 'Entretien entre d'Alembert et Diderot. Le rêve d'Alembert. Suite de l'entretien' in *Œuvres philosophiques*, ed. P. Vernière (Paris, 1964), 247-385 at 385.
[244] [Monboddo], *Origin and Progress*, i. 175. See also NLS Monboddo, MS 24537, ff. 15-38 ('Of the Ourang Outang, & whether he be of the Human Species').
[245] Language and the body could be intrinsically related, as in the work of Franciscus Mercurius Van Helmont (1614-99), who thought that Hebrew characters were diagrams showing the position of the speech organs in making the sound designated by each letter. These ideas enjoyed a brief renaissance after 1750. See Nicholas Hudson, *Writing and European Thought. 1600-1830* (Cambridge, 1994), 84.
[246] Edward Tyson, *Orang-Outang, sive Homo Sylvestris: Or, the Anatomy of a Pygmie Compared with that of a Monkey, an Ape, and a Man.* (1699), 51.
[247] Wokler, 'Tyson and Buffon', 2308.

importance of language as the mark of humanity. On the other hand, this discovery of vocal organs introduced a conflict between language and other sources of knowledge that this section has been exploring. Whether one viewed Tyson's simian cadaver as human or animal depended on the respective weight of anatomical or linguistic evidence. An emphasis on its speechlessness made the ape an animal, that on its larynx made it a potential human. Some, such as Monboddo, relied upon the anatomical evidence to claim that the ape was human, but others had greater difficulty in rejecting linguistic evidence, which after all had the backing of Judaeo-Christian tradition.[248]

This did not mean, however, that those who were not prepared to abandon entirely the linguistic evidence merely retrenched their position on the basis of this evidence or argued in any simplistic manner. Anatomical evidence was important in confuting Tyson's identification of human and orang-outang speech organs, as shown by a paper Camper presented to the Royal Society in 1779.[249] Likewise, five years earlier Kames had written that, despite having organs of speech 'in perfection', the orang-outang lacked the requisite understanding to make meaning from words. After all, 'a parrot can pronounce articulate sounds, and it has frequently an inclination to speak; but, for want of understanding, none of the kind can form a single sentence.'[250] The parrot was used throughout the century as an exemplar of the use of words without knowledge or reason behind them. The ubiquity of this is attested to by White's assertion to the contrary in 1799: 'it should not be understood that they are destitute of thought and reflection about what they speak, since many authentic

[248] NLS Monboddo, MS 24537, ff. 16^{r}, 17^{r}; [Monboddo], *Origin and Progress*, i. 182.
[249] Peter Camper, 'Account of the Organs of Speech of the Orang-Outang…', *Philosophical Transactions*, 69, 1 (1779), 139-59.
[250] Kames, *Sketches*, i. 40-1n.

instances might be adduced of having discovered much reflection and discriminative accuracy in the application of their speech to particular occasions.'[251] By far the most notorious reference to parrots, however, was David Hume's 'racist footnote' in his essay 'On National Characters'.[252] In this he compares Francis Williams, a black poet educated in Britain at the caprice of his owner, to a parrot that repeats what it has learnt but has no understanding of its own.[253] The implication is clear: a learned black is as a parrot, a mere imitation of intellect.[254] Language here works as a fiction, ostensibly upholding the notion that it is indexical of mental sophistication, but in the case of language which is sophisticated enough to place the speaker amongst Europeans, it is trumped by race. Williams's status and racial identity as a 'negro' tells a more fundamental truth than his language: his racial identity had come to signify his reason far more than had his language.

Other thinkers used language as a more certain guide to uncovering man's racial history. More celebrated linguistic developments, such as Sir William Jones's assertion of a common source for the classical languages of India, the Near East, and Europe, took place in the same period as Forster and Prichard both used linguistics to trace patterns of settlement and racial spread. Forster's work, pertaining specifically to the Pacific, will be examined in greater depth in chapter four, but Prichard's *Researches into the Physical History of*

[251] White, *Regular Gradation*, 36.
[252] This essay was first published in 1748, and the footnote was added in an expanded version of 1753-4. See David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis, 1985), 197-215. See also Richard H. Popkin, 'Hume's Racism', *Philosophical Forum*, 9 (1977-8), 211-26; Emmanuel C. Eze, 'Hume, Race, and Human Nature', *JHI*, 61 (2000), 691-8.
[253] Edward Long also devoted ten pages of his *History of Jamaica* to Williams, whom he attempted to show was haughty, contemptuous of his slaves, cruel, prejudiced, and had delusions of grandeur by referring to himself as white. See Long, *History*, ii. 475-85.
[254] Gibbon also connected the two. See Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (12 vols., 1791-2), viii. 369.

Man engaged with the same project on a global scale. As Prichard wrote, 'the most important of … aids [to tracing affinities of peoples] is the comparison of language.'[255] Despite this modified aim for language in the racial debate, Prichard's concerns still gravitated towards the convention that a savage state can need but few words, hence few ideas. But the spread and prevalence of savage states produces distinct languages, meaning that 'discrepancy of language is no proof whatever of diversity of origin.'[256] The guarantee that savages are of the same species as Europeans comes precisely from their mental shortcomings. Otherwise, they would have little excuse for a poor vocabulary. So, although they are seen as of the same species, language works to mark savages as inferior within it.

Conclusion: Making Sense of Race and Sex

As Lavater wrote a century after Locke, 'all the knowledge we can obtain of man must be gained through the medium of our senses.'[257] The fundamental development in theories of human difference traced in this chapter is that of invisible characteristics rendered legible through a process of semiotic inference. Language may have shifted in its specific role, dependent on whether or not one viewed it as natural to man, but it was its status as a marker of mental capacity that secured its prominence in racial debate. From a distance, of course, spoken language is as invisible as the intellect it represents, so ever more ambitious racial theories sought to replace it with a more stable and legible set of markers. This process was one of straightforward association: as

[255] Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, 244.
[256] Prichard, *Physical History of Man*, 246-7.
[257] Lavater, *Essays*, i. 11.

black peoples have poor language they are mentally backward. After a while, it was unnecessary to include any statement about language, as their skin colour (and/or physiognomy, skeletal structure, and so on) itself referred to their mental state. Unlike monogenists, polygenists tended to state the mapping of racial characteristics onto mental capacities quite openly. Edward Long was typical in asserting a proportional relationship between whiteness and intellect, with no mediating factors, such as language.[258] Long, Virey, White, and Kames (all polygenists) all voiced this principle most explicitly in the years after 1770.

However, it was not simply racial markers *on* the body that acted to signify cognitive impoverishment. The Lockean focus on sense was an epistemological tool that cut both ways. On the one hand, not only were racial theorisers constructing means to make the internal capacities of the racial Other more legible to the senses of the observer, but they were also using the sensory abilities of the racial Other to help rank them.[259] Lawrence referred to the 'astonishing perfection' of Africans' senses as a means of critiquing their atrophy in civilised society.[260] Sömmerring's theory was the most sophisticated. Perplexed by the fact that it was clear that man did not have proportionally the largest brain of all animals, Sömmerring developed a means of asserting the superiority of man by comparing the number of nerves entering the brain to the total brain weight. He found that there were more nerves in the brain of a black

[258] Long, *History*, ii. 374-5.
[259] See, in particular, David Lloyd, 'Race under Representation', *Oxford Literary Review*, 13, 1-2 (1991), 62-94 at 67. This, as well as the emphasis on empiricism throughout this thesis, seems to point the way to an engagement with the new and growing field of sensory history. See esp. David Howes (ed.), *The Varieties of Sensory Experience* (Toronto, 1991); id., Constance Classen, and Anthony Synnott (eds.), *Aroma* (1994); Karen Harvey, *Reading Sex in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2004), ch. 7; Mark M. Smith, *How Race is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006), ch. 2; id., 'Producing Sense, Consuming Sense, Making Sense: Perils and Prospects for Sensory History', *Journal of Social History*, 40 (2007), 841-58.
[260] Lawrence, *Lectures*, 467.

individual than a white, signifying that less of the black person's brain was available for abstract thought.[261] Once the association was thus made between a heightened sensory capacity and lack of rational thought, it became very straightforward to argue that non-whites were as children or animals, with little concept of the future.[262] One capacity in abundance thus represented another in dearth.

Sexual capacities and desires, measured both anatomically and behaviourally, represented much the same thing: a high libido connoted non-white identity, which then represented low cognitive ability. Hypo- or hyper-sized genitals, proclivities, and secondary sexual organs acted as corporeal manifestations of racial Otherness and as a physical and behavioural reminder of why race and species as concepts were so proximate throughout the century. The implication of sexual reproduction in monogenist thought, the centrality of the interbreeding criterion to thinkers on either side of the racial fence, and the development in the respective meanings of race and species throughout the century only added to the potential confusion between the two, as other scholars have shown.[263]

Vision, it has been argued here, was the most important source for the assessment of racial characteristics throughout the eighteenth century as a result of both the semiotics derived from Locke's epistemology, and the focus on optics in the Scientific Revolution. Vision itself was obviously not new, nor was folk prejudice against people of colour, but the senses' monopoly of epistemological authority was both new and powerful: as Paul Gilroy has

[261] White, *Regular Gradation*, pp. clxii-clxvi.
[262] Virey, *Negro Race*, 27.
[263] Banton, *Racial Theories*, ch. 2; Guillaumin, *Sexe, Race*, 171-94.

argued, earlier folk prejudice was translated into cognitive and aesthetic terms as a result of eighteenth-century racial theorising.[264] This most obviously lent itself to skin colour which was immediately interpretable on the basis of contemporary aesthetics, a term which until the late eighteenth century meant 'the science of the senses'. Empirical methodologies were also the root cause of the creation of systems of physiognomy, which sought effectively to translate facial intricacies into interpretable lines. From Hogarth through to Camper, White, and Blumenbach, reduction of facial complexities to lines rendered the visage systematically legible. One senses that, in keeping with Long's invective against Francis Williams, only whites would be capable of interpreting these lines. Indeed, the ability to read lines was part of an assessment of mental capacity ubiquitous in eighteenth-century racial thought. Thomas Jefferson was certainly not alone in expecting to be disappointed about finding any traces on the Rhodian shore: 'in reason, [black peoples are] much inferior, as I think one could scarcely be found capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid.'[265]

[264] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (2002), 9.
[265] Jefferson, *State of Virginia*, 202.

2 Sex and the Embodiment of Identity, 1690-1833

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the nature of the sex-race relationship as it existed in racial discourses. Both sex and race rely on an empiricist epistemology to convey meaning, and a variety of bodily features – both sexual and not – testify to the importance of empiricism for modern racial and sexual identities. The purpose of this chapter is three-fold. First, it aims simply to expand the range of discourses in which the relationship of sex and race was expressed, particularly moving away from more elite racial texts towards those which enjoyed a wider readership. Second, it will complement the analysis in chapter one by focusing on texts which relate to the sexual body. Finally, and building from this point, it aims to highlight the crucial importance of the physical body as the site of the sex-race interrelationship.

The argument proceeds in two sections. The first takes as its subject 'licit' (reproductive) sex. Philoprogenitivism is the central focus of this section, which focuses more on the body in the aggregate rather than the specifics of the individual or abstract body. The absolutely crucial association of philoprogenitivism with marriage is discussed with reference to legislative attempts to promote population growth, to the treatment of behaviours which frustrated philoprogenitivism (such as contraception, abortion or infanticide, and polygamy), and to the population theories of Thomas Robert Malthus. These reoriented philoprogenitivist goals away from a national or racial

population and instead focused on class, a factor which, it will be argued below, was important in explaining the widespread opposition he aroused.

The second section discusses 'illicit' (non-reproductive) sexualities, and is intended to demonstrate how such sexualities were thought to be physically embodied as the century wore on. Prostitution, masturbation, and sodomy were all roundly criticised for the deleterious effect they had on population growth, and were perceived to have physical manifestations of variable permanence. In addition, an explicit identity of the 'sodomite' was created in a similar way to the creation of races at the hands of European theorists. This identity was, though, unstable and manipulable given its basis in human behaviour and its foundation upon poorly (if ever) defined categories. The identities of the 'onanist' (masturbator) and prostitute were similarly based on behaviour, and all three constituted the embodiment of moral truths: moral decay, as evidenced by (for example) prostitution, was seen directly to produce physical decline. Juxtaposed to this were eighteenth-century discussions of hermaphrodites. Belief in the physical reality of these waned across the century, as hermaphroditism came to stand as a metaphor of gender, particularly male effeminacy. As such hermaphrodites were progressively *dis*embodied (denaturalised) and made to stand for a moral truth, as moral truths became naturalised in the bodies of the sodomite and onanist. Either way, the body was still regarded as a primary site for the location of identity, as hermaphroditism continued to be discussed in terms of the (progressively less manipulable) body. Such manipulability was characteristic of the maternal imagination. The belief that a mother's imaginings could be imprinted on the foetus testified both to the cultural power of the mother and of the senses. It was also a sexual locus for

racial theorists, as we have already seen, as indeed were monstrous births and bestiality.[1] Both of these also reflected the corporealisation of morals.

The relationship between the physical and the moral in such sexual discourses, although providing room for flexibility and individual agency in the embodiment of identity, can hardly come as a surprise. Throughout the eighteenth century religious teachings on sex governed the societies of Western Europe. Challenges to these became louder, more frequent, and more sophisticated as the eighteenth century progressed. In Britain, the ecclesiastical courts may have become progressively obsolescent after 1640, but observance of Church teaching was still powerful and widespread. For each statement in favour of sexual liberty there must be counterbalanced the efforts of pious groups such as the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, the Proclamation Society, and the Society for the Prevention of Vice.[2] While a secularisation thesis is not being advocated here, there is nevertheless little explicit religious material (except where important for the argument) in the following analysis. Where 'morality' or 'morals' are referred to below, they are meant in both secular and religious senses.

The evidence deployed in this chapter is varied, and ranges from high-brow works of political economy, parliamentary debate, and learned medical treatises, to scaremongering pamphlets distributed gratis with quack medicines. The breadth of this material points to four things particularly worthy of note.

[1] See, for example, *De Generis*$_3$, 200-206; William Lawrence, *Lectures on Physiology, Zoology, and the Natural History of Man* (1819), 428-30.

[2] On these questions, see Faramerz Dabhoiwala, 'Lust and Liberty', *P&P* (forthcoming). See also M. J. D. Roberts, 'The Society for the Suppression of Vice and its Critics', *HJ*, 26 (1983), 159-76. Cf. Roy Porter, 'Mixed Feelings: The Enlightenment and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in Paul-Gabriel Boucé (ed.), *Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Manchester, 1982), 1-27, reworked in Roy Porter and Lesley Hall, *The Facts of Life: The Creation of Sexual Knowledge in Britain, 1650-1950* (1995), 14-32; Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (1982), ch. 7.

First, the wider range of sexual than racial material points to the greater relevance for Britons at home of questions of sex.[3] Notwithstanding a growing non-white population, especially in London, sexual rather than racial identity was inevitably of greater relevance to the vast majority of British people. Second, the breadth of these texts points to a wide readership, and a significant share of the population being aware of the issues raised in this chapter. Third, and as a result, the connection established in this half of the thesis between race and sex is made more convincing by its appearance in such a wealth of texts read by so many. Finally, despite yoking together so many different discourses of the collective and individual body, this chapter in no way claims that the interrelation of sex and race is the most important element of these discourses. Rather, it is perhaps their least well explored feature, hence the near exclusive focus on this interaction within the chapter.

Licit Sexes and Sexualities

This section will outline the most important way in which the body (in the aggregate) hosted the interrelation of race and sex: through the drive to increase the population, otherwise known as philoprogenitivism. Stemming from mercantilist roots, this drive focused squarely on reproduction in eighteenth-century Britain. Marriage was powerfully associated with reproduction, such that philoprogenitivist endeavour almost always centred on promoting marriage. The power and sophistication of that linkage is apparent from discussions of contraception, abortion/infanticide, and polygamy, also discussed in this section. These all had links with racial discourses and thinkers.

[3] Wahrman, *Making*, 122.

Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), incorrectly interpreted (by many at the time and since) as opposed to philoprogenitivism per se, nonetheless attempted to reorient the relationship between marriage and reproduction away from improving the nation's or race's population, towards preventing that of the lower and imprudent classes from reproducing. This provoked sustained opposition, but despite this Malthus still had strong links with racial theorists, not least in his broad use of travel literature to support his claims.

Philoprogenitivism in the Eighteenth Century

The drive to promote the size of the population already had a lengthy pedigree by the start of our period.[4] However, the geopolitical context of Britain throughout the eighteenth century made this a priority.[5] The large population of Catholic France acted as a strong real world application of the general 'mercantilist' argument that 'two things…appear to be chiefly necessary, to make a nation great, and powerfull; which is to be rich, and populous'.[6] Even once France had been bested as an imperial rival by 1763, the need to populate the newly enlarged British Empire ensured that philoprogenitivism remained

[4] See especially Charles Emil Stangeland, 'Pre-Malthusian Doctrines of Population: A Study in the History of Economic Theory' (Columbia University Ph.D. thesis, 1904); D. V. Glass, *Numbering the People: The Eighteenth-Century Population Controversy and the Development of Census and Vital Statistics in Britain* (Farnborough, Hants., 1973).
[5] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, 2002), 159-67.
[6] Samuel Fortrey, *Englands Interest and Improvement* (Cambridge, 1663), 3. On the size of the population as important for French power, see [Sir William Petyt], *Britannia Languens, or a Discourse of Trade* (1680), 239-246. On the deleterious effects of Catholicism for the growth of the French population, see [Sir Peter Pett], *The Happy Future State of England* (1688), esp. 90-5; also Montesquieu, *Persian Letters*, tr. George R. Healy (Indianapolis, 1964), 194-8 [letters 116-17]. On Louis XIV's ambition and its effect on the population, see *The Spectator* (8 vols., 1712-15), iii. 174-5 (No. 200, Friday, 19 October 1711).

important.[7] It was not until the publication of Malthus's *Essay* that the appeal of a large population came to be questioned.[8] Attachment to the principle that a large population demonstrated national health and wealth (*the* 'principle of population') died hard, however, and even Malthus vigorously defended himself that he was not opposed to it.[9] Most criticisms of Malthus were based on either a misreading of him or objections to his specific proposals, but there was nevertheless a widespread perception that he opposed the principle of population, and his *Essay* had the effect of introducing doubt concerning this cherished desideratum of political economy.[10] In what follows, the specifics of the population debates underway in eighteenth-century Britain are less important than the fundamental premise upon which almost all participants agreed: the desirability of a large population.[11]

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[7] Gillian Russell, 'An "entertainment of oddities": Fashionable Sociability and the Pacific in the 1770s', in Kathleen Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History* (Cambridge, 2004), 48-70 at 59-60; Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Chicago, 1995), 96.

[8] Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People* (Oxford, 1989), 636-40; Glass, *Numbering*.

[9] See the appendix to both the 1806 and 1817 editions of Malthus's *Essay*: T. R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, ed. Patricia James (2 vols., Cambridge, 1989), ii. 205, 233. See also Donald Winch, *Riches and Poverty: An Intellectual History of Political Economy in Britain, 1750-1834* (Cambridge, 1996), 80-82, 84-7, 233-4, 305; Boyd Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1785-1865* (Oxford, 1991), 75 n. 6; Catherine Gallagher, 'The Body Versus the Social Body in the Works of Thomas Malthus and Henry Mayhew', *Representations*, 14 (1986), 83-106 at 84. Cf. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Idea of Poverty: England in the Early Industrial Age* (New York, 1985), ch. 4. See also p. 298ff., below.

[10] Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?* (Oxford, 2008), 336-7.

[11] These debates are described at length in Stangeland, 'Pre-Malthusian Doctrines', and Glass, *Numbering*. On the near uniformity of opinion on the appeal of a large population, see Sylvana Tomaselli, 'Moral Philosophy and Population Questions in Eighteenth-Century Europe', in Michael S. Teitelbaum and Jay M. Winter (eds.), *Population and Resources in Western Intellectual Traditions* (Cambridge, 1989), supplement to *Population and Development Review*, 14, pp. S7-S29, esp. p. S8. See also Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (1967), ch. 13.

'Mercantilist' arguments about the size of the population were based, in the seventeenth century, on the pioneering work of political arithmeticians.[12] Two of the most celebrated – Sir William Petty and Charles Davenant – enunciated the principle that population was proportional to national wealth, not least because of the correspondence they identified between land value and population size.[13] Other seventeenth-century writers more clearly 'mercantilist', such as William Petyt and John Houghton, emphasised the necessity of a large population to provide a basis for trade and industry.[14] The 'mercantilist' drive for population was comparatively unconcerned about the means by which it increased. Immigration was considered an acceptable means to boost the population by some: Josiah Tucker, for example, argued in favour of immigration but only of 'Wealthy and Industrious Foreigners.'[15] Although this call foundered on the rocks of British xenophobia, Tucker used hostility to foreigners as a means of arguing *for* immigration, claiming that an influx of foreign workers would shame Britons into working harder.[16] Ultimately, however, Tucker met with the same hostility described by Mr Spectator, who abandoned plans to promote immigration as a result of the 'inimitable Eloquence [with which] my Fellow Labourers had exaggerated the Mischiefs of selling the Birth-right of *Britons* for a Shilling, of spoiling the pure *British* Blood

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[12] See Julian Hoppit, 'Political Arithmetic in the Eighteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, 49 (1996), 516-540. On mercantilism see esp. Lars Magnusson, *Mercantilism: The Shaping of an Economic Language* (1994).
[13] Sir William Petty, *Political Arithmetick* (1690); Sir Charles Davenant, *An Essay upon the Probable Methods of making a People Gainers in the Ballance of Trade* (1700), *passim* but esp. 24.
[14] [Petyt], *Britannia*, 15-17; John Houghton, *England's Great Happiness: or, a Dialogue between Content and Complaint* (1677), 8-10. Seventeenth-century 'mercantilism', and especially political arithmetic, was interested more in the growth of a *productive* than a large population. See, for example, John Graunt, *Natural and Political Observations* (1662), 69.
[15] Josiah Tucker, *The Elements of Commerce, and Theory of Taxes* (Bristol, [1755?]), 30.
[16] Tucker, *Elements*, 33.

with foreign Mixtures, of introducing a Confusion of Languages and Religions, and of letting in Strangers to eat the Bread out of the Mouths of our own People.'[17] The furore over the 1753 'Jew Bill' (for which Tucker propagandized) demonstrated the extent to which national dislike of foreigners overtook the desire for an augmented population, and economic arguments were deployed on both sides of the debate.[18]

Promotion of population growth concentrated on reproduction, as immigration was clearly politically risky, and advances in public health had not yet secured – or so it appeared to contemporaries – the dramatic fall in the death rate necessary to increase the population without needing to focus on births.[19] Berkeley's statement was typical: as 'the Number of People is both Means and Motive to Industry, it should therefore be of great use to encourage Propagation, by allowing some Reward or Privilege to those who have a certain number of Children.'[20] A statute of 1695 had levied an annual tax on bachelors and childless widowers, although this was partially to compensate for a disincentive the same statute – which was, after all, a wartime revenue measure – placed in the way of marriage and conception.[21] More positive proposals,

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[17] *Spectator*, iii. 178 (No. 200, Friday, 19 October 1711).
[18] Dana Rabin, 'The Jew Bill of 1753: Masculinity, Virility, and the Nation', *ECS*, 39 (2006), 157-171 at 160; G. A. Cranfield, 'The *London Evening Post* and the Jew Bill of 1753', *HJ*, 8 (1965), 16-30 at 19; Tucker, *A Letter to a Friend Concerning Naturalizations* (1753); Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1998), 406; H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (1994), 278-9.
[19] See E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871* (Cambridge, 1989), 413-16. The historiography on public health is vast, although the work of Roy Porter stands out for the eighteenth century. See his *In Sickness and In Health: The British Experience, 1650-1850* (1988) and *Disease, Medicine, and Society in England, 1550-1860*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, 1995). For a basic overview on famine and disease, see J. A. Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History, 1550-1760*, 2nd edn. (1997), 49-55.
[20] [George Berkeley], *An Essay Towards Preventing the Ruine of Great Britain* (1721), 7.
[21] 6 & 7 William and Mary, cap. 6. This disincentive was the levying of a duty on baptisms and marriages. See Colin Brooks, 'Projecting, Political Arithmetic and the Act of 1695', *EHR*, 97 (1982), 31-53 at 36; Paul Slack, 'Government and Information in Seventeenth-Century

such as a marriage loan, or additional relief for the poor with several children, were floated in the eighteenth century as more explicitly pronatalist measures.[22] The principle that all of these measures shared was the identification of marriage with reproduction. Popular sex manuals, such as *Aristotle's Masterpiece* or Nicolas Venette's *Tableau of Conjugal Love* (both reprinted frequently throughout the eighteenth century) share both a pronatalist perspective, and one which identifies legitimate (i.e. procreative) sexuality with marriage.[23]

The association of pronatalism and marriage ran wide and deep in eighteenth-century culture. Marriage was widely perceived as peculiarly suited to the production of offspring. Unsurprisingly, this was a key feature of sermons on marriage, which was believed to exist to people the world.[24] Marital procreation was not simply a fulfilment of scripture: to marry was to be more than obedient to the will of God, it was to act to the benefit of society at large.[25] Reproduction and marriage crept into sermons which hardly warranted their

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England', *P&P*, 184 (2004), 33-68 at 37; Stangeland, 'Pre-Malthusian Doctrines'; Gregory King, *A Scheme of the Rates and Duties Granted to His Majesty upon Marriages, Births and Burials, and upon Batchelors and Widowers* (1695). A tax on bachelors was also the key proposal in the anonymous pamphlet *Marriage Promoted* (1690).

[22] For an example of a marriage loan or grant scheme, see anon., *Some Considerations upon Street-Walkers* (1726), 7. Josiah Tucker's rather punitive package of measures upon bachelors was for him preferable to a marriage grant as it encouraged industry. See Tucker, *Elements of Commerce*, 16-30, 39-40. Pitt's 1796 Bill 'for the Better Support and Maintenance of the Poor', included a clause granting at least 1s. per week for fathers with more than two children (and widows with more than one child). See *An Authentic Copy of the Bill for the Better Support and Maintenance of the Poor* (1797), 3.

[23] Roy Porter, 'Spreading Carnal Knowledge or Selling Dirt Cheap? Nicolas Venette's *Tableau de l'Amour Conjugal* in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of European Studies*, 14 (1984), 233-55; id., 'The Literature of Sexual Advice before 1800', in Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (eds.), *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science: The History of Attitudes to Sexuality* (Cambridge, 1994), 134-57; Porter and Hall, *Facts of Life*, 33-64.

[24] See, for example, Matthew Hole, *Practical Discourses on the Offices of Baptism, Confirmation, and Matrimony* (6 vols., Oxford, 1719), vi. 82. This idea continued to be officially held in Britain until the twentieth century. See Alfred Owen Aldridge, 'Population and Polygamy in Eighteenth-Century Thought', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 4 (1949), 129-48 at 148.

[25] See, for example, Joseph Fisher, *The Honour of Marriage* (1695), 13-16; John Cockburn, *The Dignity and Duty of A Married State* (1708), 11; Thomas Humphreys, *Marriage an honourable estate* (1742), 14; [John Brett], *Conjugal Love and Duty* (Dublin, 1757), 12.

mention. Preaching before the governors of the Hospitals for the Small-Pox and Inoculation in 1767, William Dodd stated that Christianity not only produced the philanthropy fuelling the hospital movement, but also tended to increase the population through the promotion of strictly monogamous matrimony.[26] Occasional defences of fornication on the basis of its philoprogenitive potential were few and condemned, notwithstanding a growing range of defences of sexual liberty across the period.[27] Indeed, adultery was never defended as a means of enlarging the population, probably due to the pathological fear of husbands for spurious issue and its effect on the transmission of property.[28] The strength of the association of monogamous marriage with reproduction can be clearly demonstrated by the treatment of anti-reproductive behaviour, such as contraception, abortion, infanticide, and polygamy.

Contraception was reviled during the long eighteenth century. Worse, it seemed to be a logical contradiction: if the end of marriage was procreation, then to marry and confute this aim seemed to make a mockery of the institution and to insult God. The most common means of contraception in the eighteenth century was *coitus interruptus* (condoms were rare, expensive, and used more as preventatives for venereal disease), often discussed alongside masturbation as the 'sin of Onan', a reference to spilling seed.[29] By the early nineteenth century,

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[26] William Dodd, *The Practice of Inoculation recommended, in a Sermon, preached…on the Anniversary Meeting of the Governors of the Small-Pox Hospitals* (1767), 4.
[27] See Dabhoiwala, 'Lust and Liberty'. For a bold statement of the libertarian view of eighteenth-century sexuality, see Porter, 'Mixed feelings', 1-27.
[28] Keith Thomas, 'The Double Standard', *JHI*, 20 (1959), 195-216; Bernard Capp, 'The Double Standard Revisited: Plebeian Women and Male Sexual Reputation in Early Modern England', *P&P*, 162 (1999), 70-100; Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (2003); Corinne Harol, *Enlightened Virginity in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (New York, 2006).
[29] Angus McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals: The Perception of Fertility in England from the Sixteenth Century* (1984), 75-81; Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England,*

radicals were attempting to popularise the use of the genital sponge as a means of limiting family size.[30] The opposition to these techniques remained strong, as demonstrated when the young J. S. Mill was detained in a London gaol for attempting to distribute pamphlets on contraception.[31] Such an effort, marginal even in the 1820s, was hardly conceivable a century earlier. Daniel Defoe waxed apoplectic about contraception in *Conjugal Lewdness* (1727), in which he accused women who were prepared to marry but who did not want children of being but a short step from lunacy.[32] Defoe's utter failure to understand contraception within the context of a marriage demonstrates exactly how, for him, marriage and procreation were synonymous. His comments prefaced a chapter against the use of contraceptives and abortifacients, in which he called contraception murder and accused those 'She-murtherers' of calling upon Satan for assistance when chemical remedies failed.[33] Although characteristic of the seventeenth-century attitudes with which Defoe grew up, this linkage of contraception, abortion, infidelity, and the occult was to fuel planter anger at

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1500-1800 (1990), 276; Tim Hitchcock, *English Sexualities, 1700-1800* (Basingstoke, 1997), 53; Julie Peakman, *Lascivious Bodies: A Sexual History of the Eighteenth Century* (2004), 51.

[30] [Richard Carlile], *Every Woman's Book: or, What is Love?*, 4th edn. (1826); Francis Place, *Illustrations and Proofs of the Principle of Population* (1822). Distribution of information about contraception, and the fact that many radicals printed and distributed pornographic literature, act as a powerful counterargument to the tradition that British pornography was unusually apolitical. See Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840* (Oxford, 1993), 204-31; Lisa Z. Sigel, *Governing Pleasures: Pornography and Social Change in England, 1815-1914* (2002), 15-49. Two exceptions to this tradition are Rachel Weil, 'Sometimes a Scepter is Only a Scepter; Pornography and Politics in Restoration England', in Lynn Hunt (ed.), *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origins of Modernity, 1500-1800* (New York, 1996), 125-53 and Melissa M. Mowry, *The Bawdy Politic in Stuart England, 1660-1714* (Aldershot, 2004).

[31] Patricia James, *Population Malthus: His Life and Times* (Abingdon, 2006), 385-7.

[32] [Daniel Defoe], *Conjugal Lewdness: or, Matrimonial Whoredom* (1727), 129.

[33] [Defoe], *Conjugal Lewdness*, 152-62.

the alleged prevalence of such practices amongst slaves throughout the century.[34]

Abortion and infanticide were often conflated, in part because abortion did not exist as a separate statutory offence until 1803, but also because the conventional morality (ably represented by Defoe) held that abortion and infanticide were synonymous.[35] This was possible not least because neat divisions between contraception, abortion, and infanticide were impossible in a period where knowledge about conception was hazy.[36] The 1624 statute against infanticide is perhaps the only in English legal history to presume an accused party guilty unless they could prove their innocence.[37] In this statute, the dividing line between marriage and procreation is decidedly blurry: as several scholars have noted, infanticide was a single woman's crime, it being assumed that a married woman would never kill her child.[38] The wording of the 1624 statute enforces this conclusion, being directed against 'any Woman … [whose child] being born alive should by the Laws of this Realm be a Bastard.'[39] This statute was reprinted in 1680 by order of London's JPs and was to be read in

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[34] See p. 302ff., below, and Hilary McD. Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Jamaica* (1989); B. W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807-1834* (Cambridge, 1976); Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (1990); Henrice Altink, *Representations of Slave Women in Discourses on Slavery and Abolition, 1780-1838* (2007).

[35] At least after quickening (the point at which the mother perceives the first movements of her foetus). See McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals*, 109.

[36] See Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* (Oxford, 2005), 276-83; McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals*; Eve Keller, 'Embryonic Individuals: The Rhetoric of Seventeenth-Century Embryology and the Construction of Early-Modern Identity', *ECS*, 33 (2000), 321-48; ead., *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves: The Rhetoric of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (2007); Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2004); Gowing, *Common Bodies*.

[37] 21 Jac. 1, c. 27.

[38] Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 281; McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals*, 131; Dana Rabin, 'Beyond "Lewd Women" and "Wanton Wenches": Infanticide and Child-Murder in the Long Eighteenth Century', in Jennifer Thorn (ed.), *Writing British Infanticide: Child Murder, Gender, and Print, 1722-1859* (2003), 45-69.

[39] *Statutes of the Realm* (12 vols., 1810-28), iv. 1234-5.

church four times annually, suggesting a perception that the law needed restating.[40] Richard Steele certainly felt so when he wrote in 1713, advocating the establishment of a foundling hospital, and complaining that many infanticides went undetected.[41] Indeed, by the early eighteenth century, increasing numbers of women were deliberately acquitted where evidence was ambivalent or lacking: the law was unpopular amongst juries and the consequent swathe of acquittals made it so with lawyers and MPs.[42] Steele equated contraception and abortion with infanticide, under the rubric of 'unnatural practices'. Such rhetoric was employed by racial theorists and slave owners, describing the casual neglect for their offspring typical of 'savages'.[43] However, as attitudes towards unmarried mothers (as well as to other examples of 'lewd' women, such as prostitutes) within Britain softened after the first quarter of the eighteenth century,[44] philoprogenitivist imperatives were

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[40] See *Anno vicesimo primo Jacobi Regis, &c. An Act to prevent the Destroying and Murthering of Bastard Children* (1680). Convictions under the statute were much higher in the period before *c.*1730 than thereafter, not least because evidentiary problems made it difficult to prove infanticide, notwithstanding the presumption of the mother's guilt. See Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 275; William Hunter, 'On the Uncertainty of the Signs of Murder, in the Case of Bastard Children', *Medical Observations and Inquiries*, 6 (1784), 266-90. See also Marilyn Francus, 'Monstrous Mothers, Monstrous Societies: Infanticide and the Rule of Law in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century England', *ECL*, 21 (1997), 133-56.

[41] *The Guardian* (2 vols., 1714), ii. 124 (No. 105, Saturday 11 July 1713). This, and Addison's piece on immigration in the *Spectator* (see n. 17, above) were later quoted by an enthusiastic advocate of foundling hospitals, who imagined that the effect on the increase of population would render Britain the most powerful nation on earth within half a century. See Thomas Man, *The Benefit of Procreation* (1739).

[42] The amount of acquittals does not mean that many women were not executed under the provisions of this statute. See Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 281; McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals*, 130-5.

[43] See p. 302ff., below.

[44] Faramerz Dabhoiwala and Tony Henderson differ on this point: Dabhoiwala emphasises a change beginning *c.*1730 to a more sympathetic attitude to prostitution, whereas Henderson argues for the co-existence of sympathetic and punitive attitudes throughout the century from 1730. Randolph Trumbach agrees with the notion of an overall softening of attitudes towards prostitutes around mid-century. See Faramerz Noshir Dabhoiwala, 'Prostitution and Police in London, *c.*1660-*c.*1760' (University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 1995), 174-91; Tony Henderson, *Disorderly Women in Eighteenth-Century London: Prostitution and Control in the Metropolis, 1730-1830* (1999), 166-91; Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, i: *Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London* (1998), 167-84; Bradford K. Mudge, *The Whore's Story: Women, Pornography, and the British Novel, 1684-1830* (Oxford, 2000); Vern L.

channelled away from convicting infanticidal mothers towards providing the institutions – such as the Foundling and Magdalen hospitals – that relieved women's perceived need to kill their children and thereby weaken the nation.[45]

Contemporary anxiety over polygamy was a mirror to the cultural investment in monogamous matrimony. As Sylvana Tomaselli has written, 'population growth was often the criterion by which the value of any social or political proposal or institution was gauged,' and marriage in its monogamous and polygamous forms was subjected to this test.[46] Patrick Delany's 1737 attack on polygamy firmly undermined the notion that polygamy could be defensible on the basis that it is philoprogenitive.[47] His text was typically interested in the marital customs of other societies, especially those which were polygamous, of which the archetype was 'Turkey'.[48] Polygamy was another supposedly prevalent feature of 'savage' (and Islamic) societies across the world, and its African variant was thought to have been transported across the Atlantic to slave plantations in America.[49] Racial and stadial theorists spent much time discussing the marital customs of other societies, which simultaneously imposed European categories on the non-European world and then used the existence of these categories in that world as proof of their naturalness, and hence

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Bullough, 'Prostitution and Reform in Eighteenth-Century England', in Robert Purks Maccubbin (ed.), *'Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality during the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1987), 61-74; Hitchcock, *English Sexualities*, 99; Karen Harvey, 'Sexuality and the Body', in Hannah Barker and Elaine Chalus, *Women's History: Britain, 1700-1850* (Abingdon, 2005), 78-99 at 85.

[45] Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 20. See also Donna Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police: London Charity in the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton, 1989).

[46] Tomaselli, 'Moral Philosophy and Population', p. S8.

[47] [Patrick Delany], *Reflections upon Polygamy,* 2nd edn. (Dublin, 1739); Aldridge, 'Population and Polygamy', 135-8.

[48] See Lisa O'Connell, '"Matrimonial Ceremonies Displayed": Popular Ethnography and Enlightened Imperialism', *ECL*, 26 (2002), 98-116.

[49] See p. 303, below.

correctness.[50] Polygamy was commonly perceived to produce fewer children than monogamy, so when Europeans visited parts of America and Africa which happened to be thinly populated, they assumed that natives were polygamous. (Although some saw certain races – such as Africans – as hyperfertile due to polygamy, its resultant hypofertility was the most common viewpoint.)[51] Polygamy was then used to explain the thinness of the population, in a circular reference typical of European racial thought. John Millar's discussion of polygamy was based on these assumptions. His *Observations Concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society* (1771) associated the evils of polygamous marriage in eastern nations with luxury when he wrote that 'the excesses of luxury have been productive of disorders almost equally pernicious [as polygamy]; and instead of introducing polygamy have carried the common prostitution of the women to a height which is not more favourable to the multiplication of the species.'[52] Polygamy was therefore *the* benchmark by which perniciousness was measured, and its tendency to undermine philoprogenitive goals apparently spoke for itself.

Dissenting voices were few, but the most notable was that of Martin Madan, chaplain of the Lock Hospital, who provoked a storm of controversy with his *Thelyphthora* (1780).[53] Madan hoped to stem the tide of prostitution by stating that the marriage bond was constituted neither by the formalities specified in the 1753 Marriage Act, nor the range of folk and clandestine practices it sought to invalidate. Rather, marriage stemmed from coitus, and

[50] This naturalisation of European categories is discussed at greater length in chapter 4.
[51] On the linkage of polygamy and hyperfertility, see esp. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones*, 78-9.
[52] John Millar, *Observations Concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society* (Dublin, 1771), 78.
[53] On Madan see Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, i. 188-90.

men who had sexual intercourse with more than one woman were thus married to each and every one. Madan argued that 'wherever, there are the most *married women*, there the increase of the people will be the greatest. *Polygamy*, therefore, as tending to increase the number of *married women*, must certainly tend to *population*.'[54] His engagement with questions of population simply amounted to arguing against the current which supposed polygamy to be antiprogenitive.[55] In doing so, he left intact the linkage of marriage and fecundity: polygamy was merely legitimised as a form of marriage. Tomaselli's words clearly ring true for Madan, in whose text polygamy is rendered legitimate as a form of marriage because it is shown to result in the ultimate *summum bonum*: population growth.

In addition to these debates, those specifically on population itself lent weight to the connection of marriage and reproduction, and of these to emergent racial discourses. It was no coincidence that the influential discussion of population in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1728) occurred in a text in which one witnesses the meltdown of a harem.[56] Montesquieu states one of the key arguments against polygamy in the midst of his discussion on population: that the number of women to be satisfied in a polygynous union exhausted their husband.[57] Montesquieu's viewpoint on population was based on the commonplace that the population was larger in antiquity, and Robert Wallace, the Scottish clergyman who debated population with David Hume, borrowed from Montesquieu scorn for the elevation of chastity in traditional

[54] Martin Madan, *Thelyphthora; or, a Treatise on Female Ruin* (2 vols., 1780), i. 100 n.
[55] Madan, *Thelyphthora*, i. 102-7, ii. 272-98.
[56] On Montesquieu's critique, see Tomaselli, 'Moral Philosophy and Population', 9-15; Aldridge, 'Population and Polygamy', 132-5.
[57] Montesquieu, *Persian Letters*, 191.

Christianity.[58] Hume strongly disagreed with the view that the ancient world was more populous, though he too critiqued monastic vows. He also turned his sceptical vision to foundling hospitals, which 'seem favourable to the encrease of numbers; and perhaps, may be so, when kept under proper restrictions. But when they open the door to every one, without distinction, they have probably a contrary effect, and are pernicious to the state.'[59] Ultimately, Hume, Montesquieu, Wallace, and the other contributors to the population debates in the eighteenth century all deal with *structural* factors which can promote or impede marriage. Hume mentions disease, but only to exclude it from his analysis.[60] Their shared assumption is that marriage does the work of population.

This assumption, although it may seem somewhat obvious, is worth restating because of its enormous importance. Asserted in philoprogenitivist texts and legislation, in discussions of contraception, abortion, infanticide, and polygamy, the linkage between marriage and reproduction was a powerful axiom. In particular, the illegitimacy of polygamous marriage was used as a cause and a consequence of racial difference. When attempts to rehabilitate polygamy took place, they merely redefined the custom as a legitimate form of marriage, leaving untouched the connection between marriage and fecundity. By recognising that marriage was crucial to population we can understand, first, the danger posed to society as a whole by non-procreative sexualities (which

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[58] Montesquieu, *Persian Letters*, 196-8; [Robert Wallace], *A Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind in antient and modern Times* (Edinburgh, 1753), 84-7; Robert B. Luehrs, 'Population and Utopia in the Thought of Robert Wallace', *ECS*, 20 (1973), 313-35 at 323. Wallace also wrote a text in favour of a freer commerce of the sexes. See Norah Smith, 'Robert Wallace's "Of Venery"', *Texas Studies in Language and Literature*, 15 (1973), 429-44.
[59] David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary* ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis, 1987), 400 (Essay XI: 'Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations').
[60] One of his primary examples of this is, at any rate, venereal disease. Hume, *Essays*, 379-80.

thereby undermined the institution of marriage and by extension formed an attack on social institutions as a whole);[61] second, the complexity of the linkage between race and sex – marriage became a racialised (or at least representative) characteristic as a race's sexual practices not only had an influence on its numbers (and hence its power) but also formed one of the many available means to rank societies; and finally, one way in which morality became embodied in the period – marriage facilitated the production of bodies. It is perhaps only with the recognition of the vast cultural weight of marriage that we can understand the reaction to Malthus.

Malthus's Essay on the Principle of Population *(1798) and the End of the Philoprogenitivist Consensus*

From the moment of its publication in 1798, Malthus's *Essay* was viewed – widely but inaccurately – as an anti-populationist tract.[62] The author of the anonymous *Remarks on a Late Publication* (1803) stated this plainly: in the *Essay*, 'the whole order of things, and the whole order of sentiments are to be erased and subverted. Marriage is to be held in comparative disgrace, and offspring to be deprecated, whilst the unmarried and the barren are to receive the thanks of the state, and the applause of their own consciences.'[63] In 1828,

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[61] Bernard Mandeville was most certainly not alone in arguing that 'Marriage is absolutely necessary, not only for the regular Propagation of the *Species*, and their careful Education, but likewise for preserving that Distinction of Rank among Mankind, which otherwise would be utterly lost and confounded by doubtful Successions.' See [Bernard Mandeville], *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews* (1724), 27, and the seminal article on this topic by Thomas, 'The Double Standard'.

[62] Gail Bederman has argued that the 1798 edition should also be viewed as an intervention in the conservative attack on Godwin, rather than simply the first edition of a great work. See her 'Sex, Scandal, Satire, and Population in 1798: Revisiting Malthus's First *Essay*', *JBS*, 47 (2008), 768-95.

[63] *Remarks on a Late Publication, Entitled, 'An Essay on the Principle of Population'* (1803), 46.

Nassau Senior summarised the reception of the *Essay* in the thirty years since its appearance: it contained 'propositions which Mr. Malthus has established by facts and reasonings, which, opposed as they were to long-rooted prejudice, and assailed by every species of sophistry and clamour, are now so generally admitted, that they have become rather matter of allusion than of formal statement.'[64] However, the gradual acceptance of Malthus's ideas was not uncontested, and there were elements of Malthus's *Essay* from which it was easy to draw the conclusion that he was at best antiprogenitive and at worst callous against the plight of the poor.[65] One passage, which only appeared in the second edition of 1803, stated that a man who could neither be supported by his parents nor work for his bread had no part 'at nature's mighty feast.'[66] This sentiment was deplored for its hard-heartedness, although it did also convey an antiprogenitive moral in the form of 'nature' telling the poor man to be gone, and quickly executing this order.

The authoritarian operation of 'nature' (one of the chief difficulties with Malthus's ideas for Christian apologists) was to be repeated in the work of Charles Darwin, who freely acknowledged his debt to Malthus's *Essay*, but it also reinforced Malthus's reorientation of philoprogenitivism away from being a racial/national issue, towards one of class.[67] Marriage (and hence

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[64] Nassau William Senior, *Two Lectures on Population* (1829), 50. Senior delivered this lecture in his capacity as Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford.
[65] Malthus, indeed, acquired a reputation as somewhat of an equivocator. See Winch, *Riches and Poverty*, 246.
[66] T. R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, 2nd edn. (1803), 531. Samuel Taylor Coleridge marked this passage in his copy of the *Essay*. Despite its removal from the third edition of 1806, William Godwin was still explosive with rage in 1820. See William Godwin, *Of Population* (1820), 19; George Reuben Potter, 'Unpublished Marginalia in Coleridge's Copy of Malthus's *Essay on Population*', *PMLA*, 51 (1936), 1061-8; James, *Population Malthus*, 60, 456; Malthus, *Essay*, ed. James, ii. 122-32.
[67] Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 73-80; Geoffrey Gilbert, 'Introduction', in id. (ed.), *T. R. Malthus: Critical Responses* (4 vols., 1998), i. 1-22 at 11.

reproduction) was, it has been shown, a locus of racial and national identity. Less developed peoples had a smaller population, not least because of their sexual practices, such as polygamy or widespread fornication. Any attempt to restrict population growth was widely perceived as a retrogressive step, and would demote Britain in racial rank, moving her closer to, say, the slave societies of the Caribbean which were notoriously unable to achieve population growth. As will be shown in chapter five, abolitionists blamed this on the cruelties of slavery, but there remained a strong current of opinion which blamed African marital and sexual practices.[68] Malthus's philoprogenitivism was a more class- than race-based concept, and his strictures on the reproductive life of the poor offended both the religious principles which he, as an Anglican clergyman, was expected to uphold, and undermined the place of Britain in a world coming to be defined along racial lines. His principles appeared to confute all the efforts of the previous century to embody morality via marriage and hence reproduction, and this goes some way to explaining the ferocity of some of his critics.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's comments on a notorious passage in the *Essay* will indicate how morality was perceived as embodied. This passage, appearing for the first time in the 1803 edition, proposed a regulation 'declaring, that no child born from any marriage, taking place after the expiration of a year from the date of the law; and no illegitimate child born two years from the same date, should ever be entitled to parish assistance.'[69] This was to be supplemented by an address read by a priest before conducting a

[68] See p. 302ff., below.
[69] Malthus, *Essay* (1989 [1803]), ii. 139.

marriage, in which 'the strong obligation on every man to support his own children' was to be emphasised, as was indeed 'the impropriety, and even immorality, of marrying without fair prospect of being able to do this; [and] the evils which had resulted to the poor themselves, from the attempt which had been made to assist, by publick institutions, in a duty which ought to be exclusively appropriated to parents.'[70] Coleridge's marginal comment was brief but illuminating: 'the clergyman! No Mr. M. you must call in the Sow-gelder.'[71] As with later racial discourses – and particularly those of Houyhnhnmland, discussed in the next chapter – Coleridge recognised that to prevent sexual intercourse, physical intervention was necessary.

In attempting to defend his philoprogenitivism in the 1806 edition, Malthus acknowledged his debt to eighteenth-century principles. For him, the choice was between restricting marriage and thus producing a degree of vice (reflecting the association of marriage, population, and morality), or accepting the escalation of poverty, and he viewed the former as the lesser of the two evils.[72] He strongly denied the charge that his principles contradicted God's original command to multiply and replenish the earth. As he wrote, 'every express command given to man by his Creator is given in subordination to those great and uniform laws of nature which he had previously established; and we are forbidden both by reason and religion to expect that these laws will be changed in order to enable us to execute more readily any particular

[70] Ibid.
[71] Marginal comment in Malthus, *Essay* (1803), 538 (British Library shelfmark C.44.g.2). See Potter, 'Unpublished Marginalia', 1066. For Coleridge's views on Malthus, see Winch, *Riches and Poverty*, 297-306. Coleridge might be referring to the words of Pompey in *Measure for Measure*, who responded to the prohibition of prostitution in Vienna by asking 'does your worship mean to geld and splay all the youth of the city?' *Meas. for M.*, II.i.18-19. I am grateful to Peter Kitson for this point.
[72] Malthus, *Essay* (1989 [1806]), ii. 221.

precept.'[73] He believed it was God's intention for the earth to be populated 'with a healthy, virtuous, and happy population, not an unhealthy, vicious, and miserable one. And if in endeavouring to obey the command to increase and multiply, we people it only with beings of this latter description, and suffer accordingly, we have no right to impeach the justice of the command, but our irrational mode of executing it.'[74] He continued to assert his belief that a large population was a measure of national strength, but simply that he differed from the traditional view of how this should be procured.[75] Malthus therefore saw himself as merely modifying the drive to population from one based less on simply encouraging births when and where possible to one which advocated a prudential policy of means-determined growth.

That this modification was along class lines was apparent to all. Malthus's advocacy of the abolition of the poor laws made him deeply unpopular with radicals and advocates of the poor, but the motive for this abolition – to dissuade the poor from marrying – secured opponents in other quarters. William Cobbett, for example, accused Malthus of being in favour of slavery, linking the disastrous demographic record of slavery and the fact that Malthus 'has not scrupled to recommend *checks to population* as conducive to the *good* of mankind.'[76] Amongst those who took umbrage at his desire to dissuade the poor from marriage was John Young, an Edinburgh Sandemanian,[77] who asked in 1808, 'is it humane or benevolent to confine the

[73] Malthus, *Essay* (1989 [1806]), ii. 205.
[74] Malthus, *Essay* (1989 [1806]), ii. 206.
[75] Samuel Hollander, 'On Malthus's population principle and social reform', *History of Political Economy*, 18 (1986), 187-235 at 198.
[76] 'Summary of Politics: Jamaica Complaints', *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* 7, 7 (16 Feb. 1805), 225-44 at 231.
[77] See note by 'J.M.', *Notes and Queries*, 5th ser., 8 (22 Sep. 1877), 239.

comforts and endearments of conjugal life to the more wealthy or independent, and to compel, *by law*, the *most numerous* class of the community to live in a state of uncleanness and distraction of mind, merely because their prospects are less fair in this life than those of their neighbours!'[78] The pernicious effect of the *Essay* on the poor was arguably evident from very soon after the first edition was published. Informed of the *Essay* by friends, Pitt read it and very soon after withdrew his Poor Relief Bill, apparently on the strength of the *Essay*.[79]

Even evidence damaging to Malthus's arguments concerning the responsibility of the poor laws for the number of feckless marriages, failed to prevent the *Essay* from becoming a basis for social legislation. Such evidence was provided by the first decennial census, finally held in 1801 after a half-century of opposition based on religious factors and fear of government misuse.[80] The immediate catalyst for the census taking place was the combination of two poor harvests in 1799 and 1800 (following a dearth in 1795) with a lengthy war abroad and radicalism at home.[81] Despite the large – and, as subsequent censuses would demonstrate, growing – population, the conduct of a proper census enabled some statisticians to demonstrate that the poor laws were not responsible for an overwhelming number of feckless marriages.[82] Nonetheless, politicians still felt justified in introducing legislation

[78] 'Simplex' [John Young], *An Inquiry into the Constitution, Government, & Practices of the Churches of Christ* (Edinburgh, 1808), 216-17.
[79] Gilbert, 'Introduction', 6. Also see note 22 above.
[80] Glass, *Numbering*, 16-20; Langford, *Polite and Commercial People*, 637. David procured the death of seventy thousand men from pestilence as a result of his census. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1-17.
[81] Slack, 'Government and Information'; Hilton, *Age of Atonement*, 74; [William Cobbett], *The Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803*, xxxv (1819), 598-601. David Glass argued in 1973 that the change in favour of censuses probably happened earlier than 1798. See Glass, *Numbering*, 90.
[82] James, *Population Malthus*, 138.

based (if only imperfectly) on the *Essay*.[83] In 1821, for example, James Scarlett (MP for Peterborough from 1819) introduced a 'Bill to amend the Laws relating to the Relief of the Poor in *England*,' which moved to set a maximum poor rate, and to withhold relief from able-bodied and single men.[84] Proof of the longevity of the association of marriage and reproduction is offered in the debates on this bill. Sir Robert Wilson referred to it as Scarlett's 'anti-matrimonial and anti-population scheme.'[85] Lord Milton was incredulous as to what was being proposed:

> was the country to be told in the nineteenth century that it would be ruined by an excess of population? Had not all the great men of the last century declared that the population was the strength and wealth of a country? And yet it was now proposed to relieve the burthen which pressed on the capital of the country by destroying that population which, although it fed upon that capital, materially contributed to its increase![86]

The bill was ultimately withdrawn, but its Malthusian credentials merely presaged the legislation of the 1830s which even more explicitly drew upon the connection between marriage, population, and poverty. Malthus, therefore, did not destroy the connection between marriage and reproduction, and he remained himself committed to the principle that a large population connoted a powerful and healthy state. But his orientation of this linkage away from race/nation towards class produced opposition, not merely, as expected, from radicals and advocates of the poor, but from clergymen and MPs who railed against the implicit demotion of Britain.[87]

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[83] Hilton, *Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?*, 337.
[84] Poor Relief HC Bill (1821) [489], cl. 2.
[85] *Hansard*, 2nd series, 1821, v, 995.
[86] *Hansard*, 2nd series, 1821, v, 997-8.
[87] See Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 285-92.

Illicit Sexes and Sexualities

This section focuses on the individual rather than the collective body. It discusses the ways in which identities were embodied in sexual discourses of the period, and shows how morals were anchored in the corporeality of the body. Moral judgement and essentialised identities were dialectically related, each based upon and acting as a basis for the other. Prostitution and masturbation, for example, were not merely criticised for the damage they did to the increase of the population, but were reified into bodily identities. Bodies were then used to demonstrate the illegitimacy of masturbation or prostitution.[88] Such also happened to the sodomite, but a more permanent identity was situated in and on the sodomite's body. This was, however, manipulable and unstable, partly because of the uncertain basis for the identity, but also because the identity was a corporealisation of voluntary and autonomous behaviour. The causality of the linkage between morality and the body shared by prostitution, masturbation, and sodomy (that is, moral turpitude was manifested in physical form), was reversed with hermaphrodites, who were nonetheless described in terms of their bodies. The flexibility of the relation of corporeal to moral also characterised the maternal imagination, which was an important source of racial characteristics. The imagination also emphasised the crucial roles of the senses and, worryingly for contemporaries, of women. These were typically blamed for monstrous births, partly as a result of supposed bestiality. Both the maternal imagination and bestiality were important references for racial texts.

[88] Masturbation and prostitution remained loci of definitions of female and male perversion into the nineteenth century and beyond. See Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality* (Oxford, 1990), 21.

Generation Revisited

Before proceeding to discuss these categories of moral behaviour and bodily identity, it is important to outline briefly the context of the reproductive body. Those elements of this context which most pertain to racial heredity have been discussed in the previous chapter.[89] However, it is important to be aware of the processes by which contemporaries believed inheritance per se occurs, in order to understand the danger posed by liminal sexual and/or racial identities. Unsurprisingly, there was no single accepted understanding of the processes of human reproduction throughout the period in question. Variously, theories of epigenesis and preformationism held sway in enlightened Europe, and each of these raised unique problems for the sexual identities under question.[90] Very approximately, theories of epigenesis (in which the foetus was formed from contributions from both mother and father) predominated until William Harvey's research was disseminated from 1651.[91] From this point until the early eighteenth century, preformationism (where the foetus was pre-formed in either the sperm or ovum) provided the best solution to the problems raised by Harvey's work.[92]

Then, from around 1739, epigenesis became more popular as problems with preformationism became more apparent. In particular, the discovery of the

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[89] See p. 51ff., above.

[90] On theories of reproduction in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Elizabeth B. Gasking, *Investigations into Generation, 1651-1828* (1967); Keller, 'Embryonic Individuals'; ead., *Generating Bodies*; Jacques Roger, *The Life Sciences in Eighteenth-Century Thought*, ed. Keith R. Benson and tr. Robert Ellrich (Stanford, 1997); McLaren, *Reproductive Rituals*; id., 'The pleasures of procreation: traditional and biomedical theories of conception', in W. F. Bynum and Roy Porter (eds.), *William Hunter and the Eighteenth-Century Medical World* (New York, 1985), 323-341; Shirley A. Roe, *Matter, Life, and Generation: Eighteenth-Century Embryology and the Haller-Wolff Debate* (Cambridge, 1981).

[91] In this year, his *Exercitationes de Generatione Animalium* was published.

[92] Most of these focused on the centrality of the ovum. The motto 'ex ovo omnia' was emblazoned on the frontispiece to his work.

regenerative powers ('reproduction', in its eighteenth-century meaning) of the freshwater polyp by Abraham Trembly undermined preformationist theory.[93] Later racial theorists, particularly Blumenbach, were to interpret this power in a broader domain, positing a formative drive (*bildungstrieb*) behind racial characteristics.[94] In the mid-eighteenth century, however, the debate between Albrecht von Haller and Christian Wolff on embryology demonstrated the extent to which preformationism was waning in popularity, as well as the investment in embryology of much wider philosophical issues.[95] Although epigenesis stipulated that contributions to the eventual foetus came from both parents, this by no means entailed an equal status of these contributions. Aristotle, for example, had stated that the female merely contributed the material cause of generation, the male the efficient.[96] This inequality was perpetuated in both major variants of preformationism which argued that the preformed foetus was present in either the ovum (ovism) or individual spermatozoon (animalculism). However, it would be erroneous to believe that ovist preformationism gave the mother any special privilege over the father, for his sperm was the agent which sparked the development of the embryo.[97] Thus,

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[93] Roger, *Life Sciences*, 316-17; Philip R. Sloan, 'The Idea of Racial Degeneracy in Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle*', in Harold E. Pagliaro (ed.), *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, iii: *Racism in the Eighteenth Century* (Cleveland, OH, 1973), 293-321 at 297-9; Roe, *Matter*, 1-20.

[94] See Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *An Essay on Generation*, tr. A. Crichton (1792); Robert Bernasconi, 'Kant and Blumenbach's Polyps: A Neglected Chapter in the History of the Concept of Race', in Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore (eds.), *The German Invention of Race* (Albany, NY, 2006), 73-90.

[95] The wider philosophical ramifications of their debate touched on Newtonianism and rationalism in scientific explanation, and hence on the status of empiricism as a whole, and the weight to be accorded other relevant thinking on materialism, vitalism and so on. See Roe, *Matter*. For an interesting – although now somewhat venerable (the chapter in question being written in the late 1960s) – account of these debates, see G. S. Rousseau, *Enlightenment Borders* (Manchester, 1991), 118-144.

[96] Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, tr. A. Platt in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (2 vols., Oxford, 1984), i. 1111-1219 at 1112 (Bk. 1 716^{a}3-716^{a}18).

[97] Keller, 'Embryonic Individuals', 338-40.

ovist preformationism entailed a greater role for the father than animalculist preformationism did for the mother. This arrangement was based, at least in part, on the unique properties and power of sperm. This was 'decocted' from the blood, a process of distillation where the life-giving properties of blood were creamed off and concentrated in sperm, as indeed in breast milk. Hence the very real fear that masturbation and resort to prostitutes could result in physical degeneration: the loss of such precious fluids could only be justified in attainment of reproductive goals. As has long been recognised, the key philosophical problem posed by epigenesis (when is the soul created from an inchoate mixture of male and female *semina*?) was not solved by preformationism, but merely deferred: the question of creation of life was simply pushed back to the beginning of time.[98] This deferral posed particularly thorny problems in the case of confused bodily identities (as we shall see), and led to the gradual deprecation of preformationist theories by the mid-eighteenth century.

Unproductive (Hetero)Sexualities: Prostitution and Masturbation

A prominent sign for historians of the emergence of modern sexual identities was the progressive obsolescence of the belief that a woman required orgasm to become pregnant.[99] According to conventional wisdom, conception was impossible without the excitement of both partners, making pregnancy

[98] For a relatively early expression of this in the historiography, see Gasking, *Investigations*, 42.
[99] This cultural ubiquity – and its nineteenth-century overthrow – permeates the historiography of sexuality in the eighteenth century, and is a central pillar to the important argument made in Laqueur, *Making*. For a contemporary statement of this belief, particularly with regards to rape, see Joannes Fridericus Faselius, *The Elements of Medical Jurisprudence*, tr. Samuel Farr (1788), 43.

from rape an impossibility.[100] One of the most pervasive consequences of this belief was the notion that prostitutes were sterile, a trope with a long history.[101] Similarly long-standing was the understanding of the prostitute's body as a saleable commodity which participated in a vicious anti-economy.[102] John Donne commented on both of these tropes in his short verse to a prostitute:

> Thy oft repeated is no Childless sin;
> When thou art lain with stil thy purs lies in.[103]

Bernard Mandeville, writing in 1724, asserted the desirability, if impracticability, of a complete ban on whoring, 'as it evidently hinders the Propagation of the Species,' primarily through infanticide.[104] Thus, even when a prostitute did produce a child, this would not serve to increase the population. Accusations of infanticide demonstrate that the trope of the sterile prostitute was not universal,[105] but it was nonetheless a widely held belief.[106] The author of *Some Considerations on Street Walkers* (1726) attributed such sterility to 'Riot and Diseases.'[107] This author and Mandeville both argued for the prostitute's ultimate unproductivity at the same time as locating the cause of this outside the womb.

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[100] Laqueur, *Making*, *passim* but see esp. 2-3, 146-8. For a contemporary statement of this idea, see *Aristotle's Master-Piece* (1690), 23-4.
[101] See esp. Laqueur, *Making*, 232-3; id., 'The Social Evil, the Solitary Vice and Pouring Tea', in Michael Feher, Romona Naddaff and Nadia Tazi (eds.), *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* (3 vols., New York, 1989), iii. 334-42. For two examples of the contemporary statement of this idea, see *The Evils of Adultery and Prostitution* (1792), 12-13; Charles Horne, *Serious Thoughts on the Miseries of Seduction and Prostitution* (1783), 3-4, 10, 12-13.
[102] Laqueur, *Making*, 230-3; id., 'Social Evil'; Dabhoiwala, 'Prostitution and Police', 53.
[103] John Donne, *Paradoxes, Problemes, Essayes, Characters…To which is added a Book of Epigrams*, tr. J. Maine (1652), 89.
[104] [Mandeville], *Modest Defence*, 4-5.
[105] Laura Gowing has recently argued to this end. See Gowing, *Common Bodies*, 91.
[106] And continued to be into the nineteenth century. See Nead, *Myths*, 100.
[107] *Some Considerations upon Street-Walkers* (1726), 6. This was at one time attributed to Daniel Defoe. See P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens, *Defoe De-Attributions: A Critique of J. R. Moore's* Checklist (1994), 143-4.

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Figure 2.1 – William Hogarth, *The Harlot's Progress* (1732), plate 5.

There also existed the argument that the prostitute was sterile not merely due to the absence of love (hence pleasure and thus orgasm) for their partner(s), but also because of the mixture of sperm in her womb, which was made slippery and treacherous for the would-be foetus.[108] This led to the view that the body (as opposed to merely the morals) of the prostitute had become defective, rendering the attempt to reclaim the individual whore problematic. However, there remained a strong sense in which sterility was induced by following a course of behaviour, and the abandonment of this behaviour promised to

[108] Henderson, *Disorderly Women*, 168-9; Sophie Carter, *Purchasing Power: Representing Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century English Popular Print Culture* (Aldershot, 2004), 53; Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, i. 166; Laqueur, *Making Sex*, 230; Gowing, *Common Bodies*, 115.

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Figure 2.2 – William Hogarth, *The Harlot's Progress* (1732), plate 6.

correct the body's defects.[109] Writing in 1836, the evangelical physician Michael Ryan stated that

> excessive venery is a common cause of sterility in women. The debility of the uterine system by promiscuous and too frequent coition is the cause of sterility in prostitutes. But when these reform, and marry, and confine themselves to one individual, the uterus regains its power, and conception occurs. Many proofs of this were given by prostitutes, who were transported to Van Dieman's Land, and became mothers.[110]

Similarly, an edition of Nicholas Culpeper's *Directory for Midwives* published in 1701 warned, 'use not the Act of Copulation too often: Some say it makes

[109] Rather modifying this behaviour was seen to be the biggest challenge by many in the eighteenth century. See, for example, Thomas Scott, *Thoughts on the Fatal Consequences of Female Prostitution* (1787), 10.

[110] Michael Ryan, *A Manual of Medical Jurisprudence and State Medicine* (1836), 225; Nead, *Myths*, 20. See also Joan Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1993), 92 on the medieval view that slippery wombs and consequent sterility were caused by too frequent intercourse.

the Womb slippery: I rather think it makes the Womb more willing to open than shut. Satiety gluts the Womb; and makes it unfit to do its Office, and that's the reason Whores have seldom Children.'[111] Probable sterility is here blamed on the frequency of sex: copulating less frequently increases the chance of conception.

Two texts will demonstrate the prominence of unproductivity in discourses of prostitution. The most famous fictional prostitute in this period, Cleland's Fanny Hill, did become pregnant very soon after she had entered into the world of prostitution, but she had been impregnated by her 'Adonis', Charles (whom she went on to marry at the end of the novel), and was remarkably still a virgin before they had sex.[112] For the remainder of her time as a woman of pleasure, she was a model of non-reproduction. It is noteworthy that in order for her to resume (more accurately, to start) her career as a prostitute following Charles's disappearance, Fanny's miscarriage was necessary, so incompatible are the states of prostitute and mother. Another eighteenth-century text to make this point was William Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* (1732), where the orphaned son of Moll Hackabout is presented as an oblivious figure, playing and unaware of the fate befalling his mother in the last two plates (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2, above). The lack of interest in the child in both plates, as well as the faux concern shown by Moll's fellow whores in the last suggests an uncertain future for him. Although she had reproduced during her career as a prostitute, Moll's son ultimately became an orphan which, prior

[111] Nicholas Culpeper, *A Directory for Midwives* (1701), 83.
[112] On Fanny's seemingly miraculous childlessness, see Lena Olsson, 'Idealised and Realistic Portrayals of Prostitution in John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*', in Patsy S. Fowler and Alan Jackson (eds.), *Launching Fanny Hill: Essays on the Novel and its Influences* (New York, 2003), 81-101 at 99.

to Thomas Coram's philanthropy, was thus to have *unproductively* reproduced.[113]

Such discourses of prostitution present a vision of the prostitute's body as corrupted by her behaviour, but not necessarily irremediably. The prostitute was imagined as sterile only as long as she remained a prostitute, and there thus appears to be two ways in which discourses of prostitution were linked to those of race. First, and most simplistically, the sexual lives of those described in racial theories were often discussed in terms of prostitution and its resultant corruption. Julien-Joseph Virey was perhaps the most virulent racist of his day, but his overall viewpoint was widely shared: 'In several countries of Africa, the time of puberty is very early, and corruption is carried to a monstrous excess. Among the inhabitants of Darfur incest is very common, and chastity is considered as the result of ugliness or inferiority, prostitution being received as a proof of worth.'[114] Second, the notion of the prostitute's body as physically corrupted but remediable is powerfully suggestive of monogenetic models of race. In these, racial others are described as physically different to Europeans, but can change, given time. Although the temporal frame is measured in generations (the prostitute can become fertile theoretically immediately upon abandoning prostitution), this temporary corporealisation of identity is revealing for the contemporaneous understanding of both prostitution and race. For one thing, this corporealisation demonstrates the need for people in the

[113] Coram's Foundling Hospital opened its doors in March 1741. Ludmilla Jordanova argues that nonprocreative sexuality is not synonymous with unproductive sexuality which, for her, is ultimately a sexuality that can lead to procreation, but of an unproductive member of society (in a fashion similar to Malthus). See Ludmilla Jordanova, 'The popularization of medicine: Tissot on Onanism', *Textual Practice*, 1 (1987), 68-79 at 76.
[114] Julien-Joseph Virey, *Natural History of the Negro Race*, tr. and ed. J. H. Guenebault (Charleston, SC, 1837), 89.

eighteenth century to ground certain beliefs in the fabric of God's nature, the ultimate epistemological authority. For another, the disgust with the prostitute's body which remained powerful throughout the period – notwithstanding attitudes to the prostitute herself becoming more sympathetic – demonstrates the potential for violent physical dislike and racial contempt even within a monogenist paradigm that contains a nominal commitment to the possibility of change. The slowness of this change in racial discourses also acted to qualify the completeness of the more rapid change in the prostitute: even once she has become a fertile and productive member of society, her past continued to haunt her, as the sexual double standard received a naturalistic justification. Even Fanny's 'tail-piece of morality' could not disguise the fact that, writing after an undisclosed length of time, her past remained with her. Connections between the discourses of prostitution and race may not have been apparent to participants in these discourses, but the importance of the body and its capacity to change was emphasised in both, each (possibly) inadvertently reinforcing the other.

One feature of prostitution that rendered it so unpalatable was the danger it posed to men. Even as the prostitute was divested of her garb as a 'she-devil' seductress, and assumed that of innocent victim of male sexual exploitation,[115] she was nonetheless a dangerous and infective agent. She not only distributed venereal infection, but drained men of their semen which, as we have seen in the discussion on reproduction, was made from the best parts of the blood. Mandeville was clear on the consequence of this: 'their bodies are so

[115] For a contemporary statement of this, see Josiah Tucker, *Letter V to Robert Dingley* (1758), 5 n.

much enervated, by the untimely or immoderate Increase of this Passion, together with the Relicks of Venereal Cures, that they beget a most wretched, feeble, and sickly Offspring: We can attribute it to nothing else but this, that so many of our antient Families of Nobles are of late extinct.'[116] James Graham, writing in 1783, agreed wholeheartedly.[117]

However, it was not merely prostitution that produced this particular type of man. Masturbation could do this job just as well, or so thought the author of *Onania* (?1716).[118] This writer rather mischievously suggested that wealthy young men were rejecting advantageous matches as a result of their masturbation-induced illness.[119] *Onania* was one of two central texts in the century-long masturbation panic (the other was the Swiss physician Tissot's *L'Onanisme*, originally published in 1760 and translated into English in 1766), and it placed the danger to marriage at the centre of the discourse on masturbation. However, the exact mechanism by which masturbation posed such a threat to marriage was illness induced by act of masturbating, and this pathologisation of masturbation paralleled that of prostitution.

One key influence for *Onania* was Jean Frédéric Ostervald's *The Nature of Uncleanness Consider'd* (1708). Ostervald's text dealt with various kinds of 'uncleanness', and his discussion of the relation of this to natural law is

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[116] [Mandeville], *Modest Defence*, 5.
[117] [James Graham], *An Eccentric Lecture on the Art of Propagating the Human Species* (1783), 7-8. See also Roy Porter, 'The Sexual Politics of James Graham', *BJECS*, 5 (1982), 199-206; Peter Otto, 'James Graham as Spiritual Libertine', in Peter Cryle and Lisa O'Connell (eds.), *Libertine Enlightenment: Sex, Liberty, and Licence in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2004), 204-220.
[118] Michael Stolberg has repudiated Thomas Laqueur's assertion that the author was the quack and physician John Marten. See Thomas W. Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* (New York, 2003), 32; Michael Stolberg, 'Self-pollution, Moral Reform, and the Venereal Trade: Notes on the Sources and Historical Context of Onania (1716)', *JHS*, 9 (2000), 37-61.
[119] *Onania: or, the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution*, 8th edn. (1723), 77. This suggestion was strongly criticised in 'Philo-Castitatis', *Onania Examined, and Detected* (1724), 25-9.

representative of contemporary views on non-marital or non-procreative sexuality:

> Uncleanness is contrary to the most inviolable Laws of Justice, and that Order which must be preserved in Society. … To doubt of this is to shew our selves unnatural and worse than Beasts. … The Permission of Uncleanness would subvert these natural, and necessary Laws. Fathers would frequently not know their own Offspring; and would have no means of being assured that any of them were really their own.[120]

Ostervald did not mean 'uncleanness' as simply masturbation. He is here referring to fornication (in the case where fathers do not know their own offspring) and adultery (where men are cuckolded by their cheating wives), and the violation of *natural* laws that these sins entail. This passage is significant in the debate on masturbation as it was plagiarised in three publications (ostensibly separate tracts, but actually volumes of the same work) on masturbation from the 1720s.[121] It is also important for the connection it proffers between race and sex, by suggesting that not following natural laws equates one with animals and renders one unnatural. From Ostervald's general discussion of uncleanness, and via the texts that plagiarise him, these issues are tied into the masturbation discourse from one of its earliest expressions in the eighteenth century, when the process of constructing the masturbator had barely begun.

From the outset, then, the deleterious effect of masturbation on population was strongly emphasised. *Onania* itself deemed this effect to be so

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[120] J. Ostervald, *The Nature of Uncleanness Consider'd* (1708), 7-8.

[121] These three tracts are *Of the Crime of Onan … or, the Hainous Vice of Self-Defilement…vol. 1* (1724); *Eronania on the Crimes of those two Unhappy Brothers Er and Onan* (1724); and *Eronania, on the Misusing of the Marriage-Bed by Er and Onan* (1724). I believe they are all parts of the same work for several reasons: the first two texts are acknowledged to be two volumes of the same work, and the first of these mentions a third volume (*Crime of Onan*, 9); they were all published by the same publisher, at the same time, and the third volume contains a price for all three together bound in a single volume.

grave that it placed masturbation alongside sodomy and bestiality in terms of moral turpitude.[122] Although fornication and adultery were also sins, the perpetrator could claim frailty of will and the natural drive to copulate, but masturbation is a sin 'that perverts and extinguishes Nature, and he who is guilty of it, is labouring at the Destruction of his Kind, and in a manner strikes at the Creation it self.'[123] Most of *Onania* was made up of a series of letters (whether genuine or fabricated it is impossible to tell)[124] and one of these dealt explicitly with these issues. Significantly written by a female correspondent, this letter argued that fornication and masturbation were as bad as one another as they both tended to frustrate the propagation of the species.[125] The author of *Onania* agreed that the cause for human sexual desire is philoprogenitive, but, tellingly, he did not agree with her assessment of the ends of marriage and the sinfulness of fornication. He argued that to posit an end to marriage and to assign a reason to avoid fornication is to second-guess God.[126] This response was in keeping with the tone of *Onania* as a whole, which was ultimately one which subsumed its 'scientific' elements beneath a providential cosmology.[127]

Notwithstanding the many areas of profound and bitter disagreement between *Onania* and one of the critical pamphlets responding to it, *Onania Examined, and Detected* (1724), there were several things on which the two authors agreed. Foremost amongst these was, quite obviously, the sinfulness of and bodily damage caused by masturbation. They were also of one mind about

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[122] *Onania*, 9.
[123] *Onania*, 10.
[124] Tissot's *L'Onanisme* contains similar letters, and the existence of genuine examples (although not those to appear in his book) in the Tissot archive suggests that they might not all be fabricated and/or doctored. See Stolberg, 'Crime of Onan', 712.
[125] *Onania*, 85-6.
[126] *Onania*, 87-100.
[127] See Singy, 'Friction of the Genitals'.

the damaging effects of masturbation to any subsequent offspring.[128] One reason proffered by the author of *Onania Examined*, 'Philo-Castitatis', for the grievousness of Onan's sin was that it not only frustrated reproduction (and hence the future survival of his brother's tribe) and God's command, but that it was a sin against the descent of Jesus.[129] As masturbation is '*a kind of murther*', this was thus an attempt at deicide.[130] 'Philo-Castitatis' here couched his attack on masturbation by promoting eugenics. Far better, he thought, to be moderate in one's sexuality, so as to produce a stronger breed of children. His comments are illustrative of the role of class within this sexual/racial debate, as he described the poor as just such a hardy and sexually moderate group: 'God is often pleased to reward their Chastity, Labour, and Frugality, with such a numerous Off-spring, that often the Place proves too narrow for them; while luxurious and venereous Rich People have the Mortification to out live their poor sickly ghastly Shadows of Children, and their Means and Estates.'[131] Despite the current of scholarly opinion that is focussed on the relative secularity of contributions to the masturbation discourse, and which thus views Tissot's *L'Onanisme* as more 'scientific', there is little in his text that approaches this level of proto-eugenic thought.[132] It is therefore remarkable that such heavily 'providential' contributions to the discourse on masturbation can contain elements of the 'scientific' that go beyond the claims of those texts identified as such. The discourse on masturbation, therefore, shared significant elements with that on prostitution: both were deeply concerned with the impact

[128] *Onania*, 19; *Onania Examined*, 10, 39.
[129] *Onania Examined*, 8.
[130] *Onania Examined*, 3.
[131] *Onania Examined*, 44.
[132] S. A. D. Tissot, *Onanism: or, a Treatise on the Disorders Produced by Masturbation*, tr. A. Hume (1766).

on the growth of the population; in both, an immoral behaviour produced a bodily response (in the case of the masturbator, their enfeeblement), and both spoke directly to racial concerns (the masturbator, frustrating the increase of the species, was explicitly bestialised and rendered 'unnatural', much as the sexual practices of racial others were described).

Producing the Sodomite

Homosexuality, termed 'sodomy' or 'buggery' in the period, was another form of sexual behaviour which did not contribute to population growth. At least not in terms of sexual reproduction, for it was responsible for the creation of another population in the eighteenth-century: the sodomite. This development will be dealt with shortly, but it is important to establish how sodomy was condemned for the fault it shared with masturbation and prostitution: frustration of philoprogenitivism. As Richard Capel wrote in 1655, sodomy was especially strange as it was '*so* against nature, that posterity, which is nature's end, is utterly lost by it.'[133] The strength of the association of reproduction and nature, in this text and in society at large, reinforced the unnaturalness of non-productive sexuality, of which sodomy was the quintessential example. Over seventy years later, this attitude was no different: before the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, Richard Smalbroke, the Bishop of St David's preached, 'that no Sin can be a greater Contradiction to the declared Intention of the Author of Nature, in continuing the Race of Mankind by the Female Sex created for that End, to the Divine Institution of

[133] Richard Capel, *Tentations: Their Nature, Danger, Cure*, 5th edn. (1655), 214.

Marriage in Paradice [*sic*] it self, and to the Command of God to *encrease and multiply* Mankind.'[134]

The clergy were not alone in emphasising sodomy's deleterious effect on population. Mentioning the danger sodomy posed to childbirth through the production of enfeebled young, the pamphlet *Plain Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy, in England* (*c.*1730) went on to delimit the boundary between human and animal on the basis of reproduction:

> An old *Proverb* says, *There is no Harm done where a good Child's got*. Faults of this Nature [i.e. fornication] must be confess'd to proceed from a Richness in *Constitution*, and therefore are more excusable than *base* and *unmanly Practices*. It is the Action of a *Man* to *beget* a *Child*, but it is the Act of a *Beast*, nay worse, to ——— I scorn to stain my Paper with the Mention.[135]

Although perhaps rarely forgiven in its own right, fornication, when compared to sodomy, was such a venial sin that pardon was readily given. Indeed, the need to prevent sodomy was a significant component of arguments in favour of licensed or regulated prostitution, betraying a real unease that sodomy was the inevitable outcome when avenues of heterosexual intercourse were closed off.[136] The view of sodomy as fundamentally bestial permeated literature on sex crimes throughout the eighteenth century.[137] Sodomy was also viewed as fundamentally enervating, in the same manner as masturbation. A good example of this is the frontispiece to *The Just Vengeance of Heaven Exemplify'd* (1730), the supposed journal of a marooned sodomite. This image

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[134] Richard [Smalbroke], Lord Bishop of St David's, *Reformation necessary to prevent Our Ruine: A Sermon Preached to the Societies for Reformation of Manners* (1728), 22.
[135] *Plain Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy, in England* (1730?), 22-3. This was plagiarised in *Satan's Harvest Home* (1749), 58-9. See Rictor Norton, 'Introduction' in id. (ed.), *Eighteenth-Century British Erotica II*, v: *Sodomites, Mollies, Sapphists and Tommies* (2004), pp. vii-xxiii at pp. xvi-xvii.
[136] See esp. [Mandeville], *Modest Defence*, 8.
[137] See page 145 above. On the bestiality of sodomy, see, for example, John Dunton, *Athenianism*, i (1710), §ii. 93-9 ('The He-Strumpets').

displayed a skeleton lying on an island with a manuscript beside it and a ship in the background. The decomposition of the enervated sodomite in the midst of possible salvation acted as a powerful reminder of the divine punishment awaiting them.

As late as the 1770s, the dangerous effect on population acted as a primary mode of attack on sodomitical activity. In *Sodom and Onan* (1776), William Jackson's attack on the dramatist Samuel Foote set out

> To satirize those Fiends, who unconfin'd
> Will stop the Propagation of Mankind.[138]

However, with the end of the philoprogenitivist consensus around 1800, attitudes to sodomy changed too, albeit slightly. They did not get any more lenient – this was only to change with the removal of the death penalty for buggery in 1861[139] – but in some quarters, a reform in punishment was advocated which appeared uniquely to fit the crime. The insurance broker and artist John Beaumont, in his topical *Essay on Criminal Jurisprudence* (1821), wrote that when a part of the body 'is perverted to acts of deep injury against individuals, or to acts of great outrage on morals, it seems only reasonable that the owner should be deprived of what he uses so mischievously.'[140] By suggesting the castration of sodomites in this manner, Beaumont was departing significantly from eighteenth-century attitudes. Castration had been suggested throughout the eighteenth century, but for groups such as Roman Catholics or Jews, whose identity did not necessarily depend on a behaviour that itself

[138] [William Jackson], *Sodom and Onan. A Satire* (1776), 1.
[139] The first 'Offences against the Person' Bill, presented in 1857, retained the death penalty for sodomy, but this was removed when the bill was again presented to Parliament in 1859. Cf. Offences against the Person HC Bill (1857) [151], cl. 59 and Offences against the Person HC Bill (1859) [111], cl. 61.
[140] J. T. Barber Beaumont, *An Essay on Criminal Jurisprudence* (1821), 32.

incurred the death penalty.[141] Replacing the execution of sodomites with castration was part of the dismantling of the (questionably) 'bloody code'. However, this suggested punishment had powerful resonance given the association of sodomy with physical debilitation which could be passed on to offspring. Sodomites were to be deprived of that which they refused to use for the public good.

At the same time as being attacked for confuting reproduction, the sodomite/molly (and sapphist/tommy, in the case of women) was being forged as a separate category of identity, both by homosexuals themselves and by the wider community.[142] This identity was founded on uncertain foundations and was shot through with ambiguity,[143] but it was created to address a cultural need to render the sodomite identifiable. Possibly one of the clearest examples of the transition from sodomitical behaviour to sodomite appears in erotica of the 1740s.[144] Many have argued that this decade – especially its final year – was crucial to the emergence of 'the sodomite'.[145] 1749 saw the publication of both *Satan's Harvest Home* – an appendix to which was the plagiarised *Plain*

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[141] See, for example, *An Historical and Law-Treatise Against Jews and Judaism* (1732), 38. This tract (distinct from the 1702 pamphlet of the same name), was both plagiarised throughout the century and attributed to Swift. See *Britannia's Fortune-Teller* (1733), *The Priest Gelded: or Popery at the Last Gasp* (1747), and *A Supplement to the Works of the Most Celebrated Minor Poets* (1750).

[142] Homosexual agency is discernible in the creation of a distinct 'molly' identity. See Rictor Norton, *Mother Clap's Molly House: The Gay Subculture in England, 1700-1830*, 2nd edn. (Stroud, 2006), *passim*.

[143] Not the least ambiguity came from the absence of a full definition of 'sodomy' or 'buggery' in statute law, even though the first law against these offences was passed in 1533 (25 Hen. VIII, c. 6). Workable definitions of these terms were ultimately offered in case law. See Leslie J. Moran, *The Homosexual(ity) of Law* (1996), part 1.

[144] Randolph Trumbach, Alan Bray, and George Rousseau opine that this transition was complete by the 1720s, but others have argued that this was by no means certain. See Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, vol. i; id., 'Sodomitical Subcultures'; Rousseau, 'Pursuit of Homosexuality'; id., *Perilous Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1991), 138-71; Thomas Laqueur, review of Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution* (vol. 1), in *AHR*, 106 (2001), 1456. I am grateful to Faramerz Dabhoiwala for this reference.

[145] A tendency criticised by Rictor Norton in his 'Introduction', pp. xvi-xvii. See also Trumbach, 'Sodomitical Subcultures', 111, 118-19; Rousseau, 'Pursuit of Homosexuality', 136-7.

Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy – as well as the second and final volume of Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, with its 'sodomitical episode' (purged in all editions until the twentieth century).[146] In this short section of the novel, Fanny witnesses two men having sex in a room at an inn. Upon recounting what she witnessed to her bawd, Mrs. Cole, she was told two things intrinsic to the discourse on sodomy: that it should not be spoken of, and that this appetite formed part of the corporeal fabric of those who indulged in it. The first of these was nothing new,[147] but the latter was certainly an eighteenth-century innovation: Mrs Cole stated, '"*that* whatever effect this infamous passion had in other ages, and other countries, it seem'd a peculiar blessing on our air and climate, that there was a plague-spot visibly imprinted on all that are tainted with it, in this nation at least."'[148] The mechanism to which Mrs. Cole was alluding by making this remark is significant. Although homosexual behaviour was now made visible and permanent on the body of the individual sodomite, the process by which behaviour made its mark was one of symbiosis with a given climate.[149] As she says, the British climate is one which is so unsuited to sodomy, that it produces a visible change in the sodomite.

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[146] On the expurgation of *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (printed from 1750 as the *Memoirs of Fanny Hill*), see David Foxon, *Libertine Literature in England, 1660-1745* (New York, 1965), esp. 52-63; Peter Sabor, 'The Censor Censured: Expurgating *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*', in Maccubbin (ed.), *'Tis Nature's Fault*, 192-201.

[147] For instance, the specific form of any indictment for sodomy usually contained the phrase stating that sodomy was 'amongst Christians not to be named.' See Edward Coke, *The Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England*, 4th edn. (1669), 58-9; Peter Bartlett, 'Silence and Sodomy: The Creation of Homosexual Identity in Law', *Modern Law Review*, 61 (1998), 102-114 at 103.

[148] Cleland, *Memoirs*, 159.

[149] Hal Gladfelder discusses the marking of sodomites' bodies in this passage from Cleland in his 'Plague Spots', in David M. Turner and Kevin Stagg (eds.), *Social Histories of Disability and Deformity* (Abingdon, Oxon, 2006), 56-78. See also Andrew Wells, 'Confusion Embodied: Epistemologies of Sex and Race in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748-9) and the *Histoire naturelle* (1749-1804)' in Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher (eds.), *Sexual Histories: Bodies and Desires Uncovered* (forthcoming, 2010).

The notion of the foreignness of sodomy was ubiquitous from the middle of the seventeenth century. Smalbroke's 1727 sermon was inspired, in part, by the all-too-common recognition that 'that most detestable and unnatural Sin of *Sodomy*, which but rarely appears in our Histories, and that among Monsters and Prodigies, has been of late transplanted from the hotter Climates to our more temperate Country.'[150] Fourteen years later, the author of *A New Description of Merryland* (1741), an erotic text which described the female body as a foreign country,[151] also wrote that sodomy is foreign but had of late infiltrated Britain:

> There are some People who very preposterously (as I think) give the Preference to the P[O]D[E]X [anus]; the *Italian* Geographers are pretty much inclined that Way; some of the *Dutch* have likewise come into it, and of late Years a few in *Great-Britain* have appeared not altogether averse to it.[152]

Much as with prostitutes, the sodomite identity was marked on the body. It differed, however, in being explicitly linked to the climate, and thereby rendered more permanent than a bodily consequence of unacceptable behaviour, such as prostitution-induced sterility. Indeed, sodomite identity was also imported from abroad, meaning that sodomy was no longer – if it ever was – confined to foreign lands, but had infiltrated Britain. The behaviour that was newly marked on the body was an effeminacy which overwhelmingly represented homosexuality.[153] *Plain Reasons for the Growth of Sodomy* made clear the relationship between behaviour, the body, and reproduction:

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[150] [Smalbroke], *Reformation*, 21.
[151] In Darby Lewes's terms, a 'somatopia'. See Lewes, *Nudes from Nowhere: Utopian Sexual Landscapes* (Oxford, 2000), 1-13.
[152] [Thomas Stretser], *A New Description of Merryland*, 4th edn. (Bath, 1741), 7.
[153] See, amongst others, Norton, *Mother Clap's Molly House*, 149.

> When our [effete] young Gentleman arrives to Marriage; I wish I could say fit for it, What can be expected from such an enervated effeminate Animal? What Satisfaction can a Woman have in the Embraces of this Figure of a Man? Should she at last bring him a Child, What can we hope from so crazy a *Constitution*? but a feeble unhealthy Infant, scarce worth the rearing.[154]

Behaviour has led to an enervated body (as with masturbation and the use of prostitutes), which is in no sense equal to the task of fathering a vigorous offspring. With the marking of behaviour on the body, and the consequent creation of identities, these discourses raised the spectre of the inheritability of this behaviour, rendering it doubly dangerous. Such inheritance of a father's feebleness or sodomitical tastes was a threatening foretaste of Lamarckian biology, which emphasised the inheritance of acquired characteristics.[155] This manipulability of the identity of the sodomite demonstrates its ambiguities and was quite possibly responsible for a sharpening of anxieties concerning sodomy at the turn of the nineteenth century. This period witnessed a growth in the number of people executed for sodomy, and also saw, as mentioned above, the suggestion of new and seemingly appropriate punishments for sodomites.[156]

Inheriting Confusion: Hermaphroditism and the Maternal Imagination

Eighteenth-century controversies over the existence of hermaphrodites demonstrate the importance of grounding identities in the body, but also of retaining a degree of flexibility in this process. Hermaphrodites were a subject

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[154] *Plain Reasons*, 9.
[155] See John C. Greene, *The Death of Adam: Evolution and its Impact on Western Thought* (Ames, IA, 1959), 155-69.
[156] See Ross Forman, 'Race and Empire' in H. G. Cocks and Matt Houlbrook (eds.), *Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality* (Basingstoke, 2006), 109-132 at 110. Also see H. G. Cocks, 'Safeguarding Civility: Sodomy, Class and Moral Reform in Early Ninteenth-Century England', *P&P*, 190 (2006), 121-46.

of perennial fascination for eighteenth-century commentators.[157] Building on Michael Stolberg's recent critique of Thomas Laqueur's thesis, it is clear that hermaphrodites demonstrate the extent to which any transition from a 'one sex' to a 'two sex' model must be heavily qualified.[158] In the first instance, the universal rejection of hermaphrodites, even from the early eighteenth century, is a clear indication that people were very uncomfortable with both the idea of ambiguous sexual identity and of spontaneous sex change. Giles Jacob wrote in 1718 that 'it cannot be said, that one Sex is chang'd into another, for we never heard of Men that became Women, and that their privy Parts were abolish'd, or turn'd within, in order to form the Genital Parts of a Woman.'[159] This remained the case in discussions of hermaphrodites at mid-century. James Parsons, for example, railed against the confident telling of such stories by authors, which confidence spread 'like a Contagion, [and] has infected them into a Belief of the Matter.'[160] The use of the reproductive organs as the fundamental criterion for deciding questions of hermaphroditism forms a clear link with the intense interest of racial theorists with these organs, met with in chapter one.

At the same time as the flexibility of the 'one sex' model was in doubt – in the early eighteenth century – elements of the 'two sex' model were clearly present. The classification of hermaphrodites from the seventeenth century shows how strict the division between the male and female sexes was at the turn

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[157] See Gowing, *Common Bodies*, 28; William Lawrence, 'Account of a Child born without a Brain', *Medico-Chirurgical Transactions*, 5 (1814), 165-224 at 183; M. Vacherie, *An Account of the Famous Hermaphrodite* (1750); Friedli, 'Crossing Gender Boundaries', 262-371; ead., '"Passing Women"', 246-50; Jean-Pierre Guicciardi, 'Hermaphrodite et la prolétaire', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 12 (1980), 49-77.

[158] Stolberg, 'A Woman Down to Her Bones', 12.

[159] [Giles Jacob], *Tractatus de Hermaphroditis: or, a Treatise of Hermaphrodites* (1718), reprinted in Kevin L. Cope (ed.), *Edmund Curll and Grub-Street Highlights* (vol. ii of Alexander Pettit and Patrick Spedding (eds.), *Eighteenth Century British Erotica*) (2002), 22.

[160] James Parsons, *A Mechanical and Critical Enquiry into the Nature of Hermaphrodites* (1741), 24.

of the eighteenth century. Nicolas Venette's 1687 quinquepartite classification of hermaphrodites was much discussed by authors on the subject in the next century.[161] As is clear from Figure 2.3, Venette viewed the first three as fundamentally male, the fourth as female, and the fifth, or true hermaphrodite, as neither. As he wrote, 'these sorts of person are more a species of eunuch than of hermaphrodite, their penis is good for nothing and their periods never flow.'[162] In other words, and as figures ranging from Parsons to Blumenbach and Lawrence would argue, hermaphrodites either do not exist or are incapable of reproducing their kind, nullifying the threat they posed.[163]

This threat was not merely to the prevailing gender order, but also to theories of embryology. Discussions of hermaphroditism conducted before 1750 took place in an intellectual atmosphere where preformationism was the dominant theory of embryology. Parsons argued that epigenesis led to hermaphroditism in terms which will be familiar from the previous chapter:

> that there are certain Limits set to the Things of Generation appears no where better than when Animals of different Species meet and copulate; the Animal that is the Product of such a Congress is no wise capable of producing an Off-spring like itself, to this there is an absolute *ne plus ultra*, and why? Because, indeed, if such were capable of Generation, we should, by degrees, have a new set of Heterogeneous Animals upon Earth.[164]

The task of reconciling the existence of hermaphrodites – always constructed as abnormal 'jokes of nature' (*lusus naturae*) – with preformationism was not easy. Many did not even bother. George Arnaud sidestepped this controversy by

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[161] See Nicolas Venette, *La Generation de l'Homme, ou Tableau de l'Amour Conjugal* (2 vols., 1751), ii. 397-427.
[162] 'Ces sortes de personnes sont plutôt un espéce d'Eunuque que d'Hermaphrodite, leur verge ne leur servant de rien & les régles ne leur venant jamais.' Venette, *Generation de l'Homme*, ii. 402. This was semi-plagiarised in [Jacob], *Tractatus*, 19.
[163] Parsons, *Mechanical and Critical Inquiry*, 144-54; *De Generis*$_1$, 141; Lawrence, 'Account', 183; Guicciardi, 'Hermaphrodite et le prolétaire', 58.
[164] Parsons, *Mechanical and Critical Inquiry*, 7.

claiming that he was only interested in putting the view of both sides across, it being 'better to instruct by amusing, than to tire out by instructing.'[165] Indeed, even if they did prod contemporary concepts of sexual difference, many were not above making jokes about hermaphrodites, who supposedly originated in 'Middlesex', according to one punster from 1719.[166]

The difficulty of situating the hermaphrodite within a body led to the progressive *dis*embodiment of the hermaphrodite over the course of the century, as hermaphroditism became more associated with behaviour. Transvestites and transsexuals were indiscriminately referred to as hermaphrodites by the later eighteenth century, and although this reference does play on prior meanings of the hermaphrodite as physical monster and *lusus naturae*, the demolition of belief in *actual* hermaphrodites shows that this was not the primary meaning of the word by 1800.[167] The debate Arnaud felt the need to sidestep was no longer relevant by the time the term 'hermaphrodite' was being used to describe those men whose enervation rendered them unfit fathers. In 1795, the *Bon Ton Magazine* admonished its

> readers of the fair-sex, in the choice of their husbands to pay greater attention to a sound, vigorous, robust frame, and healthy constitution, than to rosy cheeks, fair complexions, a delicate skin, and other effeminate graces, which render but too many of our sex a kind of beings of doubtful gender, that seem to correspond with the character and description of a certain equivocal race of being, known by the name of *Hermaphrodites*.[168]

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[165] George Arnaud [de Ronsil], *A Dissertation on Hermaphrodites* (1750), p. v.
[166] [Thomas Sheridan], *Ars Pun-ica sive Flos Linguarum: The Art of Punning*, 2nd edn. (1719 [?1720]), 4.
[167] The extent to which hermaphroditism was rejected is reflected in the denial of it in animals on the basis that it was non-existent in humans. See Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 246.
[168] *The Bon Ton Magazine*, *55* (Sep. 1795), 244.

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Figure 2.3 – Venette's classification of hermaphrodites. From Nicolas Venette, *Le Generation de l'Homme* (London, 1751), vol. ii., betw. pp. 402 and 403.

Coming thus to represent enervated men – as well as celebrated transsexuals and cross-dressers (such as the Chevalier d'Eon)[169] – the development of the 'hermaphrodite' through the eighteenth century was a mirror of that of the sodomite or masturbator. As the identities of the masturbator and sodomite

[169] See Peter Wagner, *Eros Revived: Erotica of the Enlightenment in England and America* (1988), 32. On D'Eon in particular, see Lisa Forman Cody, 'Sex, Civility, and the Self: Du Coudray, d'Eon, and Eighteenth-Century Conceptions of Gendered, National, and Psychological Identity', *French Historical Studies*, 24 (2001), 379-407 at 398; Gary Kates, *Monsieur d'Eon is a Woman* (2001); id., 'D'Eon Returns to France: Gender and Power in 1777', in Julia Epstein and Kristina Straub (eds.), *Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity* (1991), 167-94.

moved from simple moral condemnations of specified behaviours to an intrinsic corporeal identity, so that of the hermaphrodite moved from a corporeal identity to a moral condemnation of effeminate behaviour. All of these identities relied on their previous state for their ultimate force: the sodomite and masturbator were inherently bad identities because of their evolution from prior moral condemnation, and the hermaphrodite relied on its previous status as a supposed corporeal reality for the moral condemnation it represented to have any force. Notwithstanding these differences, they all ultimately testified to the importance of a corporeal identity to naturalise moral condemnation. The hermaphrodite ultimately shows that there was a notable degree of flexibility in this process.

The role of the maternal imagination also points to the signifying capacity of the body, yet its continual flexibility. The mother and her imagination could be crucial to the shape of the resultant offspring.[170] Claude Quillet's *Callipædia, or the Art of Getting Pretty Children* (1655), was reprinted throughout the eighteenth century and made this exact point.[171] Whilst paying attention to other factors behind producing beautiful children, Quillet issued a call to mothers:

> Let all her Thoughts on lovely Objects dwell,
> Her Fancy in the nicest Charms excel:
> No other Phantoms should admittance find,
> But what may please the Eye and cheer the Mind;
> For whilst great Nature's Work unfinish'd lies,
> The Brain, to whose close Cells each Object flies,
> Conveys, by subtle Atoms, to the Womb,
> All Images that from the Senses come,

[170] See Londa Schiebinger, 'The Anatomy of Difference: Race and Sex in Eighteenth-Century Science', *ECS*, 23 (1990), 387-405; ead., *Nature's Body: Sexual Politics and the Making of Modern Science* (1993), 134-42.
[171] Originally published in Latin in 1655, the poem was translated into French in 1665. English editions were published in 1710, 1718, 1720, 1729, 1733, 1750, 1768, 1771, and 1776.

> And these imprint upon the yielding Mass,
> Whatever Features, Looks and Forms, they please:
> The passive *Fœtus* no Resistance makes,
> And oft a wrong deform'd Impression takes. (iii. 59-70)[172]

There was nothing novel about this statement, but the importance of the maternal imagination for determining (amongst other things) racial characteristics is clear from the previous chapter. Despite the retention of belief in maternal imagination in some of the more conservative and pronatalist advice literature (such as *Aristotle's Masterpiece*), this belief came under sustained attack from the 1720s.[173] Two London doctors, Daniel Turner and James Blondel, engaged in the most famous eighteenth-century controversy on the role of the mother's imagination between 1727 and 1730.[174] As with the Haller-Wolff debate, the Blondel-Turner dispute was about more than simply the role of the mother's imagination or a debate over a recent scandal.[175] Rather, the role of empirical data, rationalism, Newtonianism, and ancient authority was at stake.[176] Blondel, a Huguenot who had studied with Boerhaave in Leiden, argued strongly against the notion that the mother's imagination could make any impression on the foetus. His primary argument against this idea, after discounting the authority of the stories which described it, was that there was no connection between the mother's brain and the womb sufficient to produce effects which were, in any event, inconsistent. Irrespective of whether a mother felt love, hatred, fear, or excitement for strawberries, for example, an

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[172] Claudius Quilletus, *Callipædia: or, the Art of Getting Pretty Children* (1710), 33.
[173] For an example of this belief in advice literature printed late in the eighteenth century, see *Aristotle's Master-Piece Compleated* (Glasgow, 1781), 32.
[174] See Paul-Gabriel Boucé, 'Imagination, Pregnant Women, and Monsters in Eighteenth-Century England and France', in Roy Porter and G. S. Rousseau (eds.), *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1987), 86-100.
[175] This scandal being the 1726 Mary Toft case. See the following chapter.
[176] Philip K. Wilson, '"Out of Sight, Out of Mind?": The Daniel Turner-James Blondel Dispute Over the Power of the Maternal Imagination', *Annals of Science*, 49 (1992), 63-85.

identical birthmark was supposedly produced.[177] Indeed, Blondel wrote, 'is it not ridiculous and absurd to believe, that the very same Effect can proceed from two contrary Causes, from Love and Desire, and also from Fear and Abhorrence, from tumultuous Passions, and from calm Ones?'[178] Although his original intention was to argue solely against such claims made in the recent Toft case (see chapter three), his attack provoked a response from Turner, a fellow member of the Royal College of Physicians.[179] Turner felt that Blondel's 1727 text, anonymous and silent on the subject of its motive and inspiration, was a direct attack on his own work on the subject, a chapter in his 1714 work on diseases of the skin, *De Morbis Cutaneis*.[180]

In this text, Turner had upheld the importance of the mother's imagination. Deformed births, he wrote, were 'blemish'd by Marks from the strong Imagination or disappointed Longings of the Mother; which have had not only Power sufficient to pervert and disturb … but to stamp its Characters, to dismember and dislocate, and to make large and bloody Wounds upon the Body of the *Foetus*, conceiv'd long since and form'd completely.'[181] Blondel rejected this totally, saying at one point that it is 'no more possible for the Mother's Imagination to act upon the Child in *Utero*, than for a Nurse to make by her Fancy upon the suckling Babe any Mark, or Impression.'[182] In saying this

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[177] Craving for food or fear of an object or person were the two primary grounds for maternal imaginings. See G. S. Rousseau, 'Pineapples, Pregnancy, Pica, and *Peregrine Pickle*', in id. and Paul-Gabriel Boucé (eds.), *Tobias Smollett: Bicentennial Essays* (New York, 1971), 79-109; Marcia Cooper, *Pica* (Springfield, IL, 1957).
[178] [James Blondel], *The Strength of Imagination in Pregnant Woman Examin'd* (1727), 14.
[179] James Augustus Blondel, *The Power of the Mother's Imagination over the Foetus Examin'd* (1729), pp. i-v.
[180] Daniel Turner, *De Morbis Cutaneis. A Treatise of Diseases Incident to the Skin* (1714).
[181] Turner, *Morbis Cutaneis*, 112.
[182] [Blondel], *Strength of Imagination*, 77. He later denied saying this in his *Power of the Mother's Imagination*, p. iii. On the power of nurses to influence children through their milk, see Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford, *Women in Early Modern England, 1550-1720*

he positioned himself against this other widely popular belief, one that was to persist in the Caribbean, for example, until emancipation.[183] It should not be surprising that Turner and Blondel sat on opposite sides of the fence with respect to their favoured theories of embryology, but although we might have more sympathy with Blondel's views on the maternal imagination, he was a preformationist.[184] Turner's epigenesism – which was of the dated, pre-Harveian form – enabled him to ascribe a powerful role for the mother's imagination, to which Blondel felt unable to assent. Blondel rather attributed monstrous births to one of four causes: the variety of particles from which bodies are made; illnesses of the foetus *in utero*; interrupted or intermittent growth of the foetus, producing disproportion; or force and violence on the body of the foetus.[185] As Philip Wilson and these examples have shown, the differences of opinion between Blondel and Turner are in no way clear cut.[186]

This debate was significant for several reasons, the most pressing being both its promotion of the question to a subject of importance for contemporary medicine and its inconclusiveness.[187] The last word in the debate was Turner's, although translations of both Blondel's and Turner's pamphlets were made throughout the century.[188] In the 1740s, John Henry Mauclerc wrote in support

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(Oxford, 1998), 29; *A Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Lady, Relating chiefly to the Nursing and Bringing up of Children* (1698), 39.

[183] See Julia V. Douthwaite, *The Wild Girl, Natural Man, and the Monster: Dangerous Experiments in the Age of Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2002), 165, 283 n. 22; Stone, *Family, Sex, and Marriage*, 270; Barbara Bush, ' "Sable Venus", "She Devil", or "Drudge"? British Slavery and the "Fabulous Fiction" of Black Women's Identities, *c.*1650-1838', *Women's History Review*, 9 (2000), 761-89 at 764.

[184] Wilson, '"Out of Sight"', 77-8.

[185] [Blondel], *Strength of Imagination*, 94-106.

[186] Wilson, '"Out of Sight"', 75.

[187] Wilson, '"Out of Sight"'; id., 'Eighteenth-Century "Monsters" and Nineteenth-Century "Freaks": Reading the Maternally Marked Child', *Literature and Medicine*, 21 (2002), 1-25; id., *Surgery, Skin, and Syphilis: Daniel Turner's London (1667-1741)* (Atlanta, GA, 1999).

[188] The last of these for Turner and Blondel (respectively) were into German (1766) and Italian (1760). Wilson, '"Out of Sight'", 83. See also id., 'Turner, Daniel (1667–1741)', *Oxford*

of Turner, albeit lacking the sophistication of his predecessor.[189] Blondel's supporters wrote throughout the century. In 1745, Isaac Bellet wrote his *Lettres sur le pouvoir de l'imagination des Femmes encientes* (translated into English in 1765), in which he supplemented Blondel's arguments by emphasising the impossibility of sensory impressions being communicated to the foetus.[190] In 1772 Giovanni Fortunato Bianchini condemned the vulgarity of the error that the maternal imagination had any power, and the apathy that allowed this to be perpetuated.[191] Two features in particular emerge from the ongoing eighteenth-century debate on the maternal imagination: the role of women, and that of the senses.

Women – especially pregnant women – were viewed by both sides of the debate to be particularly frail and untrustworthy as custodians of posterity. Bianchini hoped that he would 'be the means of alleviating those anxious fears raised by prejudice, and but too generally attendant on the pregnant state.'[192] Turner in 1714 aimed to demonstrate 'how manifest and great an Empire, the *Phantasy* of the pregnant Woman has over the Blood and Humours together with the Spirits of her Body, and how by their Ministry she is able to give not only monstrous Shapes and Figures to that of the more tender *Foetus*, but to communicate Diseases also.'[193] In the midst of enumerating all the ways in which he was prepared to concede a foetus could be damaged, Blondel in 1727

Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27844>, accessed 22 Oct 2007.

[189] Mauclerc's *Power of Imagination in Pregnant Women Discussed* (1740), reprinted as *Dr. Blondel Confuted: or, the Ladies Vindicated* (1747), makes several unfathomable statements (for example, he grants that *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* is a 'vulgar sophism', but he argues that it 'is sound Logic in the Business before us', 3).

[190] [Isaac Bellet], *Letters, on the Force of Imagination in Pregnant Women* (1765).

[191] [Giovanni Fortunato Bianchini], *An Essay on the Force of Imagination in Pregnant Women* (1772).

[192] [Bianchini], *Essay*, p. ii.

[193] Turner, *Morbis Cutaneis*, 120.

stated that through 'the Disappointment of what the Mother longs for, making her uneasy and pine away, the Child may be depriv'd of sufficient Nourishment, grow feeble and weak, and at last, lose its Life.'[194] The role of the mother was thus scarcely more secure even when she was exonerated from direct blame in the disfigurement of her newborn infant. The importance of motherhood resonated throughout the corpus of racial theories, and was particularly important to debates on slavery.[195]

The role of the senses is key to the entire debate, for it is necessary for a sensory impression to be transmitted through the mother's body in order to make an impression on the foetus. Bellet argued that this was impossible, but it is significant that, despite being what seems to be the more atavistic of the two sides of the debate, those in favour of the power of the maternal imagination were carving a privileged epistemological niche for the senses. Leaving some room for the imagination by stating that we can only know the external appearance of things,[196] Turner defined imagination itself to be a power of the soul, residing in the brain, which takes sensory impressions and then excites an appetite.[197] It is thus impossible to separate the senses from the imagination in Turner's formulation. Blondel's conception of the imagination was built upon a sensory foundation. Children, he wrote, were not capable of reflection: 'their Thoughts, if they have any, are limited by their State, and the narrow Bounds of Sensation.'[198] Thus reflection, of which mothers were capable, was built upon this foundation. The similarity in attitude of both factions to women, and the

[194] [Blondel], *Strength of Imagination*, 10.
[195] See pp. 59ff., above and 302ff., below.
[196] As did Locke. See Locke, *Essay*, III.vi.9 (p. 397).
[197] Turner, *Morbis Cutaneis*, 106.
[198] [Blondel], *Strength of Imagination*, 55.

privileging of a sensory epistemology by what seems the most traditional side of the debate are further demonstrations of the complexity and significance of the debate concerning the mother's imagination. They also point to the centrality of an empiricist epistemology in the formulation of embodied identities which were, nevertheless, subject to human volition.

Confused Species: Bestiality and Monstrous Births

The complexity of the debate surrounding the maternal imagination spilt over into the question of policy regarding the effects of the imagination. Turner felt that 'Monsters and truly monstrous Births, are not to be meddled with, but to be left to the Civil Law to determine upon mature Deliberation, and the Judgment of Physicians before consulted, which are fit to be destroy'd and made away with, and which to be preserved and kept alive.'[199] Turner's views, however much they may shock today, were commonplace at the time, and were based on a straightforward division of monstrous births, clarified by *Aristotle's Masterpiece*:

> all those [monstrous births] that are like men, according to the order of Generation, deduced from our primitive Parents, proceeded by natural means from either Sex, though they are deformed and of monstrous shape, having notwithstanding a reasonable Soul, shall when they have run the date of Mortality, be capable of Resurrection to Immortality: but those that proceed not from man, but by the womans unnaturally mixing with other Creatures, shall not participate of Immortality, but perish as brute Beasts, because such a monstrous Births is not capacitated to receive a divine part or Soul, which should entail him to the Resurrection.[200]

[199] Turner, *Morbis Cutaneis*, 121.
[200] *Aristotle's Master-Piece* (1690), 52. See also *Aristotle's Master-Piece Compleated* (1781), 37.

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Figure 2.4 – Figure from *Aristotle's Master-Piece Compleated* (1781), 33.

Turner's call in 1714 was to allow physicians to decide which was the human monster (that with a soul) and that which was not. Roy Porter has commented on this passage in *Aristotle's Master-Piece* as uncharacteristically misogynistic, laying blame squarely with women for the production of monsters: either their imagination was to blame or they were guilty of committing bestiality.[201] The notion that a woman's sexual commerce with an animal would lead to soul-less offspring (thus stating that a human father is necessary for the infusion of a

[201] Porter and Hall, *Facts of Life*, 48.

soul) is reminiscent of animalculist preformationism, although *Aristotle's Master-Piece*, when it addressed embryological niceties, is clearly epigenesist.[202]

The association of women with bestiality was part of the later seventeenth century distrust of female sexuality.[203] In 1677 and 1704, women were charged with bestiality at the Old Bailey, and in the 1677 case the defendant was found guilty and executed.[204] On the same day a man was charged with bestiality with a mare, but acquitted as positive proof could not be produced. As a result, the reporter in the *Old Bailey Sessions Paper* noted, 'the Bearded Sex [cannot], though pretending to a stronger reason, … upbraid the Weaker Vessels, or tax them with this dishonor.'[205] On the whole, however, bestiality was associated in this earlier period with women, and part of the importance of bestiality for the interrelation of sex and race is the afterlife of this belief. As female sexuality became more domesticated throughout the eighteenth century, its association with bestiality disappeared, not least because the vast majority of the few instances of bestiality were committed by men.[206] The advancement of the life sciences also began strenuously to question the possibility that monstrous offspring could result from a commerce of different species. Indeed, as Blondel wrote in 1727, one strong argument against the maternal imagination 'is, that the greater Care Nature takes to preserve the

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[202] Porter and Hall, *Facts of Life*, 45. See *Aristotle's Master-Piece* (1690), 19.
[203] Gowing, *Common Bodies*, 131-2.
[204] *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>, 22 October 2007), 11 July 1677, trial of Married Woman (t16770711-1), also 26 April 1704, Mary Price (alias Hartington) (t17040426-42). See also *News from Tybourn: Being An Account of the Confession and Execution of the Woman condemned for committing that horrid sin of Buggery with a Dog* (1677).
[205] *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, 11 July 1677, trial of Fellow (t16770711-2).
[206] In Sweden, for example, 1486 men compared to 14 women were tried for bestiality in the period 1635-1754. See Jonas Liliequist, 'Peasants against Nature: Crossing the Boundaries between Human and Animal in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Sweden', *JHS*, 1 (1991), 393-423 at 395.

different Species of Plants, and Animals, from Confusion, Authors seem to be the more sollicitous in collecting stories about Monsters, and the sad Effects of Imagination, and to relate them with great Zeal and Positiveness.'[207]

However, implicit in the process by which female sexuality was domesticated was the assumption that the women in question were white.[208] Black women, and all those whose sexuality was not restrained in the same manner as white women's, were deemed capable, and even likely, of indulging in bestial commerce.[209] John Atkin in 1735 made clear that attitudes previously held about female sexuality in general were being particularised to black women:

> at some Places the *Negroes* have been suspected of Bestiality with [apes and monkeys], and by the Boldness and Affection that are known under some Circumstances to express to [Negro] Females; the Ignorance and Stupidity [of these women], to guide or controul Lust; but more from the near resemblances [which] are sometimes met to the Human Species, would tempt one to suspect the Fact: Altho' by the way, this, like other *Hebridous* Productions, could never go no farther; and as such a monstrous Generation would be more casual and subject to Fatality, the Case must be uncommon and rare.[210]

As late as the 1770s, racists such as Edward Long were equating sex between white and black as bestiality, and Long himself justified his belief in human-ape

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[207] [Blondel], *Strength of Imagination*, 14-15.
[208] Londa Schiebinger, Roxann Wheeler and Jennifer Morgan all make points related to this, but none states it explicitly. See Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race* (Philadelphia, 2000), 133; Schiebinger, *Nature's Body*; ead., 'Anatomy of Difference'; ead., 'Mammals, Primatology and Sexology', in Porter and Teich (eds.), *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science*, 184-209; Jennifer L. Morgan, '"Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder": Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770', *W&MQ*, 3rd ser., 54 (1997), 167-192, reprinted in ead., *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in the Making of New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, 2004), 12-49.
[209] Queen Caroline was metamorphosed into an ape for her to deemed capable of this in *Essay towards the Character of the Late Chimpanzee* (1739). See G. S. Rousseau, *Enlightenment Crossings* (New York, 1991), 198-209; Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones*, 59-60.
[210] John Atkins, *A Voyage to Guinea, Brasil, and the West Indies* (1735), 108.

intercourse by arguing that even white women had indulged in bestiality.[211] Even scientists as respected as Buffon believed that black women had frequently indulged in sexual relations with apes, and that these might be fertile.[212] The question as to whether black women could produce offspring from this intercourse – and, more to the point, whether or not these would prove to be fertile – was still not settled at the end of the century.[213] So, despite the comparative rarity of bestiality in Britain, its association with female sexuality (explicitly mentioned in Long's argument), which was obliterated in the course of the domestication of European sexuality throughout the century, was particularised to extra-European female sexuality. This racialisation of cross-species sex plays a crucial role in the interconnection of race and sex throughout the period. By endowing with plausibility the possibility of female-ape sexuality, eighteenth-century scientists and racial theorists bestowed a degree of legitimacy on the older folk belief that Africans must have originated in bestial commerce with apes. To an extent, therefore, the gradual deprecation of the power of the maternal imagination and sex with animals as a source of birth defects was a development limited to Europe. The comparative rarity of this sex crime in Britain precluded the development at home of an identity of the 'bestialite', in the same vein as the onanist (masturbator) or sodomite. Although such an identity was also not constructed in the extra-European

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[211] See previous chapter, p. 63 above, and [Edward Long], *Candid Reflections Upon the JUDGEMENT lately awarded by the Court of King's Bench* (1772), 48-9; Long, *History*, ii. 383.

[212] 'Si vous voulez comparer le singe à l'homme, ajoutez-y les rapports d'organisation, les convenances de tempérament, l'appétit véhément des singes mâles pour les femmes, la même conformation dans les parties génitales des deux sexes; l'écoulement périodique dans les femelles, et les mélanges forcés ou volontaires des Négresses aux singes, dont le produit est rentré dans l'une ou l'autre espèce.' Georges Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière* (15 vols., Paris, 1749-1767), xiv (1761). 31.

[213] See Charles White, *An Account of the Regular Gradation in Man* (1799), 34.

world, it arguably remained an intrinsic component of a European understanding of the African in the period. Donna Haraway's 'simian orientalism' seems to acquire a new and disconcerting meaning in this context.[214]

Conclusion

This chapter has sketched a range of sexual discourses which related to race in more detail. At the same time, it has maintained a focus on the human body, which came to bear identity throughout the period. The interrelationship of sex and race throughout the period was, it has been argued in this part of the thesis, based on two distinct but related components. The first of these was the empiricist epistemology discussed in the previous chapter. The second is the human body itself, the ontological entity which was 'read' using empiricist methodologies. Conceptually, this body, as part two of the thesis will show, became progressively more stable throughout the eighteenth century as a bearer of identity. In other words, the body became more legible or scrutible.

This chapter has suggested some ways in which the body came thus to signify. In the discussion of licit sex, above, it was shown that the production of a quantity of bodies – philoprogenitivism – was a guiding principle in eighteenth-century culture. Marriage was promoted as most likely to produce this, and various sexual practices, such as contraception, abortion, infanticide, and polygamy, were anathematized as frustrating philoprogenitivist goals. The primacy of marriage as the quintessential productive sexual relationship was

[214] See Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (1992), 10-12.

crucial to dictating the interests of stadial and racial theorists, who became interested in the treatment of women – often in terms of the sexual attention they received – and marriage, or systems of marriage, became a key marker of these theories. In addition, the contraceptive, infanticidal, or polygamous practices of different groups were discussed, and often formed the basis of racial classification. In addition, as Tim Hitchcock and Londa Schiebinger have argued, pronatalism shaped heteronormative sexuality and provoked interest in the female body, producing the cult of maternity, which then influenced the invention of the sexes.[215] Philoprogenitivism was reconfigured by Malthus towards a class-based interest in sexual reproduction, a move which provoked outcry. In thus appearing to deprecate marriage, Malthus not only seemingly turned his back on his religion, but also on the interests of his nation.

Perhaps more central to questions of the ability of the body to signify was the following section, which discussed illicit sex. This focused closely on just how identities came to be embodied, and relates this process to morality. Also discussed in terms of population, prostitution, masturbation, and sodomy all came to be marked (however temporarily) on the body, as a prior moral stance was corporealised. The extent to which the moral is seen to dictate the physical is clear from the trope of the barren prostitute, who becomes productive as soon as she has quit her life of vice. The permanence of the identity of the 'sodomite' did not mean that it was any more stable or inflexible, although the spectre was raised of racial degeneration, as the enfeeblement seen to stem from sodomy was, it was argued, heritable. Those who argued thus, by

[215] Tim Hitchcock, 'Redefining Sex in Eighteenth-Century England', *HWJ*, 41 (1996), 73-90; Londa Schiebinger, 'Skeletons in the Closet: The First Illustrations of the Female Skeleton in Eighteenth-Century Anatomy', *Representations*, 14 (1986), 42-82.

emphasising the reproductive or inherited consequences of sodomy, and therefore of the danger of a combination of homo- and hetero-sexual behaviours, demonstrably lacked a conception of the 'exclusive' sodomite.[216] Hermaphroditism is a useful counterpoint to these illicit sexualities, as it became steadily disembodied and made to stand as a metaphor for moral truth. Thus the causality of the relationship of moral truths to the body was reversed: rather than a prior morality becoming marked on the body, a body came to act as a metaphor for morality. Accusations of hermaphroditism were increasingly barbed in the last third of the century, as the gender order came to be naturalised into those 'opposite' sexes, male and female. A lack of belief in the hermaphrodite's body contributed to the growing sharpness with which people were accused of 'hermaphroditism'.

Despite disbelief in the hermaphrodite's body, it was still discussed in corporeal terms. These remained flexible, which was inevitable when the human will – of which morality was a part – came to be closely related to the human form. Such flexibility was best demonstrated by the maternal imagination, which was itself viewed as a central source of racial characteristics. The role of motherhood was central to the maternal imagination, as indeed it came to be in culture at large towards the end of the eighteenth century. Belief in the power of the maternal imagination had been long deprecated by that point, but that in the senses remained. The senses were another central element of the discourse on the maternal imagination as the mother's sense impressions were made flesh. Thus the maternal imagination may act as a metaphor for the process described in this thesis, whereby human difference was constructed on the basis of an

[216] Cf. esp. Trumbach, *Sex and the Gender Revolution*, introduction to vol. i.

empiricist epistemology. Unlike the maternal imagination, however, this epistemology was by no means naïve: as this chapter shows, it constructed its objects of scrutiny on the basis of prior moral characteristics. Indeed, discussion of 'monstrous' births was strongly related to legal questions about the existence of a soul within the birth and whether it could be legitimately destroyed. Women were often blamed for the production of such offspring, often thanks to bestial intercourse, but such questions were ultimately related to the body in a way which reinforced epistemological norms. The more physically grotesque the monstrous birth, the less likely it was to have a soul, and the more legitimately it could be destroyed. Subsequent chapters will show how high were the stakes for the significatory power of the body and the empiricist epistemology which might be used to read it. Questions of life or death, of the existence or absence of the soul, were determined on these ontological and epistemological bases. As the chapters in part two of the thesis will show, the interplay between the epistemological and ontological foundations of racial and sexual identity offer an account of the emergence of these identities which has gone unrecognised by historians.

PART II

PRODUCING RACE AND SEX

3 The Fragile Frontier: Race, Sex, and the Human/Animal Boundary in Early Hanoverian London

Introduction

The first part of this thesis has outlined the range of discourses which encapsulated the interrelationship of race and sex in the period. This part is intended to further the overall argument in three ways. First, these discourses are to be explored in greater depth in three case studies to be examined in this and the following two chapters. These case studies will show, secondly, that the human body was conceptualised as progressively more stable over the course of the century, such that it came to be seen as a reliable source of empirical knowledge. Finally, and as consequence of this development, a new perspective on the emergence of racial and sexual identities will be outlined. Rather than a radical act of creation or revolution, these identities had a more mundane origin, based on the synchronisation of their epistemological and ontological foundations. Long-term epistemological change, in the shape of the empiricism that had steadily become an orthodoxy throughout the seventeenth century, was absolutely crucial to the emergence of modern notions of race and sex. But so too was the ontological development of a stable body, legible and interpretable through this epistemology. This latter development was, it will be argued in this part of the thesis, more rapid than the change in epistemological outlook. The chapters in this part will show that the body, fundamentally unstable before 1730, became more reliable between this date and 1770, when the voyages of Pacific discovery – the subject of chapter four – provided an

opportunity for the (sometimes unsteady) formulation of modern racial and sexual identities. So reliable had the body become by the early nineteenth century, that it was overloaded with significatory weight for those attempting to establish racial hierarchies in the British Caribbean, to be discussed in chapter five.

This chapter will establish the unreliability of the body as a source of empirical knowledge in the early eighteenth century. Humanity had long been predicated on the existence of a rational soul. In this period, the soul was detectable by either of two signifiers: human form, and intelligible speech, which demonstrated the existence of reason.[1] Both of these signifiers resided in or on the body: human form determined the shape of the body itself, and language was only accessible through written script produced by human hands or, more commonly, through speech. Sight and sound conveyed these truths, but, as will be shown, the human body in the 1720s was an untrustworthy source. On one hand the body could be manipulated and false claims made about its capabilities. On the other, a mismatch of these signifiers – a human form without language or language without human form – threw into doubt their reliability as proofs of humanity. Through a discussion of three cases in which these possibilities were enacted, this chapter will demonstrate that the body failed to act as an unequivocal signifier of identity. In what follows, it will be shown that this was the case despite the fact that there existed a demonstrable commitment to empirical methodologies of knowledge acquisition. Furthermore, several commonplaces of later discourses of race and sex, such as ethnographic description, eugenics, and (imagined) genocide, were

[1] Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World* (1984), 30-33.

also available to Augustan thinkers. Therefore, the inability of the body to signify in this manner was not due to the absence of intellectual prerequisites, but to the manipulability of the body and its attributes.

This argument is made in three sections. The first is a short examination of the texts to be explored, and of important political and cultural contexts in which they appeared. The following two sections discuss three events that all took place within London in 1726. The second section examines the cases of Mary Toft and 'Peter the Wild Boy'. Toft, the illiterate wife of a poor journeyman cloth-worker, claimed to give birth to seventeen rabbits in an attempt to secure a royal pension. Her case attracted both nationwide interest and was investigated by some of the foremost medical men of the day.[2] Unable to evaluate her claims on the basis of empirical evidence from Toft's body, these men were forced to consult an even more manipulable and unstable source: her language. The role of language as a proof of humanity was undermined by Peter, a feral child from Hanover brought to London by royal command early in 1726. Contemporaries had already begun to question the ability of language to act in this capacity given the existence of the deaf and mutes. Daniel Defoe, whose son-in-law was a celebrated teacher of the deaf, was also the author of the most thoughtful text on Peter.[3] Thus, despite a widespread commitment to empiricism, Toft and Peter demonstrate that the body could not be relied upon as a repository of human identity.

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[2] London reports of Toft's case were widely reprinted in the provincial press. See, for example, the Exeter papers *Brice's Weekly Journal*, 16 Dec. 1726, and *Farley's Exeter Journal*, 25 Nov. 1726. In addition, at least one satire came from a provincial town. See anon., *The Wonder of Wonders* (Ipswich, 1726).
[3] *MND*.

The final section, an examination of part of *Gulliver's Travels* (published in October 1726) and its reception will show that the body was unreliable in spite of the presence of several commonplaces of later racial thought. The fourth book, 'a Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms', engaged with a wide range of discourses, including those raised by Toft and Peter (on the body, language, reproduction, humanity, and animality), but also with such racial commonplaces as ethnographic description, eugenics, and genocide. It did so in a manner designed deliberately to provoke outrage. Swift appeared radically to resituate human identity in the body whilst simultaneously removing language and all attributes of the rational soul from that body. With such dehumanisation, the eugenics of an equine master race and the extermination of a human *untermensch* became possibilities to which Gulliver lent enthusiastic support. The consideration of Swift's text furthers the argument of this chapter by demonstrating that these possibilities of racial science were conceivable in the 1720s. *Gulliver's Travels* itself was not a racist text nor was taken as such. Rather, Swift demonstrated the conceivability of corporealised notions of difference which, to judge from the reaction to his text, were not yet widely deployed. To become enraged at the Yahoo as representative of the human was to demonstrate a universalist conception of humanity. Had notions of racial difference typical of the mid-nineteenth century been available to contemporaries, the Yahoos might safely have been interpreted as Africans or another undesirable people. A continuing commitment to empiricism and the conceivability of corporeal notions of difference both serve to isolate the instability of the body as the primary reason for the absence of such concepts of difference in the Augustan era.

Texts and Contexts

The thematic continuities between the three cases ring-fence a set of discourses on race and sex in the early Hanoverian period, and go much of the way to obviating the manifest differences between source materials in terms of their ephemerality and cultural weight. Much of the source material on Toft and Peter is contained in cheap print, often priced between 2*d*. (the price of a weekly London newspaper after 1725) and 6*d*. Defoe's text on Peter, *Mere Nature Delineated*, weighed in at 1*s*. 6*d*., but this price is understandable for a pamphlet in excess of 120 pages. This variety in price indicates the range of anticipated audiences, with the more philosophically or scientifically informed texts being at the more costly end of the scale, and satirical verse or broadsheets at the cheaper. In addition, much material – including a serialisation of the first edition of *Gulliver's Travels* – was published in the newspaper and periodical press. Although not as cheap as they had been prior to 1712, newspapers still competed on price, particularly amongst the penny newspapers, and attempts to evade the most recent stamp legislation (1725) were rife. Indeed, most readers of newspapers did not have to pay for their news, as copies of many newspapers were available in the coffee houses, and those who could not afford to patronise these were able to hear news read in taverns, on the street corner, or even in the fields.[4] Notwithstanding the cheaper and more sensational cultural products, the three cases were discussed by some of the most celebrated figures in Augustan culture, such as Swift and Defoe, but also including Alexander Pope,

[4] See James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (Cambridge, 1986); Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* (1987); John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (1997), 184, 187.

John Arbuthnot, and William Hogarth. Such a wide range of commentators and texts make these cases ideal for discussing the cultural purchase of racial, sexual, and epistemological discourses in early Hanoverian Britain.

Each of the cases discussed here occurred in a range of contexts. Politically, the mid-1720s was a period of comparative calm.[5] Following the Jacobite excitement of the first decade of George I's reign (the 1715 rebellion and the 1723 Atterbury Plot), the threat from the Pretender appeared to abate, notwithstanding popular Jacobitism in urban centres.[6] Much of this was motivated by dislike of Britain's German king, who made no attempt to disguise his preference for his Electorate and who took every opportunity to return there.[7] Part of the reason behind dislike of George was the very real fear that the Hanoverian connection would subordinate British interests to those of the Electorate. There was, however, little immediate threat of this. France and her young king were not merely quiescent, but had joined an alliance with Britain and Holland in 1716 to check Spanish designs on the French throne. The threat from Spain grew with the conclusion of the Treaty of Vienna with Austria in 1725. War broke out between Britain and Spain at the end of 1726, but it was brief: the fleet sent to blockade Porto Bello was ineffective, and the Spanish siege of Gibraltar quickly lifted.[8] Nonetheless, war fever continued to run high for the rest of the 1720s, reaching a fever pitch by the late 1730s (mythologised

[5] The following discussion of contexts is indebted to Julian Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty?* (Oxford, 2000) and W. A. Speck, *Stability and Strife* (1977).
[6] Hoppit, *Land of Liberty*, 393; Nicholas Rogers, 'Popular Protest in Early Hanoverian London', *P&P*, 79 (1978), 70-100; id., *Crowds, Culture, and Politics in Georgian Britain* (Oxford, 1998), ch. 1.
[7] Ragnhild Hatton, *George I: Elector and King* (1978), 158.
[8] See Maximilian E. Novak, 'Defoe as a Defender of the Government, 1727-29: A Re-attribution and a New Attribution', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 71 (2008), 503-12 at 504-5.

in the image of Captain Jenkins showing his pickled ear to an aghast House of Commons).[9]

Domestically, the early 1720s witnessed the spectacular burst of the South Sea Bubble which, nonetheless, had limited consequences for sectors of the economy outside the world of stocks and projects. Agriculture was calming after a period of fluctuation (1690-1715) and industrial output was steadily, if slowly, growing.[10] It was boom time for poachers, whose depredations at Waltham in Hampshire led to the notorious 'Black Act' of 1723.[11] This legislation introduced about fifty new capital offences, and is significant for the argument of this chapter. For at its heart lay the activities of the 'Waltham Blacks', a gang of poachers who evaded justice by blacking their faces and obscuring their identity. The very first capital offence introduced by the act was being under arms 'with … Faces blacked, or otherwise disguised,' poaching deer, rabbits, hares, or fish.[12] The wider issue which the act sought to address – identities deliberately obscured for the purpose of lawlessness – spoke to a Hanoverian preoccupation. The morality of masquerades prompted a good deal of heated controversy in the 1720s, and the Black Act was more than once

[9] Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1998); Harold W. V. Temperley, 'The Causes of the War of Jenkins' Ear, 1739', *TRHS*, 3rd ser., 3 (1909), 197-236 at 210; Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People* (Oxford, 1989), 51.
[10] Hoppit, *Land of Liberty*, 324-6, 356.
[11] On the Black Act, see Pat Rogers, 'The Waltham Blacks and the Black Act', *HJ*, 17 (1974), 465-86; id., *Eighteenth-Century Encounters: Studies in Literature and Society in the Age of Walpole* (Brighton, 1985), ch. 6; E. P. Thompson, *Whigs and Hunters* (1977). On the link between the Waltham Blacks and Jacobitism see Eveline Cruickshanks and Howard Erskine-Hill, 'The Waltham Black Act and Jacobitism', *JBS*, 24 (1985), 358-65; John Broad, 'Whigs and Deer-Stealers in Other Guises: A Return to the Origins of the Black Act', *P&P*, 119 (1988), 56-72.
[12] 9 Geo. I, c. 22, s. 1.

mobilised in the debate.[13] Without the restraint imposed by an unambiguous identity, so argued the opponents of masquerades, all sorts of moral chaos (especially sexual) would ensue. Incest and adultery threatened the propertied order by introducing 'spurious issue' to a family.[14] Indeed, this fact was used to discredit the Jacobite claim to the throne in the 'Warming Pan Scandal' (the claim James II's son was illegitimate, smuggled into the birthing chamber in a warming pan), a case which shared key themes with that of Toft.[15] Concerns about identity and its ambiguity thus went to the heart of British culture in the period.

Two further examples of such concerns will complete this survey of the context for the following discussion. First, man-midwifery emerged as a serious entity in this period. In the century from 1660, as Adrian Wilson and others have described, men ceased to attend births solely in cases of danger to the mother's life, and began to do so routinely in lieu of female midwives. This expropriation of a traditional woman's role had repercussions for male identity, as satirists were later to exploit. The very name 'man-midwife', which began in the 1720s to replace 'surgeon' to describe men at births, denoted a hybrid identity.[16] As man-midwifery became more dominant over the course of the eighteenth century, and female midwives were proportionally displaced, these

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[13] On masquerades, see Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilisation* (1986); ead., *The Female Thermometer* (New York, 1995), ch. 6; Bradford K. Mudge, *The Whore's Story* (Oxford, 2000), 33-47; Wahrman, *Making*, 157-65.

[14] See Corinne Harol, *Enlightened Virginity in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (New York, 2006), 1-15.

[15] See Rachel Weil, 'The Politics of Legitimacy: Women and the Warming-Pan Scandal', in Lois G. Schwoerer (ed.), *The Revolution of 1688-89: Changing Perspectives* (Cambridge, 1992), 65-82; Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* (Oxford, 2005), 71-83.

[16] It was to remain as such throughout the century. See Adrian Wilson, *The Making of Man-Midwifery* (1995), 164, and Isaac Cruickshank's 1793 etching, *A Man-Mid-Wife*, the frontispiece to 'John Blunt' [S. W. Fores], *Man-Midwifery Dissected* (1793).

ambiguities of gender became politicised, as Lisa Cody has recently shown.[17] Many midwives were extremely hostile to this development, and attacked man-midwifery with relish.[18] This ongoing struggle, although not to reach its peak until after 1726, was nevertheless an important context to the Toft fraud.

Perhaps the most crucial context for this chapter is existential. As several historians have argued, concepts of humanity vis-à-vis the animal creation were challenged throughout the early modern period. Although heterodox claims that animals were possessed of souls were as marginal, if not more so, as outright polygenism in the period, it remained the case that the gap between humans and animals narrowed significantly during the eighteenth century.[19] This is in marked distinction to the Cartesian notion that animals were mere automata, an idea which barely registered amongst English thinkers of the seventeenth century, but which nonetheless brought the dominant paradigm of human-animal relations to its logical conclusion.[20] The growth of interest in animal welfare, the establishment of veterinary medicine, and Linnaeus's unnerving immersion of humanity within the animal kingdom were all to take place after the 1720s, but were forming during the decade.[21] Speech, reason, and moral responsibility were the traditional markers of humanity, and there was a growing number of people who claimed that rational behaviour could be

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[17] Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 180-84.
[18] J. Donnison, 'The Decline of the Midwife', in Edwin van Teijlingen et al (eds.), *Midwifery and the Medicalization of Childbirth* (Hauppauge, NY, 2004), 101-116 at 105; Cody, *Birthing*, ch. 6; Eve Keller, *Generating Bodies and Gendered Selves: The Rhetoric of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (2007), 159-63, 184-5; Wilson, *Making*, 166-7; Fiona Haslam, *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Liverpool, 1996), ch. 2.
[19] Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, 137-42; Wahrman, *Making*, 130-45.
[20] See Erica Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality, and Humanity in Early Modern England* (2006); Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, 33-6.
[21] Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, 143-91; Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate* (1990); Joanna Swabe, *Animals, Disease, and Human Society* (1999). See also Thomas Taylor, *A Vindication of the Rights of Brutes* (Gainesville, FL, 1966 [1792]).

discerned in animals.[22] The human form remained an important marker, but with the development of comparative anatomy (such as Edward Tyson's 1699 dissection of a chimpanzee) was de-emphasised in favour of the more certain ground of speech and reason.[23] As we have already seen, and as this chapter will show, the security afforded by these was illusory.

Unstable Bodies and Inscrutible Minds: Mary Toft and Peter the Wild Boy

The cases of Toft and Peter have until recently been the stuff of antiquarian curiosity. Once their topicality and cultural purchase had faded, they were viewed as bygone relics of a credulous and primitive era, especially by nineteenth-century commentators.[24] The Toft case was typically dismissed as an example of the boundless 'limits of human credulity,' and Peter's story became the subject of juvenile literature.[25] Such perspectives masked the importance of these cases for contemporaries. Peter, for example, was of such importance that he was invoked by later authors such as Rousseau, Monboddo, Blumenbach, and Lawrence.[26] These were interested in the mismatch between Peter's human form and his lack of language, and as such he acted as a satirical foil and as a source of racial and philosophical speculation. Toft, in like fashion, was an

[22] Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*, 32, 129.
[23] See Erica Fudge, Ruth Gilbert, and Susan Wiseman, 'Introduction: The Dislocation of the Human', in eaed. (eds.), *At the Borders of the Human: Beasts, Bodies and Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Period* (Basingstoke, 2002), 1-8.
[24] For expressions of this attitude, see anon., 'Archaeologica Medica XIX: Mary Tofts, the Rabbit Breeder', *British Medical Journal* (25 Jul. 1896), 209-10; W. E. Aitchison-Robertson, 'Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbits', *Annals of Medical History*, 10 (1928), 368-75.
[25] anon., 'Archaeologica Medica', 209; C. M. Tennant, *Peter the Wild Boy* (1938).
[26] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Inequality*, tr. Maurice Cranston (1984), 140; [James Burnett, Lord Monboddo], *The Origin and Progress of Language* (6 vols., Edinburgh, 1773-96), i. 171-88; id., *Antient Metaphysics* (6 vols., 1779-99), iii. 41, 57-68, 74, 94-5, 198; Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*, part 2 (Göttingen, 1810), reprinted in Bendyshe, *Treatises*, 325-40; William Lawrence, *Lectures on Physiology, Zoology, and the Natural History of Man* (1819), 136-40.

emblem of 'enthusiasm' – dangerous pseudo-religious fanaticism – for figures as distinct as Hogarth and Voltaire.[27] Only since the 'cultural turn' have modern historians and literary critics paid attention to these episodes in any detail. Some of these have, however, made rather grandiose claims, such as Toft being causative of 'epistemological collapse.'[28] In this section it will be shown that Toft demonstrated the inability to seek knowledge in or on the body: a symbol of epistemological handicap, not collapse. Peter, it will be argued, questioned the basis for one of the oldest means of identifying humanity, but it was to take Swift's ruthless application of this in *Gulliver's Travels* to produce a response as violent as the damage Peter supposedly did to notions of rank and the Habermasian public sphere.[29]

The Unstable Body of the 'Pretended Rabbit Breeder'

In the late summer of 1726, Mary Toft of Godalming miscarried. Hoping to profit from the ubiquitous fascination with monsters and curiosities, Toft and a few accomplices constructed a monster from the remains of a cat and the backbone of an eel, which was then delivered to the local man-midwife, John Howard of Guildford. Initially disinclined to believe the truth of the monster, Howard nevertheless visited Godalming the following day. Soon after Toft began to give birth to rabbits, attracting the curiosity of men-midwives such as Sir Richard Manningham and James Douglas, and Royal figures such as the Prince of Wales's Secretary Samuel Molyneux, one of the King's physicians

[27] Dennis Todd, *Imagining Monsters: Miscreations of the Self in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago, 1995), 294-7 n. 62; Voltaire, *The Works of M. de Voltaire*, tr. William Campbell (5 vols., 1779-80), iv. 175.
[28] Todd, *Imagining Monsters*, 81.
[29] See Richard Nash, *Wild Enlightenment: The Borders of Human Identity in the Eighteenth Century* (2003), ch. 2.

Cyriacus Ahlers, and the King's Anatomist, Nathaniel St André. Relocated from Godalming to Guildford, and thence to London, Toft produced rabbits until she was moved to Lacey's Bagnio at Leicester-Fields in late November. Soon after, the hoax was discovered thanks to the confession of a porter at the bagnio caught smuggling in a rabbit under instructions from Toft. Her claims to either know nothing about it or to have asked for the rabbit to eat fell on deaf ears, a confession was extracted through threats of a painful experiment being performed on her, and she was sent to Tothill Fields Bridewell until the late spring of 1727. Between December 1726 and January 1727, these medical men frantically produced self-justificatory pamphlets, although St André's reputation was the only one to suffer any permanent damage. The man-midwife Howard was charged with conspiracy to commit fraud, but neither he nor Toft were ever brought to trial, because of an inability to agree upon what statute they should be charged.[30]

The Whiggish interpretation of this case, which became an orthodoxy in the nineteenth century, pitted credulous buffoons such as St André and Howard against such intrepid empiricists as Manningham. This interpretation, as Lisa Cody and others have argued, cannot justifiably be sustained.[31] Manningham

[30] See S. A. Seligman, 'Mary Toft – The Rabbit Breeder', *Medical History*, 5 (1961), 349-60; Glennda Leslie, 'Cheat and Impostor: Debate Following the Case of the Rabbit Breeder', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, 27 (1986), 269-286; Lisa Cody, 'The Doctor's in Labour; or a New Whim Wham from Guildford', *Gender & History*, 4 (1992), 175-196; Todd, *Imagining*, ch. 1; Pam Lieske, 'Introduction' in ead. (ed.), *Eighteenth-Century British Midwifery*, ii: *The Mary Toft Affair* (2007), pp. vii-xv. For a popularised (but abysmal) account of the Toft case, see Clifford A. Pickover, Ph.D., *The Girl Who Gave Birth to Rabbits: A True Medical Mystery* (New York, 2000).

[31] Todd, *Imagining Monsters*, *passim*. The argument offered in this subsection is indebted to Cody's 1992 article, which makes many of the same points regarding Toft's frustration of empirical investigation and the need for investigators to have recourse to her language. Although I am in agreement with her argument that the Toft case demonstrated a significant gendering of knowledge about the natural world and the female body, this chapter de-emphasises the gendered basis of this knowledge for three reasons. First, the status of women as privileged bearers of this knowledge was, with the rise of man-midwifery in particular,

did indeed have a solid empirical method, but so too did other investigators, including St André.[32] In his *Short Narrative of an Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbets* (1726), St André meticulously recorded observations on both Toft and the rabbits she produced, including their anatomy, size, and shape.[33] However, once convinced that Toft was genuine, he began to interpret equivocal or contrary evidence in a manner supportive of his views.[34] For example, he noted that 'the flesh of these creatures, particularly of that which I extracted, had the smell of rabbets just killed,'[35] without wondering whether they actually *were* freshly killed. Once it emerged that Toft's claims were fraudulent, St André looked especially foolish for having noticed this smell.[36] But in ingenuously recording this sense impression, St André was demonstrating his own empirical credentials. In any event, his inclination to believe Toft's claims was no more questionable than that of Ahlers (for example) to disbelieve them.[37]

Ahlers may have been vindicated by outcome of the case, but this did not mean that his views were any less prejudiced. He emerged the most unscathed of all associated with Toft precisely because he was prejudiced against her

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beginning to crumble in this period. Second, the Toft case exemplified a frustration of empirical research that stemmed from the human – not just the female – body, as shown by the limitations of contemporary medicine. Third, it is more important for the argument of this chapter that this focus is retained on the human body, as its challenges to empirical methodologies were repeated in the cases of Peter and *Gulliver's Travels*, which feature men of different ages and social status. See Cody, 'Doctor's in Labour'; ead., 'Sex, Civility, and the Self: Du Coudray, d'Eon, and Eighteenth-Century Conceptions of Gendered, National, and Psychological Identity', *French Historical Studies*, 24 (2001), 397-407 at 402; Andrew Wear, *Health and Healing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 1998), 294-320.

[32] On Manningham, see his *An Exact Diary Of what was observ'd during a Close Attendance upon Mary Toft…* (1726).

[33] [Nathaniel St André], *A Short Narrative Of an Extraordinary Delivery of Rabbets, Perform'd by Mr. John Howard, Surgeon at Guilford*, 2nd edn. (1727).

[34] According to Dennis Todd, this was conceived by satirists as Toft enticing figures such as St André into a state of 'enthusiasm'. See Todd, *Imagining Monsters*, 64-105.

[35] [St André], *Short Narrative*, 18.

[36] 'Lemuel Gulliver', *The Anatomist Dissected: or the Man-Midwife finely brought to bed* (1727), 19.

[37] See Cyriacus Ahlers, *Some Observations Concerning the Woman of Godlyman in Surrey* (1726).

claims: the naïve empiricism of the most competent medical men involved, the man-midwives Manningham and Douglas, was ruthlessly satirised. When on 4 December they saw signs of pregnancy in Toft which turned out to be nothing of the sort, they came within the sights of the satirists. Alexander Pope's risqué ballad, *The Discovery* (1726), used the instruments of empirical inquiry – sight, touch, and telescopes – in a discussion of the case riddled with innuendo.[38] Manningham appeared in Hogarth's *Cunicularii* (see Figure 3.1)[39] and the anonymous *Much Ado About Nothing* as 'an ugly old Gentilman in a grate blak wig.'[40] According to Dennis Todd, *Cunicularii* was based directly on the events of 4 December and was reputedly commissioned by a group of surgeons, no doubt seeking to discredit man-midwifery as a profession populated by credulous and superstitious men.[41] In this Manningham is portrayed as the antithesis of the empiricist. The label attached to him beneath the image stated that he was 'an occult philosopher searching into the depth of things'.[42] The contemporary meaning of 'occult' – 'secret, hidden, unknown, undiscoverable' – hardly points to the transparency and repeatability intrinsic to the experimental method of the new science.[43] Next to Manningham is pictured a figure named 'the Sooterkin Doctor', John Maubray, whose *Female Physician* (1724) had

[38] [Alexander Pope], *The Discovery; or, The Squire Turn'd Ferret* (1727). This was reprinted in the *British Journal*, 7 Jan. 1726/7. See Barbara M. Benedict, *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago, 2001), 81.
[39] This engraving is also present in some extant copies of *The Discovery*. See, for example, the copies of *The Discovery* at the British Library and Bodleian Library, Oxford (shelfmarks 643.l.24(49) and G.Pamph. 1665(6), respectively).
[40] ['Merry Tuft'], *Much ado about Nothing: Or, a Plain Refutation of All that has been Written or Said Concerning the Rabbit-Woman of Godalming* (1727), 14.
[41] Cody, *Birthing the Nation*, 220-2; John Nichols and George Steevens, *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth* (3 vols., 1808-17), i. 37.
[42] As with *Much Ado about Nothing*, this plays on the slang connotations of 'thing' and 'nothing' for female genitals. See Eric Partridge, *Shakespeare's Bawdy* (1968), 199-200.
[43] Johnson, *Dictionary*, s.v. 'occult'.



Figure 3.1 – William Hogarth, *Cunicularii, or The Wise Men of Godliman in Consultation* (1726). Reproduced courtesy of Glasgow University Library.

argued fervently for the existence of monstrous births named 'sooterkins'.[44] Deriving from the Old Dutch for 'sweet child' (*soeterkijn*), these were likened to rats and apparently attempted to escape the light as soon as they had the womb.[45] Maubray was widely respected for his public spirit, but was viewed as gullible for believing both in these monstrous births and in Toft's claims.[46] The presentation of Manningham in such company meant that he hardly stood out as the intrepid empiricist of later opinion.

One of the difficulties faced by the investigators in combating prejudice was the resilience of the widespread belief in the power of the maternal

[44] On the identification of the different figures in *Cunicularii*, see Dennis Todd, 'Three Characters in Hogarth's *Cunicularii* – and Some Implications', *ECS*, 16 (1982), 26-46.
[45] *OED*, s.v. 'sooterkin'.
[46] Philip Rhodes, 'Maubray, John (d. 1732)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/58697, accessed 17 Dec 2008]. See n. 51, below.

imagination.[47] Toft herself took full advantage of the lack of agreement amongst medical authorities on this issue, showing that an awareness of élite scientific thought was present in the lower echelons of society.[48] The case provoked the most famous controversy in the history of the phenomenon, the Blondel-Turner dispute. Already discussed in chapter two, this controversy shows that Toft's claims were not as outlandish as they may appear.[49] Nevertheless, claims in favour of the maternal imagination certainly had their critics. As 'Lemuel Gulliver' stated in *The Anatomist Dissected*, 'it was never known, that ever any Creature brought forth any one Creature of a Species in all Respects different from it self, much less five or seventeen such Creatures.'[50] Without making a claim about the overall truth of the power of the maternal imagination, 'Gulliver' was here restricting its range of operation to within the same species: what was termed 'equivocal generation' at the time was declared an impossibility. The author of the *Letter from a Male Physician* summed it up most concisely: 'it is as impossible for Women to generate and bring forth Rabbits, as it is for Rabbits to generate and bring forth Women.'[51]

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[47] See Marie-Hélène Huet, *Monstrous Imagination* (1993), esp. ch. 5.
[48] Mary Fissell and Roger Cooter, 'Exploring Natural Knowledge: Science and the Popular', in Roy Porter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Science*, iv: *Eighteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge, 2003), 129-58 at 150-1.
[49] See p. 158ff., above.
[50] 'Gulliver', *Anatomist Dissected*, 6.
[51] [?Anthony Kent], *A Letter from a Male Physician in the Country, to the Author of the Female Physician in London* (1726), 79. Evidence for Kent's authorship of this pamphlet and the other satire against Maubray to appear at this time, *The Sooterkin Dissected* (1726), both listed as anonymously authored in the ESTC, derives from a confession first printed in *The Flying-Post: or Post-Master* of 24-26 Jan. 1726/7:

> Whereas I ANTHONY KENT, of New-Bond-Street, Apothecary, have not only in my ordinary Conversation for sometime past, Scandalized *John Maubray*, Doctor in Physick, but also maliciously caused to be printed and dispersed abroad, great Numbers of Papers and Pamphlets, reflecting on his Character; I do hereby acknowledge, that my only Motive for so doing, was, because the said Doctor had tax'd my Bill upon the Poor of the Parish of St. George, Hanover-Square, and Justly abated me a considerable Part thereof: Upon which I resolved to be revenged, and, as far as possibly I could, to

Every pamphlet which dealt with medical aspects of the case made limited criticism of the doctrine of the maternal imagination, but none were prepared to reject it completely. Rather, they objected that it seemed to get out of hand. Equivocal generation was declared impossible, but preternatural[52] generation was never explicitly rejected: nobody went as far as denying the existence of monsters. Preternaturalism was used by St André to exempt evidence damaging to his claims from the need to conform to the laws of nature and experience. For instance, he explained the resemblance of Toft's supposed afterbirth to a hog's bladder – a circumstance that troubled Manningham – by merely stating that it was no more strange for a woman to produce this than for her to give birth to rabbits. As Manningham explained, 'this he thought prov'd, in the strongest Terms possible, that these Animals were of a particular kind, and not bred in a natural way, saying, Why therefore might not this Membrane which looks like a Hog's Bladder, come also out of the *Uterus?*'[53] The stubborn credulousness evinced by explaining all troublesome facts as preternatural was potent grist for the satirical mill. The anonymous author of the ballad *St. A-d-è's Miscarriage* (1727) seemingly agreed with St André that the rabbits indeed were preternatural:

> ruin his Reputation. But now being most sensible of, and truly sorry for my great Offence by this Conduct; and therefore being desirous of making Satisfaction, and doing Justice to the said Doctor, as far as in me lyeth; I think it my Duty to make this publick Acknowledgement of my Faults, and heartily and sincerely ask his Pardon for the same. As Witness *my Hand* this 25th Day of *January*, 1726-7.

Although inconclusive, this suggests that at least some of the opposition to Maubray stemmed from more mundane and personal motives than simply his credulousness.

[52] As opposed to supernatural: preternatural events worked within the laws of nature but were extremely rare, supernatural ones worked outside the laws of nature. See, for example, Fernando Vidal, 'Extraordinary Bodies and the Physicotheological Imagination', in Lorraine Daston and Gianna Pomata (eds.), *The Faces of Nature in Enlightenment Europe* (Berlin, 2003), 61-97.

[53] Manningham, *Exact Diary*, 18.

> Monsieur *St. A-d-è*, that Anatomist rare,
> Says all these same Rabbets præternatural were;
> And faith we must own there is something in that,
> For the first that came out, did prove a black Cat.[54]

Playing on the use of preternaturalism as an excuse for a mismatch of some kind, 'Gulliver' (in *The Anatomist Dissected*) addressed St André, 'a præternatural Anatomist Thou art without Dispute.'[55] Significantly, however, attacks on the weaknesses of preternaturalism only took place after Toft's confessions. Notwithstanding the retrospectively obvious flaws of claims of preternaturalism, Manningham still agreed temporarily to suppress his suspicions following the conversation over the hog's bladder.[56] Even use of preternaturalist argument was insufficient to discredit Toft and her supporters.

After all, Toft did her best to make her claims seem plausible. She had chosen the number of rabbits to produce – seventeen in all – in accordance with the average size of a rabbit litter.[57] Toft's expert ability to manipulate her own body also strengthened her claims. Manningham described 'a Motion like a sudden leaping of something within the right side of her Belly' which St André and Howard took to be rabbits living within Toft's womb.[58] The application of hot cloths to her belly apparently produced this movement, which greatly confused Manningham and Douglas, who were unable to explain it. The cause of this abdominal movement remains obscure, but what is clear is that Toft's

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[54] *St. A-d-è's Miscarriage: or, A Full and True Account of the Rabbet-Woman* (1727), sig. A2.
[55] 'Gulliver', *Anatomist Dissected*, 20-1.
[56] As the author of *A Song on the Rabbit Breeder* said of St André, 'Præternatural Rabbits have shewn him a tool | And made him appear a mere natural fool'. *A Song on The Rabbit Breeder* (1727), handwritten copy in 'Howard, Narrative of Delivery of Rabbets'. MSS 265, Royal Society of Medicine, London. See Manningham, *Exact Diary*, 18.
[57] See Toft's confession of 7 Dec. 1726, D325 (Douglas Papers, University of Glasgow Library), f. 4^{r}.
[58] Manningham, *Exact Diary*, 10.

ability to turn her body into an unstable signifier highlighted the limits of a sensory epistemology when applied to that body.

Even when this epistemology was employed elsewhere than the physical body, such as with language, it remained of questionable reliability. Firstly, Toft's confession was extracted using the threat to induce sensory pain in the form of Manningham's 'painful experiment'. Empiricism here degenerated into one of the oldest, crudest, and cruellest ways in which the senses are used in the acquisition of knowledge: via the induction of sensory pain in its possessor.[59] The crudity of this method is evidenced in the fact that Toft produced two confessions, blaming the inspiration for the fraud on, respectively, an anonymous woman and her mother in law.[60] Also, the need for her confession demonstrates that Toft, and not her body, was the producer of knowledge about the fraud.[61] Such a source, endlessly manipulable by Toft herself, was hardly any more reliable than the body itself.

However, in seeming to go further one satire actually reinforced an equation between language and the body. *Much Ado About Nothing*, one of two satirical texts which purported to derive from Toft herself, presented her words in caricaturised dialect, as was the case throughout the century with the speech of those of an 'inferior' nation, class, or race.[62] As the pseudonymous 'Merry Tuft' states in this pamphlet,

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[59] Such techniques were used when attempting to learn the name of the father of an illegitimate child from its mother. See Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (2003), ch. 5.

[60] These confessions are contained in the Douglas Papers, University of Glasgow Library, and are dated 7 Dec. 1726 (D324 and D325) and 14 Dec. 1726 (D328).

[61] Cody, 'Doctor's in Labour', 181.

The other text was the rebus letter *The Rabbit Woman's Epistle to C. Ray now a Prisoner in Newgate* (?1730), at Bodl., shelfmark Gough Maps 45 (f. 161).

> As for bing fryted with *Rawbitts*, it is all a ly; for the troath is, I had alwas an ugli wa of crying *Odd Rawbitt me!* at evri turn. This ugli wurd I uzd in gest or arnist; … Now I do sollymly deklar, that to the best of my nolige, all this had hapned to me for my rash wishis, and profan swearin, and saing Odd Rawbitt me, and such wikid wishis; tharfor I do besech all Cristiun peple to tak worning by me and not to wish rash wishis for the futur, or to sware or curs, lest tha be punishid for the sam.[63]

Rather than being frightened, with the result that her imagination produced the rabbits, her speech has effected the same. This pamphlet was satirical, but (or possibly therefore) it inverts the role of language as signifier: rather than reflecting a reality, language in this text *produces* that reality. Toft's language has caused divine offence resulting in monstrous births, and although the creative power remains with God, language has a causal influence on the production of monstrous bodies. This correspondingly reflects the equation at the heart of early modern physiognomic speculation: an ugly (or beautiful) body signifies an ugly (or beautiful) mind. This reinforcement of the language-body relationship demonstrates how the Toft case problematised language in a more ambivalent manner than it did the body.

Toft's fraud reflected deep ambivalences about the status and sources of knowledge. Empiricism was dealt a blow with the recognition that the naïve trust of one's senses could lead to errors like that of Manningham and Douglas on 4 December. Prejudice led to an a priori emplotment of empirical data for the likes of St André and Ahlers, and the eventual vindication of the latter is no defence of his bias. The enduring belief in the power of the maternal imagination, the reliance on preternaturalism, Toft's ability to manipulate her own body (thereby falsifying empirical evidence), and the unreliability of language all problematised the body as a location of stable identity. The

[63] [Tuft], *Much ado about Nothing*, 19-20.

following subsection will show that language had, in any event, already been dealt a more severe blow as an empirical marker than it was to receive from the Toft case.

The Inscrutible Mind of the 'Wild Youth'

'Peter the Wild Boy' was found in July 1724 wandering the woods just outside Hameln in Hanover, and was presented to George I when he visited the Electorate in November 1725. Brought to England in the following year, Peter was introduced to polite society in February 1726 and remained the chief diversion of the court that spring. Swift met Peter in April, and Swift's close friend, John Arbuthnot, the satirist, surgeon, and Scriblerian, had been charged with his education.[64] After two months of unsuccessful attempts to get Peter to speak, he was baptised and named in July, and eventually passed over to one of the women of Princess Caroline's bedchamber, granted a pension, and settled in Hertfordshire where he lived until his death in 1785.[65] During his lifetime, Peter's story became a *locus communis* for racial and linguistic theorists who were later able to assimilate him within their models of human and linguistic development.[66] At the time of his arrival in Britain, however, he upset traditional models of human identity by seeming to lack the crucial feature that distinguished humans from animals: a rational soul.

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[64] Swift to Thomas Tickell, 16 Apr. 1726, in Harold Williams (ed.), *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift* (5 vols., Oxford, 1963-5), iii. 128-9.

[65] Little certainty surrounds Peter's life, either in the forests of Germany or in England after 1725. The best account is given in Michael Newton, *Savage Girls and Wild Boys: A History of Feral Children* (2003), ch. 2. Other sources for Peter's life include Nash, *Wild Enlightenment*, 42-4; Julia V. Douthwaite, '*Homo ferus*: Between Monster and Model', *ECL*, 21 (1997), 176-202; Maximilian E. Novak, 'The Wild Man Comes to Tea', in Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak (eds.), *The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (1972), 183-221. For a roughly contemporary account, see *GM*, 55 (1785), 851-3.

[66] See n. 26, above.

The reaction provoked by Peter's arrival in London was overwhelmingly satirical. Both Defoe and Arbuthnot wrote pamphlets about Peter and a host of other writers all used him to probe the limits of the human, or merely poke fun at the Hanoverian court or Sir Robert Walpole.[67] It is not difficult to see why Peter would be used in this fashion. He was a perfect example of the sort of 'noble savage' or *ingénu* whose opinions on Europe held a mirror to its societies, soon to become a significant trope of Enlightenment social fiction with Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (1728). Perhaps more important for British culture was that the arrival of an 'idiot' from Hanover mirrored that which took place in 1714.[68] George's predilection for the Electorate was, as we have seen, a source of tension straining relations between the King and his British subjects. As satirists were unable openly to ridicule the monarchy in print, Peter was the perfect vehicle to criticise the Hanoverian dynasty. Hence there is perhaps little surprising about the Scriblerian authorship of satires on Peter.

However, texts on Peter neither lacked content which reflected important issues of identity nor were the two uses of Peter, one satirical, the other philosophical, mutually exclusive. Even the lowest genre of pamphlet, those which were given away as enticements to buy quack remedies, engaged with some notions of wildness and socialisation. For example, confident assertions about Peter's humanity fill *An Enquiry how the Wild Youth Lately taken in the Woods … could be there left* (1726): 'certain it is, that he is of human Kind, and had a Father and Mother like us, but how he could subsist in

[67] [John Arbuthnot], *It cannot Rain but it Pours; or, London strow'd with Rarities* (1726) was at one time attributed to Swift.
[68] Hannah Smith and Ragnhild Hatton have been at the vanguard of rescuing George's reputation from the condescension of later scholars, but George was widely satirised as boorish. See Hannah Smith, *Georgian Monarchy* (Cambridge, 2006) and Hatton, *George I*.

those *Woods*, and be wild, as really he was, the most probable Account that can be thought of, must be as follows.'[69] So strong, it appears, is Peter's humanity, that it manages to rub off on other animals, especially his ursine surrogate mother, for ''tis well known to those Persons who keep Bears tame, that where they naturally take, they are very fond of human kind.'[70]

Peter's humanity ultimately emerges as less secure than these confident assertions imply, as trans-species affection, being a two-way process, threatens a collapse of the human into the animal.[71] Indeed, *An Enquiry* supposed it 'not improbable, that if a Bear was brought to him, he would discover by some Action or other, that might naturally break out, that that Creature had been no Stranger to him, and would confirm the Opinion of his being brought up by that Creature rather than any other.'[72] This possibility was enacted in the satirical *Most Wonderful of Wonders That ever appear'd to the Wonder of the British Nation*. Here, Peter is reunited in London with the bear that reared him. Peter's conversation with this bear is a critique of man's view of himself in nature and of his worship of Mammon. Peter's conception of language, owing much to the Lockean 'way of ideas', is demonstrated when explaining why he has been unable to learn English:

> for they use many Words to which they join no *Idea*. These are I fancy imaginary Deities; as Justice, Piety, Charity, Mercy, Publick Good, and many others which commonly fill their Discourse; but what is meant by 'em I cannot yet discover, tho' I have a strong notion they have no Meaning at all; and are only employ'd to give a Grace to their Conversation, because they sound pleasant to the Ear, and run glibly off the Tongue.[73]

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[69] Anon., *An Enquiry how the Wild Youth…* (1726), 2.
[70] *Enquiry*, 3.
[71] See Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World* (1984), esp. 121-36; Fudge, *Brutal Reasoning*.
[72] *Enquiry*, 4.
[73] *Most Wonderful Wonder*, 11.

This pamphlet provided perhaps the clearest expression of Peter's ability to communicate with animals, a feature of all the literature on him.[74] Peter, Arbuthnot claimed, was sufficiently adept at this to act as mediator in forest quarrels between different species of animals.[75] There exists a degree of ambivalence, however, given that while Peter's communicative abilities with the animal creation were being celebrated, the selfsame pamphlets were exploiting his satiric potential as one of the only living examples of a Lockean *tabula rasa*.[76]

Indeed, the only self-consciously serious consideration of Peter's case to emerge in 1726, Daniel Defoe's *Mere Nature Delineated*, argued that he would be unable to distinguish between discrete entities because of the inaccessibility for Peter of the ideas behind them.[77] This equation of a lack of perception with a lack of knowledge, is precisely the point behind both Locke's linguistics and the use of language by racial theorists throughout the century.[78] Defoe expressed the metaphysical challenge posed by Peter in the clearest way. For him, the fundamental marker of humanity was a soul, and 'we are not easily able to conceive of a Human Body, without any such Thing as a reasonable Soul infused at its first being form'd, unless we had ever seen or read of such a Creature in the World before.'[79] The previously automatic association of human bodies and reasonable souls was disrupted by Peter. The choices in this situation seemed to Defoe to be equally distasteful: either it was conceded that

[74] Lucienne Strivay, *Enfants sauvages: Approches anthropologiques* (Paris, 2006), 296.
[75] [Arbuthnot], *It cannot Rain*, 7.
[76] Strivay, *Enfants sauvages*, 57.
[77] Defoe's pamphlet is discussed at length in Newton, 'Bodies without Souls: the Case of Peter the Wild Boy', in Erica Fudge, Ruth Gilbert, and Susan Wiseman (eds.), *At the Borders of the Human: Beasts, Bodies and Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Period* (Basingstoke, 2002), 196-214.
[78] See chapter one, above, and Newton, 'Bodies without Souls', 205.
[79] *MND*, 23.

Peter did not have a soul, in which case the empirical signifier of human identity – the human form – could no longer signify the presence of a soul and thus the humanity of the individual; or Peter did have a soul, which would have suffered degradation by his remaining mute and wanting to escape and live in the forest.[80] Defoe's solution was to fudge the issue: Peter had a soul, but it was inert.[81]

Defoe makes it clear in his discussion of the education of the deaf and dumb that, for him, language was not an essential marker of humanity. In 1727 Defoe's daughter, Sophia, became engaged to the tutor of the deaf, Henry Baker who, although not deaf himself, would hardly have been sympathetic to the notion that absence of language connoted a lack of humanity.[82] When discussing the deaf and dumb, Defoe engages with the same correlation of words and ideas as did the author of *The Most Wonderful Wonder of Wonders*, stating that 'Words are to us, the Medium of Thought; we cannot conceive of Things, but by their Names, and in the very Use of their Names.'[83] Defoe asserts that the deaf and dumb do act their passions and senses on things, but that we do not know how. This leads him to a conclusion which, although it departs somewhat from his consideration of Peter, nevertheless demonstrates the extent to which the absence of language, in *Mere Nature Delineated*, is uncoupled from questions of humanity: 'It is evident then, that they can act upon material Objects, and even upon some immaterial too, as well as we can; but it is certainly in a different, and, perhaps, superior Way.'[84] The absence of language

[80] *MND*, 20-2.
[81] *MND*, 23-4.
[82] See Maximillian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (Oxford, 2001), 648-52.
[83] *MND*, 38-9.
[84] *MND*, 41-2.

permits a more immediate connection with things, earthly and divine. Although Peter himself is a being with a soul only *in potentia*, his lack of language is here considered to be a potential benefit.

The only speaking and hearing adult human who enjoyed such an immediacy of communication and with whom most, if not all, of Defoe's readers would have been acquainted, was Adam.[85] Like him, Peter is also envisaged as engaging in nomenclative activity. Arbuthnot's own contribution to the pamphlet literature on Peter, *It cannot Rain but it Pours, or London strow'd with Rarities*, states that Peter

> distinguishes Objects by certain Sounds fram'd to himself … Beholding one Day the [Butcher's] Shambles with great Fear and Astonishment, ever since he calls Man by the same Sound which expresseth Wolf. A young Lady is a Peacock, old Women Magpyes and Owls; a Beau with a *Toupee*, a Monkey; Glass, Ice; Blue, Red, and Green Ribbons, he calls Rainbows; an Heap of Gold a Turd.[86]

Peter was not the only eighteenth-century 'savage' to redefine the commonplace when visiting Britain: the Polynesian Mai was to do the same in the mid-1770s.[87] The emphasis on their honesty placed iron in the satiric glove, whilst emphasising their humanity, for to rename things it was necessary to have ideas of them, for which one required a soul.

Despite his exploitation as a fruitful satiric locus, Peter quite clearly brought to the surface uncertainties about the status of the human. Not only did his upbringing and (lack of) linguistic abilities potentially blur the boundary

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[85] See Simon Patrick, *A Commentary upon the First Book of Moses, Called Genesis*, 2nd edn. (1698), 54; Thomas Stackhouse, *A New History of the Holy Bible*, 2nd edn. (2 vols., 1742-4), i. 10; Matthew Poole, *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*, 4th edn. (2 vols., 1700), Gen. ii. 19-20. See also Lia Formigari, *Language and Experience in 17th-Century British Philosophy* (Philadelphia, 1988), 1-14.

[86] [Arbuthnot], *It cannot Rain*, 6-7.

[87] See chapter four, below, and Harriet Guest, 'Ornament and use: Mai and Cook in London', in Kathleen Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire* (Cambridge, 2004), 317-44, and Wahrman, *Making*, 123-6.

between human and animal, but the possibility that Peter may or may not have a soul problematised what it meant to be a human. Defoe offered the possibility that thought, or even an enhanced relationship with God, could take place without language. However, as the following section will show, this was not shared by those reacting to *Gulliver's Travels*.

The Wild Dean of Dublin

This section will demonstrate that both the unreliability of the body as a source of empirical knowledge (exemplified by Toft) and the provisionality of language as an alternative marker of humanity (demonstrated by Peter) were powerfully stated in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. In addition, it will be shown that commonplaces of later discourses of embodied identity, such as physical (ethnographic) description, eugenics, and contemplated genocide, were available to Augustan thinkers. Moving from a brief account of the critical reception of *Gulliver's Travels*, this section will consider how Swift achieved an identification of humans and Yahoos. This was accomplished by using ethnographic description, the interbreeding criterion, and the embodiment of reason in a non-human form. By thus establishing the humanity of mute and unthinking creatures in a land where reason was monopolised by its equine inhabitants, Swift pointed to the unreliability of the body and reason as markers of human identity. It will be argued that he did this, paradoxically, to reassert the nobility of man. This section will then briefly show how *Gulliver's Travels* was, as a result of these techniques, taken to be emblematic of the confusion of identity. Finally, the related questions of eugenics and genocide in Houyhnhnmland will be considered. *Gulliver's Travels* demonstrated not

merely the conceivability of such murderous possibilities but explored them as means of preventing identity confusion in a land where, unlike England, such confusions did not occur. Swift ultimately explored the possibilities of a racialised order before one came to exist, and thereby testified to the importance of a stable body for the establishment of such an order.

An Uncomfortable Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms

Despite the loud praise that greeted his *Travels* on their publication in October 1726, Gulliver's last voyage caused deep discomfort for many readers.[88] From the mid-eighteenth century until the start of the twentieth, reaction to this part of the book coloured the general perception of Swift himself.[89] Johnson accused Swift of a 'depravity of intellect', and Thackeray's 1853 lecture on Swift contained some of the most extreme comments to be made on the author.[90] 'As for the moral [of book four of *Gulliver's Travels*], I think it horrible, shameful, unmanly, blasphemous … It is Yahoo language; a monster gibbering shrieks, and gnashing imprecations against mankind, – tearing down all shreds of modesty, past all sense of manliness and shame; filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene.'[91]

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[88] On the publication and positive reception of the *Travels*, see Irvin Ehrenpreis, *Swift: The Man, His Works, and the Age*, iii: *Dean Swift* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), 494-508; David Nokes, *Jonathan Swift, A Hypocrite Reversed* (Oxford, 1985), 305-6, 309-10; J. Paul Hunter, '*Gulliver's Travels* and the later writings' in Christopher Fox (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift* (Cambridge, 2003), 216-40 at 216-22; Julian Hoppit, *A Land of Liberty? England, 1689-1727* (Oxford, 2002), 415, 445-6.

[89] See Williams, *JS*; Merrel D. Clubb, 'The Criticism of Gulliver's "Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," 1726-1914', in Hardin Craig (ed.), *Stanford Studies in Language and Literature* (Stanford, CA, 1941), 203-32; James L. Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage: "Hard" and "Soft" Schools of Interpretation', in Larry S. Champion (ed.), *Quick Springs of Sense: Studies in the Eighteenth Century* (Athens, GA., 1974), 33-49 .

[90] Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets; and a Criticism on their Works* (Dublin, 1779-81), ii. 492.

[91] W. M. Thackeray, *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century* (1853), 40.

It was not until the twentieth century, and in particular the experience of world war, that the 'savage indignation' against the Yahoos, and the unary correspondence of Swift and his hero, Gulliver, was challenged in any serious manner.[92] In consequence, two schools, known as 'hard' and 'soft', came to dominate criticism of the voyage.[93] Both have fluid boundaries and encompass a wide range of opinions, but the division is fundamentally one of whether Swift did truly intend, as he claimed, to vex readers rather than divert them.[94] This dichotomy is a result of different interpretations of what the three parties in Houyhnhnmland (Gulliver, the Yahoos, and the Houyhnhnms) represent, and what Swift is consequently claiming about the nature of humankind.[95]

The 'soft' school holds that the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos are distilled (and therefore exaggerated) reifications of the rational and passionate elements (respectively) of the human character, and that the Portuguese captain, Mendez, who rescues Gulliver from New Holland at the end of the voyage, is actually the ideal – if there is one – of the fourth book. The 'soft' school emphasises compromise and a comic satirisation of Gulliver himself for idealising the Houyhnhnms in so absurd a manner.[96] The feature that unites the disparate

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[92] Clubb, 'Criticism'; Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage'.
[93] See R. S. Crane, 'The Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos, and the History of Ideas', in id., *The Idea of the Humanities and Other Essays* (2 vols., Chicago, 1967), ii. 261-82. Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage', contains an excellent account of the formation of these two schools.
[94] For Swift's statement of his intentions for *Gulliver's Travels*, see the oft-quoted letter to Alexander Pope of 29 Sep. 1725, in Williams (ed.), *Correspondence*, ii. 102-5.
[95] For two conflicting opinions of the relevance of the 'hard' and 'soft' debate to modern Swift studies, see Charles H. Hinnant, 'Swift and the "Conjectural Histories" of the Eighteenth Century: The Case of the Fourth Voyage', *SECC*, 21 (1991), 75-88 and Richard H. Rodino, '"Splendide Mendax": Authors, Characters, and Readers in *Gulliver's Travels*', *PMLA*, 106 (1991), 1054-70.
[96] Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage', 35-7. For examples of the 'soft' school, see Ann Cline Kelly, 'Swift's Explorations of Slavery in Houyhnhnmland and Ireland', *PMLA*, 91 (1976), 846-55; Irvin Ehrenpreis, 'The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Voyage', *Review of English Literature*, 3, 3 (1962), 18-38; George Orwell, 'Politics vs Literature: An Examination of *Gulliver's Travels*', in Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (eds.), *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell*, iv: *In Front of Your Nose: 1945-1950* (1970), 241-61; W. B. Carnochan, *Lemuel*

'soft school' interpretations of the fourth voyage is the shared view that Swift's goal was to satirise his own creations: the Houyhnhnms could no more be an ideal to aspire to – they are at once boring and sinister – than the Yahoos could be an accurate representation of humanity, and Gulliver's attitudes to both are excessive and unrealistic.[97] His eventual insanity is the result of his own idiosyncratic and misplaced veneration of the Houyhnhnms.

The 'hard' school, on the other hand, argues that Gulliver's ultimate insanity resulted from the fact that the Houyhnhnms were an impossible ideal and that humans remained imprisoned in Yahoo-ness.[98] Amongst examples of this interpretation of the voyage are readings that emphasise the Yahoos' physical and/or moral superiority to European man (notably, the Yahoos do not engage in sodomy, unlike Gulliver's erstwhile shipmates), their primitive script, or their sexual passion and liveliness; and those that concentrate on the superiority of the Houyhnhnms, through a consideration of their moral, physical, rational, or linguistic merits.[99] Amongst some of the most sophisticated examples of this type of criticism are those readings which are

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Gulliver's Mirror for Man (Los Angeles, CA, 1968); Frederick M. Keener, *The Chain of Becoming* (New York, 1983), ch. 5. Ricardo Quintana, *Two Augustans: John Locke, Jonathan Swift* (Madison, WI, 1978); Hinnant, 'Swift and the "Conjectural Histories"'; Mary P. Nichols, 'Rationality and Community: Swift's Criticism of the Houyhnhnms', *Journal of Politics*, 43 (1981), 1153-69; Herbert Zirker, 'Horse Sense and Sensibility: Some Issues Concerning Utopian Understanding in *Gulliver's Travels*', *Swift Studies*, 12 (1997), 85-98; F. R. Leavis, 'The Irony of Swift', in id. (ed.), *Determinations: Critical Essays* (1934), 79-108.

[97] F. R. Leavis first made the point about the Houyhnhnms being fundamentally dull in a 1934 essay on *Gulliver's Travels*. See his 'The Irony of Swift', in id. (ed.), *Determinations*, 79-108.

[98] The classic work in this school remains R. S. Crane's seminal essay, originally published in 1962. See Crane, 'Houyhnhnms'; Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage'.

[99] See, respectively, James E. Gill, 'Beast Over Man: Theriophilic Paradox in Gulliver's "Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms"', *Studies in Philology*, 67 (1970), 532-49; Terry J. Castle, 'Why the Houyhnhnms Don't Write: Swift, Satire and the Fear of the Text', *Essays in Literature*, 7 (1980), 31-44; Brean S. Hammond, 'Scriblerian Self-Fashioning', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 18 (1988), 108-24; William H. Halewood and Marvin Levich, 'Houyhnhnm Est Animal Rationale', *JHI*, 26 (1965), 273-81; Gene Washington, 'Natural Horses ⊠ The Noble Horse ⊠ Houyhnhnms', *Swift Studies*, 3 (1988), 91-5; Clive T. Probyn, 'Swift and Linguistics: The Context behind Lagado and around the Fourth Voyage', *Neophilologus*, 58 (1974), 425-39.

fundamentally comparative, examining one or all of Gulliver, the Yahoos, and the Houyhnhnms with reference to each other.[100] One consequence of such comparative readings is that it becomes possible to employ simultaneously a 'hard' and 'soft' interpretation,[101] and the dissolution of the individual critic's 'hard' or 'soft' identity exactly mirrors one of Swift's arguable goals in the fourth voyage: the dissolution of identity itself.[102]

Yahoos and Humans

Most eighteenth-century readers were oblivious to such critical niceties. They almost uniformly identified the Yahoos as human and were therefore shocked by Swift's libel on humankind.[103] Many, including Samuel Richardson and the Scottish philosopher James Beattie, were outraged at the demotion of the human vis-à-vis the animal.[104] Those who sought to defend Swift's work, such as his cousin, Deane Swift, eschewed interpretations that posited a one-to-one correspondence of Yahoo and human. Instead, they preferred to associate the protagonists of Houyhnhnmland with abstract vice and virtue.[105] Such defences of the fourth voyage were few, contested, and ultimately undermined

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[100] Halewood and Levich, 'Houyhnhnm Est Animal Rationale'; Gill, 'Beast Over Man'.
[101] John Traugott, 'A Voyage to Nowhere with Thomas More and Jonathan Swift: *Utopia* and *The Voyage to the Houyhnhnms*', *Sewanee Review*, 69 (1961), 533-65. Cited in Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage', 39.
[102] Dennis Todd, 'The Hairy Maid at the Harpsichord: Some Speculations on the Meaning of *Gulliver's Travels*', *Texas Studies in Language and Literature*, 34 (1992), 239-83.
[103] Claude Rawson has argued that the Yahoos are polymorphous, representing different things at different points in the narrative of the fourth voyage. At certain key points (e.g. the genocide to be discussed later in this chapter) they represent humanity, but his argument is more concerned with Swift's meanings, rather than how contemporaries read the book. See his *God, Gulliver, and Genocide: Barbarism and the European Imagination, 1492-1945* (Oxford, 2001), ch. 4.
[104] Letter of 23 Feb. 1752 to Lady Bradshaigh, in Anna Laetitia Barbauld (ed.), *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (6 vols., 1804), vi. 152-3; James Beattie, *Dissertations Moral and Critical* (1783), 515. Both reprinted in Williams, *JS*, 105, 196, respectively.
[105] Deane Swift, *Essay upon the Life, Writings, and Character of Dr. Jonathan Swift* (1755), 230. Reprinted in Williams, *JS*, 145.

by the text of *Gulliver's Travels* itself. In the prefatory letter to the 1735 edition, Gulliver described how he was able to root out all the Yahoo vices, thus making it clear that the Yahoos are most certainly not an abstracted moral turpitude.[106] Indeed, the Yahoos have deeply immoral characteristics, but they are not immorality embodied. Rather, their humanity is clear from both their possession of souls and the existence of a class of them named 'Europeans'.

Swift achieved this identification of Yahoo and human in three ways. First, he deployed the rhetoric of ethnographic description to portray the Yahoos in the same way that contemporary travellers did Africans, the Irish, native Americans, or Antipodean populations. Second, Swift deployed the interbreeding criterion met with in chapter one to establish the common species of Gulliver and Yahoos.[107] Finally, he embodied reason in such a distinct form – equine – that it became impossible to assert mankind's status as *animal rationale*. Gulliver's physical description of the Yahoos draws an unequivocal link between them and humanity by associating them to known non-Europeans:

> My Horror and Astonishment are not to be described, when I observed, in this abominable Animal, a perfect human Figure; the Face of it indeed was flat and broad, the Nose depressed, the Lips large, and the Mouth wide. But these Differences are common to all Savage Nations, where the Lineaments of the Countenance are distorted by the Natives suffering their Infants to lie grovelling on the Earth, or by carrying them on their Backs, nuzzling with their Face against the Mother's Shoulders. (213)

Gulliver is shocked and disgusted at the physical form of the Yahoos. Whatever the moral, ethical, or rational basis for this disgust, it remains an a priori judgement based on physical form. Such judgements were common in the

[106] Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Robert DeMaria, Jr. (2003 [1726]), 8. All subsequent references are parenthesised and are from this edition.
[107] See pp. 49ff., above.

contemporary travel literature that formed much of the source material for Swift's portrayal of the Yahoos.[108] The proximity of Swift's descriptions to those in two popular travel accounts, both owned by him,[109] will suffice to substantiate the argument that his description of the Yahoos reflected an overall climate of opinion on non-European peoples.[110]

One of the most popular travel accounts of the early eighteenth century, William Dampier's *New Voyage Round the World* (1697), provided one of the earliest European depictions of the inhabitants of New Holland (now Australia):

> Setting aside their humane shape, they differ but little from Brutes. … They have great Bottle noses, pretty full lips, and wide mouths. The two fore-teeth of their upper Jaw are wanting in all of them, men and women, old and young … Neither have they any Beards. They are long visaged, and of a very unpleasing aspect; having no one graceful feature in their faces. Their Hair is black, short and curl'd, like that of the Negroes: and not long and lank like the common *Indians*. The colour of their skins, both of their faces and the rest of their body, is coal black, like that of the Negroes of *Guinea*.[111]

In addition to his ownership of Dampier, Swift also posited a genealogical link with Gulliver, who referred to his 'cousin *Dampier*.' (5) Another popular text

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[108] Swift's fascination with travel literature is well documented in Ehrenpreis, *Swift*, iii. 457-9 and R. W. Frantz, 'Swift's Yahoos and the Voyagers', *Modern Philology*, 29 (1931), 49-57.

[109] Dirk F. Passmann and Heinz J. Vienken, *The Library and Reading of Jonathan Swift* (4 vols., Frankfurt am Mein, 2003), i. 489-91, ii. 831-3; Frantz, 'Swift's Yahoos', 50; M. R. James, 'Swift's Copy of Dampier', *TLS*, 26 Feb. 1925, 138.

[110] Houyhnhnmland itself was based on descriptions of China provided by Swift's erstwhile patron, Sir William Temple. See P. J. Marshall and Glyndwr Williams, *The Great Map of Mankind: British Perceptions of the World in the Age of Enlightenment* (1982), 128-54.

[111] William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 3rd edn. (1698), 464. This is the edition Swift owned. On the popularity of Dampier, see Marshall and Williams, *Great Map*, 37-40; Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas* (2001), ch. 2. Other scholars have noted the importance of Dampier in particular for the fourth voyage of *Gulliver's Travels*. See A. H. Mackinnon, 'The Augustan Intellectual and the Ignoble Savage: Houyhnhnm versus Hottentot', in J. Bakker, J. A. Verleun, and J. van der Vriesenaerde (eds.), *Essays on English and American Literature and a Sheaf of Poems* (Amsterdam, 1987), 55-63; Cristina Malcolmson, '*Gulliver's Travels* and Studies of Skin Color in the Royal Society', in Frank Palmeri (ed.), *Humans and Other Animals in Eighteenth-Century British Culture: Representation, Hybridity, Ethics* (Aldershot, 2006), 49-66; David Fausett, *Images of the Antipodes in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Stereotyping* (Amsterdam, 1994), ch. 3.

was Thomas Herbert's *Some Yeares Travels into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique* (1638), reprinted in several anthologies of travel literature in the eighteenth century.[112] Herbert's description of the inhabitants of the Cape of Good Hope is even closer to Gulliver's of the Yahoos. These 'differ in nothing from bruit beasts save forme … Their colour is ugly black, and strongly limbd, desperate, crafty, and injurious. Their heads are long; their haire, woolly and crispt, no apparell in any place shewing more variety. … Their noses are flat, crusht so in their infancie; great lips, description cannot make them greater; quick crafty eyes.'[113] These two extracts focus attention sharply on skin colour, facial features (particularly the nose and lips), and hair, all the while making strong aesthetic and moral judgements which emphasise the contiguity of these peoples to the brute creation. The circulation of images such as these amongst the Augustan reading public meant that an interpretation of the Yahoos as non-Europeans was certainly possible.

However, that same public did not draw the obvious conclusion that the Yahoos straightforwardly represented such peoples.[114] An alternative reading, whereby the Yahoos could be represented as like but not identical to humans, in the same way as apes in the early eighteenth century, is prevented by Swift's second means of associating humans with Yahoos: the clear deployment of the

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[112] See, for example, John Harris, *Navigantum atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca* (1705) and John Hamilton Moore, *A New and Complete Collection of Voyages and Travels* (?1785).
[113] Thomas Herbert, *Some Yeares Travels into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique* (1638), 16-18.
[114] This has not stopped modern scholars positing this rather simplistic connection. A trenchant but cripplingly unsophisticated analysis of race in book four of *Gulliver's Travels* is provided in Anthony Stewart, 'The Yahoo and the Discourse of Racialism in *Gulliver's Travels*', *Lumen*, 12 (1993), 35-43. A more sophisticated appraisal is provided by Laura Brown, who sees both the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos as contributing to a position of anticolonialism. See Laura Brown, *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Ithaca, NY., 1993), ch. 6, published earlier as 'Reading Race and Gender: Jonathan Swift', *ECS*, 23 (1990), 425-43. Claude Rawson has taken exception to this reading in his *God, Gulliver, and Genocide*, esp. 175-81.

interbreeding criterion.[115] Sexual attraction governed this mechanism, as animals that could not produce fertile offspring demonstrated their different species identity by not being attracted to one another. Gulliver's sexual assault at the hands of a pubescent female Yahoo in season (245) left him under no illusion as to his true identity. Gulliver 'could no longer deny, that I was a real *Yahoo*, in every limb and Feature, since the Females had a natural Propensity to me as one of their own Species.' (245) Gulliver's own aesthetic appreciation of this Yahoo girl (her appearance was not 'altogether so hideous as the rest of the Kind')[116] eliminates the possibility that she might have misidentified Gulliver, and the consequent reciprocity of sexual attraction clearly invokes the interbreeding criterion.

This wider species identity of Gulliver/humanity and the Yahoos via sexual attraction was parodied in contemporary responses to *Gulliver's Travels*. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, hostile to Pope by 1726, initially thought *Gulliver's Travels* to have been a joint Scriblerian production and waxed vituperative in a letter to her sister of November 1726. In this she accused the Scriblerians of sexual desire for horses, as 'they talk of a stable with so much warmth and Affection I can't help suspecting some very powerfull Motive at the bottom of it.'[117] Montagu's imputation of bestiality notwithstanding, Pope himself wrote in a similar vein in one of his *Poems Occasion'd by Reading the*

[115] On apes, and especially Tyson's work on the chimpanzee, in connection with Swift and the Scriblerians, see M. F. Ashley Montagu, 'Tyson's *Orang-Outang, sive Homo Sylvestris* and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*', *PMLA*, 59 (1944), 84-9; Hammond, 'Scriblerian Self-Fashioning'; Mackinnon, 'Augustan Intellectual'; Carnochan, *Lemuel Gulliver's Mirror*, ch. 1.
[116] This point was also made by Carnochan. See his *Lemuel Gulliver's Mirror*, 11.
[117] Letter to Lady Mar, Nov. 1726, in Robert Halsband (ed.), *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (3 vols., Oxford, 1965-7), ii. 71-2. Reprinted in Williams, *JS*, 65.

Travels of Captain Lemuel Gulliver (1727). In Mary Gulliver's 'epistle' to her husband, she indignantly protests

> Not touch me! never Neighbour call'd me Slut!
> Was *Flimnap*'s Dame more sweet in *Lilliput?*
> I've no red Hair to breath an odious Fume;
> At least thy Consort's cleaner than thy *Groom*.
> Why then that dirty Stable-boy thy Care?
> What mean those Visits to the *Sorrel Mare?*
> …
> *Where sleeps my* Gulliver? O *tell me where?*
> The Neighbours answer, "*With the Sorrel Mare*."[118]

The power of the interbreeding criterion, with an emphasis on sexual attraction (or lack of 'abhorrence'), is clear from these responses to *Gulliver's Travels*, which play on the pathos of Gulliver's desire to be a Houyhnhnm. These parodic deployments of the criterion make it highly unlikely that readers would not have agreed with Gulliver that his sexual assault made him – and with him all humanity – a Yahoo. However, it was also a commonplace of eighteenth-century racial theories and ethnographic literature that non-Europeans were attracted to whites, so the reason why the Yahoos stood for all humanity, rather than a particular degraded part of it, must be sought beyond the purely physical domain.[119]

It is in fact the specific embodiment of reason in an equine form, that is the third and most thorough way in which Swift corrals humans and Yahoos together.[120] On 29 September 1725, Swift wrote to Pope to tell him that 'I have

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[118] [Alexander Pope], *Poems Occasion'd by Reading the Travels of Captain Lemuel Gulliver, Explanatory and Commendatory* (Dublin, 1727), 13-14.
[119] On the black (female) attraction for whites, see for example Jean Barbot, *A Description of the Coasts of North and South-Guinea*, reprinted in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (6 vols., 1732), v. 34; Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia, 1794), 230.
[120] Locke himself related the human form to the constitution of man as capable of development into a (rational) person. See John W. Yolton, 'Locke's Man', *JHI*, 62 (2001), 665-83.

got Materials Towards a Treatis [*sic*] proving the falsity of that Definition *animal rationale*; and to show it should be only *rationis capax*. Upon this great foundation of Misanthropy … The whole building of my Travells is erected.'[121] Swift's redefinition of humanity as a species with the capacity for – rather than attainment of – reason is accomplished by two manoeuvres. The foremost of these is a redefinition of reason itself. Houyhnhnm reason is intuitive, devoid of passion and interest. Gulliver recalls that 'it was with extreme Difficulty that I could bring my Master to understand the meaning of the Word *Opinion*, or how a Point could be disputable; because *Reason* taught us to affirm or deny only where we are certain; and beyond our Knowledge we cannot do either.' (246) 'Reason' as we would understand it is a polluted and warped version of its archetypal form as it exists amongst those 'perfections of nature', the Houyhnhnms. Our inability to agree demonstrates our incomplete grasp of 'reason', and in emphasising this Swift destroys the definition 'homo est animal rationale.'

This conclusion is forced home in the second of Swift's definitive manoeuvres. In this, not only is a behavioural continuity between the Yahoos and Europeans established,[122] but reason is firmly embodied. Following Gulliver's explanation of the treatment of horses in Europe, the Houyhnhnm master begrudgingly acknowledged that if Yahoos alone had reason, then they would surely rule, 'But, considering the Frame of our Bodies, and especially of

[121] Swift to Pope, 29 Sep. 1725, in Williams (ed.), *Correspondence*, iii. 103. 'Soft' school critics emphasise that the distinction Swift drew between himself and Timon of Athens means that his misanthropy is fundamentally comic and self-reflexive. See A. D. Nuttall, 'Gulliver among the Horses', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 18 (1988), 51-67; Roger Bartra, *The Artificial Savage: Modern Myths of the Wild Man*, tr. Christopher Follett (Ann Arbor, MI, 1997), 189.

[122] For example, the Houyhnhnm master explicitly links Gulliver's kind with the Yahoos, by reflecting on Gulliver's description of European warfare (226-7), and likening this to the Yahoos' Hobbesian war of all against all (239).

mine, he thought no Creature of equal Bulk was so ill-contrived, for employing that Reason in the common Office of Life.' (223) The body is here judged on its utility 'for employing … reason,' and the degradation of humans was intensified when the Houyhnhnm master argued that Europeans are worse than Yahoos: 'He seemed therefore confident, that instead of Reason, we were only possessed of some Quality fitted to increase our natural Vices; as the Reflection from a troubled Stream returns the Image of an ill-shapen Body, not only *larger*, but more *distorted*.' (228) Swift disabuses humanity of its pretensions to reason, by both forcing our concurrence with the Houyhnhnm notion of reason, and by showing that our understanding of it is productive of vices worse than the Yahoos'. With our pretensions to reason gone, the rational soul as the key criterion of humanity is fatally undermined. Beattie, writing in 1776, thought this as supremely perverse, and was incredulous that 'a Christian Divine can set himself deliberately to trample upon that nature, which he knows to have been made but a little lower than the angels.'[123]

Beattie arguably missed the point of Swift's satire, which was at once religious, political, and racial. Book 4 of *Gulliver's Travels* can be read as a reassertion of the nobility of man, as Swift appears at pains to demonstrate that viewing certain characteristics, such as the human form or the possession of reason, as fundamental markers of humanity can result in attributing humanity to non-humans. The denial of an insensible 'essence' of humanity, or, which is much the same thing, an assertion of its inaccessibility using (linguistic) signs, was a characteristic of Locke's Whig epistemology.[124] This rejection of 'essence'

[123] James Beattie, *Essays* (Edinburgh, 1776), 44 n. Reprinted in Williams, *JS*, 196-7.
[124] Locke, *Essay*, III.iii (pp. 337-76). Attempts by literary scholars to posit a clear link between Swift's writings and the thought of John Locke have always struggled both for want of positive

results in an undue promotion of human form and reason as *the* signifiers of humanity. Along such a path, as Gulliver's fate manifestly proves, madness lay. Acknowledging the nobility of humans, even when they were only *rationis capax*, prevented reason or human form from acting as proofs of humanity. When they did act in this capacity, a unary correspondence between the body and the reason of its possessor was established. Such a correspondence characterised Houyhnhnm categories of thought, in which Gulliver entrapped himself, and which gave rise to murderous possibilities that appear throughout much of Swift's later satire. Ever the Tory, Swift's reassertion of an essence of humanity strongly conformed to traditional religious teaching on man, confounded a Whiggish epistemology, and undermined the empirical methodologies of nascent racial science. Although it would be to go too far to claim that Swift is actively participating in or parodying racial science *per se*,[125] *Gulliver's Travels* does indicate that the texts, techniques, and theoretical underpinnings of racial theories (particularly the conclusion that physical form had a causal relationship with mental or intellectual endowment) were freely available for Swift to deploy.

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evidence, and as a consequence of Swift's occasional – and satirical – comments on the Lockean 'way of ideas'. See Rosalie L. Colie, 'Gulliver, the Locke-Stillingfleet Controversy, and the Nature of Man', *The History of Ideas Newsletter*, 2 (1956), 58-62; Christopher Fox, *Locke and the Scriblerians: Identity and Consciousness in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain* (1988), ch. 5; W. B. Carnochan, 'Swift, Locke, and the *Tale*', *Swift Studies*, 1 (1986), 55-6; Ehrenpreis, 'Meaning'. Nicholas Hudson has argued that Swift agreed with Locke that language constituted what humans perceived as reality, and that consequently 'essences' were inaccessible via linguistic signs. This does not mean, however, that Swift thought no such essence of humanity existed, merely that it could not be induced from the possession of certain characteristics. See Nicholas Hudson, '*Gulliver's Travels* and Locke's Radical Nominalism', *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, Inquiries*, 1 (1994), 247-66.

[125] Some have made this claim, although none in a particularly convincing manner. See Brown, 'Reading Race and Gender'; Stewart, 'Yahoo and the Discourse of Racialism'; Malcolmson, '*Gulliver's Travels*'.

Confusing Identity

The clear identification of Yahoo and human was a pivotal part of the interpretation of the fourth voyage for most eighteenth-century critics. Paradoxically, it was because of the clarity of this linkage that *Gulliver's Travels* acted as a cultural emblem of identity confusion. Gulliver is perhaps the strongest sign of this in the text itself, as his entrapment within Houyhnhnm categories of thought forces him to come increasingly to describe himself as a Yahoo, and the Houyhnhnms as people.[126] By undermining the apparent stability of the concept of humanity, *Gulliver's Travels* opened up a space for competing epistemological authorities. Its own status as a fictional travel narrative was a catalyst for this process.[127] The best illustration of this is contained in contemporary criticism of the *Travels*. The angry reaction to Swift's conflation of humans and animals was typical of later criticism, but was also apparent in earlier texts, such as the anonymous *Letter from a Clergyman to his Friend* (1726).[128] This fatuous panegyric on Walpole waxed vituperative on the 'unnatural' description of animals of Houyhnhnmland: 'the great Preheminence asserted of them, to the most virtuous and noble of humane Nature, is so monstrously absurd and unjust, that 'tis with the utmost Pain a generous Mind must endure the Recital.'[129] This text deployed the rhetoric of 'nature' and 'naturalness' as an epistemological authority to justify the virulence of its criticism. In contrast, 'Doctor Bantley' (possibly Arbuthnot), in his

[126] See Timothy J. Reiss, *The Discourse of Modernity* (Ithaca, NY., 1982), ch. 11; Hudson, '*Gulliver's Travels*'; Gill, 'Beast Over Man'; Halewood and Levich, 'Houyhnhnm Est Animal Rationale'; Washington, 'Natural Horses'.
[127] Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (Berkeley, 1962); Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840* (Oxford, 2002); Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts* (Oxford, 1995); Fausett, *Images*.
[128] Anon., *A Letter from a Clergyman to his Friend, With an Account of the Travels of Capt. Lemuel Gulliver and a Character of the Author* (1726).
[129] Anon., *Letter*, 7.

Critical Remarks on Capt. Gulliver's Travels (1735), adduced a wealth of classical texts in order to demonstrate that the Houyhnhnms actually did exist. 'Bantley' boldly defended Gulliver against sceptics by bringing the whole authority of antiquity to bear on Gulliver's side.[130] The competing authorities of nature and antiquity were invoked respectively by these participants in the critical debate on *Gulliver's Travels*, and the breadth of the discursive field laid open by the disjuncture between Houyhnhnm and human categories of thought meant that appeal to any of these authorities was equally valid.

Contemporaries were certainly aware of the role played by Gulliver in confusions of identity. Pseudo-Gulliverian texts, in a variety of forms, proliferated after October 1726, but one particularly fruitful genre of this literature played deliberately on questions of identity.[131] In *The Masquerade*, purportedly by 'Lemuel Gulliver' but actually the product of the pen of Henry Fielding and the patronage of his cousin, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Gulliver plays both the voyager and commentator on modern identity confusions.[132] Going to a masquerade, he finds that 'here in one confusion hurl'd / Seem all the nations of the world.'[133] The endemic confusion of contemporary society is described in the words by which a woman propositions Gulliver, informing him that he is the man for her:

> For all our wiser part despise

[130] 'Doctor Bantley' [?John Arbuthnot], *Critical Remarks on Capt. Gulliver's Travels* (Cambridge, 1735), 32. Another defence of the Houyhnhnms on the basis of antiquity was offered by the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1739. See Jonathan Wagstaffe, M. D., 'Truth Asserted, or a Demonstration that the Relation in Mr GULLIVER's Voyages are no Fictions', *GM*, 9 (1739), 55-9.
[131] See, for example, 'Gulliver', *Anatomist Dissected*; [?Eliza Haywood], *Memoirs of the Court of Lilliput* (1727). A complete list of Gulliveriana is contained in H. Teerink, *A Bibliography of the Writings of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Arthur H. Scouten (Philadelphia, 1963), 244-52.
[132] See Ronald Paulson, *The Life of Henry Fielding* (Oxford, 2000), 13-16.
[133] 'Lemuel Gulliver' [Henry Fielding], *The Masquerade* (1728).

those little apish butterflies;
And if the breed been't quickly mended;
Your empire shortly will be ended:
Breeches our brawny thighs shall grace,
(Another Amazonian race.)
For when men women turn – why then
May women not be chang'd to men?[134]

The association of Gulliver with the gender and identity confusion of the masquerade bespeaks the status of *Gulliver's Travels* as a cultural emblem of confusion. The threat posed by men who turned themselves into women,[135] and who inspired analogous behaviour in women, is both conceived in racial terms ('the breed'), and deemed to require 'mending'. The final element of the fourth voyage to be considered here provided a suggestion of how this could take place: genocide.

Identity and Genocide in Houyhnhnmland and Sparta

Texts from antiquity also played a crucial role in the intellectual foundations of Houyhnhnm thought, particularly Plutarch's 'Life' of Lycurgus.[136] Several features of Plutarch's portrayal of Lycurgus are relevant, but two in particular stand out for our purposes: the Spartans' eugenics, and

[134] 'Gulliver' [Fielding], *Masquerade*, 4.
[135] Another pseudo-Gulliverian example of this threat is 'Martinus Gulliverianus', *The Art of Beauing: in Imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry* (1730).
[136] This relates both to classical authors, such as Plato or Plutarch, and also to Swift's classical education, such as his logical training. See Julia Goldberg, 'Houyhnhnm Subtext: Moral Conclusions and Linguistic Manipulation in *Gulliver's Travels*', *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era*, 4 (1998), 269-84; William H. Halewood, 'Plutarch in Houyhnhnmland: A Neglected Source for Gulliver's Fourth Voyage', *Philological Quarterly*, 44 (1965), 185-94; Ian Higgins, 'Swift and Sparta: The Nostalgia of *Gulliver's Travels*', *Modern Language Review*, 78 (1983), 513-31; John F. Reichert, 'Plato, Swift, and the Houyhnhnms', *Philological Quarterly*, 47 (1968), 179-92; Crane, 'Houyhnhnms'; Nichols, 'Rationality and Community'; Probyn, 'Swift and Linguistics'; Zirker, 'Horse Sense and Sensibility'; Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide*, ch. 4; Barta, *Artificial Savage*, ch. 7. More recent authors were also important, especially Thomas More. See Traugott, 'Voyage to Nowhere'.

their extermination of the Helots.[137] In both Houyhnhnmland and Sparta, marital and sexual regulations were enforced, and in Houyhnhnmland in particular, the relationship of body to reason was the driving force behind the racial differentiation of the Houyhnhnms themselves. Gulliver observed

> that among the *Houyhnhnms*, the *White*, the *Sorrel*, and the *Iron-grey*, were not so exactly shaped as the *Bay*, the *Dapple-grey*, and the *Black*; nor born with equal Talents of the Mind, or a Capacity to improve them; and therefore continued always in the Condition of Servants, without ever aspiring to match out of their own Race, which in that Country would be reckoned monstrous and unnatural. (236)

In Houyhnhnmland, mental capacity was correlated with physical status, policing sexual activity. The subordinate rank is allowed more children (three as opposed to one) so that there is a pool of available servants. When the females have given birth to their quota, they part from their mate, and only rejoin them if one of their offspring dies. If the woman is past child-bearing at this time, then they are given a child by another couple, who then produce another to replace it. (246-7) Gulliver's explanation is as cold as this logic: 'this Caution is necessary to prevent the Country from being overburdened with Numbers.' (247) Coupled with this loveless procreation was a system of eugenics that specified partnerships to produce a purity of colour and balanced offspring. (247)[138]

Lycurgan eugenic policy reflected the Houyhnhnm correlation of body and mind. In reflecting on the sexual communism of Sparta, where all men were able to have sex with any married woman (with the consent of their husband),

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[137] Gulliver had been served a meal in Glubbdubdrib by a Helot of Agesilaus. See Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 184.

[138] On animal breeding in the period, see Harriet Ritvo, 'Possessing Mother Nature: Genetic Capital in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in John Brewer and Susan Staves (eds.), *Early Modern Conceptions of Property* (1995), 413-26.

Plutarch stated that Lycurgus felt children to be the common possession of the Commonwealth, rather than their parents.[139] He was incredulous that men would be more interested in the breeding of their dogs and horses than their children.[140] The inheritance of disease, intelligence, good, or ill qualities was at stake in Lycurgus's thinking, which reflected the primacy of the body over the mind. This equation, used to identify Gulliver (humanity) as Yahoo, was used by both Lycurgus and the Houyhnhnms to justify a eugenic programme based on combating the threat of degeneration and the spectre of racial mixing or 'confusion', if only of social ranks.[141]

The obverse of this programme of reproductive social purification is one of mass extermination, also a feature of both Houyhnhnmland and Sparta. Plutarch reported a supposed 'secret ordinance' that contained instructions for a massacre of the Helots.[142] These were mostly descended from Messenian slaves, but whose name served as a generic term for all slaves of the Spartans.[143] Thucydides described the worst atrocity committed by the Spartans, undertaken because of suspicion that the Helots were prepared to revolt. The Spartans asked those Helots who felt that they had performed well to nominate themselves for freedom, but thought that such as would respond would be the soonest to rebel, 'and when they had thus preferred about two thousand, which also with Crowns in their Heads went in Procession about the Temples, as to

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[139] Such was echoed later by Diderot. See p. 259, below.
[140] *Plutarch's Lives. Translated from the Greek, by Several Hands* (5 vols., 1700), i. 165-6.
[141] Lycurgus envisaged a division of Spartan society along the same lines as the Houyhnhnm, as he had been particularly impressed with Egyptians during the period of his exile, and 'being much taken with their way of separating the Souldiery from their Handycrafts and Mechanicks, … and this distinction of their Professions, as it prevented *confusion*, it encreased their *strength*, and causing *regularity*, added *beauty* to the State.' *Plutarch's Lives*, i. 137.
[142] *Plutarch's Lives*, i. 193.
[143] Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, tr. William Smith (2 vols., 1753), i. 77 n. 6.

receive their Liberty, they not long after made them away, and no Man knew how they perished.'[144] As Claude Rawson has argued, the status of the Helots as slaves in Spartan society was not the only important factor behind these massacres. Their foreignness was also important: 'there was a sense in which they were killed, at least in part, for what they were, not for what they did. It seems to be thus with the whole race of Yahoos.'[145]

The final solution of the Yahoo question was the only topic ever to be debated by the Houyhnhnms, who discussed it at every Houyhnhnm council. We ought not to be surprised at their indeterminacy, for such debate must have been particularly dogmatic where none could understand opinion or how a point could be disputable. At the same council in which Gulliver's expulsion from Houyhnhnmland was decided upon, the question was debated 'whether the Yahoos should be exterminated from the Face of the Earth.' In support of this, one Houyhnhnm enumerated the following reasons: 'the *Yahoos* were the most filthy, noisome, and deformed Animal which Nature ever produced, so they were the most restive and indocible, mischievous and malicious.' He then suggested that the Yahoos were not indigenous to Houyhnhnmland, 'but, that many Ages ago, two of these Brutes appeared together upon a Mountain, whether produced by the Heat of the Sun upon corrupted Mud and Slime, or from the Ooze and Froth of the Sea, was never known. That these *Yahoos* engendered, and their Brood in a short time grew so numerous as to overrune and infest the whole Nation.' (249) The Yahoos, after being described physically then mentally, are here perceived as foreigners, then ultimately as a

[144] Thucydides, *The History of the Grecian War*, tr. Thomas Hobbes, 3rd edn. (2 vols., 1723), i. 359.
[145] Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide*, 262.

disease or infestation.[146] The Houyhnhnms have prevaricated on the question of exterminating the Yahoos because they gain too much benefit from their labour. Gulliver suggested castration as a solution to this question, and this resonated with the eugenic imperatives of Houyhnhnm society. (250) The species difference between Houyhnhnms and Yahoos made this contemplated genocide no more than the simple eradication of a farmyard pest.[147] Indeed, the Houyhnhnm account of Yahoo origins explicitly verminised them by resting upon ideas of spontaneous generation (the creation, from 'decaying earth and excrements', of 'bloodless animals' such as lice or worms).[148] Although no longer intellectually credible in the 1720s, these ideas were still expressed, as when a satirical essay posited Peter's origin in just such a fashion.[149]

Gulliver's presence in Houyhnhnmland prompts his master to revise the theory of Yahoo origins. Combining spontaneous generation with racial degeneration, the two Yahoos were now seen to have come from abroad in the same manner as Gulliver, and profoundly degenerated. The suggestion that Yahoos were European was unmistakable, and Pope's 'Grateful Address of the Unhappy Houyhnhnms, now in Slavery and Bondage in England' draws direct reference to the relationship between the Yahoos of Houyhnhnmland and their kin across the seas:

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[146] The contemporary meaning of 'extermination' itself emphasises the importance of foreignness: throughout the century it retained its older meanings of 'to drive out', 'cast out', or 'banish', even as its modern sense – 'to root out' or 'destroy' – came increasingly to dominate. See *Glossographia Anglicana nova* (1707), s.v. 'Exterminate'; Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 2nd edn. (1755-6), s.v. 'Exterminate'; Thomas Sheridan, *Sheridan's Pronouncing and Spelling Dictionary*, ed. Nicholas Salmon (1800), 253.
[147] Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide*, 259.
[148] Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, tr. A. Platt in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (2 vols., Oxford, 1984), i. 1111-1219 at 1111 (Bk. I $715^{a}18$-$715^{b}15$); Dirk F. Passmann, 'Mud and Slime: Some Implications of the Yahoos' Genealogy and the History of an Idea', *BJECS*, 11 (1988), 1-17.
[149] *The Country Gentleman*, 10 (Mon. 11 Apr. 1726), 159-60.

> Art thou [Gulliver] the first who did the Coast explore;
> Did never *Yahoo* tread that Ground before?
> Yes Thousands. But in Pity to their Kind,
> Or sway'd by Envy, or through Pride of Mind,
> They hid their Knowledge of a nobler Race,
> Which own'd, would all their Sires and Sons disgrace.[150]

Gulliver's madness becomes more explicable when we consider that his assent to Houyhnhnm categories makes him complicit in the extermination of his own kind. It becomes possible to argue that one of Swift's points in the fourth voyage was not to insult humanity (as his opponents claimed), nor to demonstrate the consequences of uncontrolled immorality (as his apologists argued), but to show how setting an arbitrary qualification for humanity would always result in exclusion. Not merely this, for by that qualification being the *attainment* of reason, and thereby the enthronement of reason as the quintessentially human characteristic, unthinkable violence to one's own kind was made a distinct possibility, sanitised as it was behind the coldness of logic. The identification of humans with Yahoos through description in an ethnographic idiom, through the interbreeding criterion, and through the embodiment of reason all served to produce a confusion of identity, such as that encapsulated by Toft and Peter, leading to a hunt for epistemological authority. The eugenic and genocidal imperatives of Houyhnhnm and Spartan society were a logical consequence of the evacuation of an 'essence' from the concept of the human and its replacement with cold and arbitrary markers such as the human form and language. With humanity so easy to deny for those without language, verminisation and guiltless extermination could follow in short order.

[150] [Pope], *Poems Occasion'd*, 10-11.

Conclusion

By the time that Peter was first identified as a Yahoo by a critic of *Gulliver's Travels* in 1784, the mental world described by this chapter was fading fast.[151] It was almost impossible in the 1720s to imagine even non-European populations as Yahoos. The human form and language/reason were the two fundamental components of human identity, and a mismatch or absence of these was dealt with by shock, bewilderment, denial, anger, or any combination of these. By the 1780s, thanks to developing modes of racial thought, it was possible to imagine peoples such as the 'Hottentots' as bodies without reason. This was impossible in the 1720s largely because of the commitment to human unity: any attempt to ring-fence a human population and assert its proximity to the animal kingdom reeked dangerously of polygenism, and was treated as theologically heterodox. This did not disappear in the later period, but with the elaboration and sophistication of theories of degeneration and climatic determinism, not to mention developmental models such as stadial theory, it became possible to maintain a commitment to monogenetic creation *and* to assert the closer proximity of certain human groups to animals. Polygenism made this assertion more straightforward, but Swift was no polygenist. Rather, *Gulliver's Travels* demonstrated the murderous possibilities inherent within a system of human identity where humanity was predicated on the existence of certain empirically sensible attributes.

In doing so, Swift emphasised the instability of these attributes. Although written prior to both Peter's arrival and the Toft case, the appearance of

[151] Thomas Sheridan, *The Works of the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Swift* (17 vols., 1784), i. 514.

Gulliver's Travels in October 1726 was nonetheless associated with both of these events.[152] Toft's destabilisation of the human body was effected by the treatment of medical authority by satirists, the ongoing power of the maternal imagination, the deployment of preternaturalism to defend against counter-evidence, her own remarkable manipulation of her body, and the uncertain truth-value of her language. This last element was powerfully bolstered by the reaction to Peter, which strongly questioned his humanity simply as a consequence of his speechlessness. All three examples demonstrate that in 1726, the human body and its appearance, stability, and sensible attributes, were a problematic site for the foundation of identity. It was not to be until after the Seven Years War that it became sufficiently stable to act as such, a development charted in the next chapter.

[152] For example, the tutelage of Peter at the hands of a Scriblerian (Arbuthnot), and pseudo-Gulliverian texts on Toft, such as 'Gulliver', *Anatomist Dissected*.

4 Race and Sex in Discourses of Pacific Discovery, 1767-1789

Introduction

So far, this thesis has argued that there existed a broad and deep interconnection between sex and race, founded upon their situation within/on the human body and on their reliance upon an empiricist epistemology. The second half of this thesis is intended to show that the modern forms of race and sex emerged over the course of the eighteenth century as a consequence of the growing dominance of empiricism and the stabilisation of the human body, which could henceforth act as a reliable source of empirical data. The previous chapter has shown that the body was fundamentally unstable prior to 1730, as it could be easily manipulated and thereby undermine cherished markers of human identity. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an account of change. As the introduction to this thesis has shown, historians have readily acknowledged the appearance of scientific racialism at the same time as the sexes bifurcated to become opposites.[1] The arguable suddenness of these developments has prompted much comment, but what have remained comparatively underexplored are their long-term roots.[2] Through an examination of Captain James Cook's voyages, this chapter will both emphasise the emergence of race and sex over a prolonged period, and explain why they seemed to appear so suddenly after the Seven Years War.

[1] See pp. 1-11, above.
[2] Dror Wahrman makes much of the suddenness of this change. See Wahrman, *Making*, *passim*. See also Lawrence Klein's review in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 37 (2007), 610-12.

Cook's voyages were part of a series undertaken by the British and French between the 1760s and 1790s to map the Pacific. They originated in the supposition, itself of ancient origin, that there must exist a great southern continent – a *terra australis incognita* – to balance the Eurasian land-mass. Prior to Cook, three other British (John Byron, Samuel Wallis, and Philip Carteret) and one French sailor (Louis Antoine de Bougainville) had visited the Pacific. Wallis's voyage, in the *Dolphin*, had 'discovered' Tahiti in 1767, to which Cook was sent two years later to observe the Transit of Venus. This first voyage (on HMS *Endeavour*, 1768-71), which mapped New Zealand and the east coast of Australia, was followed by another (HMSs *Resolution* and *Adventure*, 1772-5) in which Cook was charged with locating the great southern continent. Finding only the icy seas around Antarctica, this voyage is most notable for having discovered very little apart from the non-existence of the *terra australis incognita*. It was nonetheless celebrated for having produced another great cache of ethnographic information, and for introducing Britain's first Polynesian visitor, the Raiatean Mai. Cook's final voyage (HMS *Resolution*, 1776-80) was intended both to repatriate Mai and to discover whether the fabled North-West Passage was accessible from the west. More was discovered on this voyage, including the Hawaiian Islands, on which Cook met his death in February 1779 following a dispute over stolen property.[3]

[3] Scholarship on Cook's voyages is sizeable and still dominated by Australasian scholars. Of essential importance is the magisterial, if somewhat hagiographic, work of John Beaglehole. See esp. his *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery* (4 vols., Hakluyt Society, 34-7; Cambridge, 1955-74); *The Exploration of the Pacific*, 3rd edn. (1966); *Life of Captain James Cook* (1974). Two solid and informative recent surveys of the voyages are provided in Nicholas Thomas, *Discoveries* (2003), and Anne Salmond, *The Trial of the Cannibal Dog* (2003).

On the basis of these voyages, this chapter makes two claims. First, that empiricism was central to the accounts of voyages made to the South Seas.[4] As Neil Rennie has argued, the proper function of voyages was to discover knowledge.[5] Indeed, those undertaken by the British and French to the South Seas had nominally no other goal in sight.[6] As will become apparent, one of the most significant consequences of the Cook voyages was the emergence of a standard of reliability for voyage accounts and evidence gathered overseas. The second claim is that, thanks to their empirical credentials, the Cook voyages played an important role in the development of concepts that depended on an empiricist epistemology, such as race and sex.[7] As discussed earlier, Dror Wahrman's *Making of the Modern Self* (2004) makes the claim that the 1780s witnessed the demise of an 'ancien régime of identity' sympathetic to playful transgressions of gender, race, and other identities, and its replacement by a 'modern self', characterised by essentialised and unbridgeable categories.[8] Notwithstanding his problematic argument concerning the nature of 'identity', his timing of the transformation in race and sex appears inaccurate. It is argued here that the 1770s was the crucial decade in this process. Official accounts of the first two (and most significant) of Cook's voyages were published during

[4] On the desire for empiricism, see Kathleen Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity: Theatre, Englishness, and the Arts of Discovery, 1760-1800', in Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman (eds.), *The Age of Cultural Revolutions* (2002), 62-93, updated in her *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (2003), ch. 2.
[5] Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts* (Oxford, 1995), 45.
[6] See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Acculturation* (1992), 1-14.
[7] Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific* (Cambridge, 1997), 1-22; Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture* (Oxford, 1994), ch.2; John H. Gagnon, 'Others Have Sex With Others: Captain Cook and the Penetration of the Pacific', in Gilbert Herdt (ed.), *Sexual Cultures and Migration in the Era of AIDS* (Oxford, 1997), 23-38; Jackie Huggins, 'Cook and the New Anthropology', in Margarette Lincoln (ed.), *Science and Exploration in the Pacific* (2001), 199-206.
[8] See p. 14ff., above.

this decade, and these, as will be argued, contributed to and reflected the progressive stabilisation of the human body.

This stabilisation was largely complete by the 1770s. The inscrutability and fungibility of the body so apparent in the Toft case was on the wane after the first third of the eighteenth century, and the 1770s marks the point by which its power to prevent effective empirical reasoning was overcome. For example, the last pamphlet to be published in the eighteenth century which discussed the power of the maternal imagination appeared in 1772.[9] Remnants of the earlier mode survived on into the twentieth century, largely in folk wisdom, but it was no longer sufficiently strong to challenge effectively empirical, 'scientific' knowledge. The survival of this mode in any form must, however, act as a reminder that the changes described in this chapter were never total, and are perhaps best described less as a paradigm shift than as the foundation of a hegemony. Older modes were subordinated, not destroyed.

This chapter makes use of published voyage accounts, newspapers, polemical and satirical pamphlets, fiction, theatrical performances, music, and private correspondence. Its argument is contained in four principal sections. The first discusses the empirical reliability which emerged as a result of Cook's voyages; the second and third, the stabilisation of the racial and sexual bodies, respectively; and the final section concludes with two examples which capture the overall change described in the chapter. Particular reference will be made throughout to Mai, who was lionised during his stay (1774-6) and who

[9] [Giovanni Fortunato Bianchini], *An Essay on the Force of Imagination in Pregnant Women* (1772). A text did appear later (1788) in France. See Paul-Gabriel Boucé, 'Imagination, Pregnant Women, and Monsters, in Eighteenth-Century England and France', in Roy Porter and G. S. Rousseau (eds.), *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1987), 86-100 at 92.

prompted both satirical critique and serious reflection. The voyages discussed below are those accounts contained in John Hawkesworth's official compilation (of Byron's, Wallis's, Carteret's, and Cook's first voyages), the French voyager Bougainville (published in English in 1772), and the official and unofficial accounts of Cook's second and third voyages.

The Emergence of Reliable Voyages

The injunction to voyagers to produce empirical and worthwhile knowledge was at least a century old by the time Cook sailed in the *Endeavour* (1768).[10] Soon after the foundation of the Royal Society (1660) several of its members attempted to instruct seamen in good Baconian methods, 'to study *Nature* rather than *Books*.'[11] However, nothing could overcome the need to communicate knowledge in textual form.[12] For all knowledge of the wider world a flourishing travel literature was necessary, but where there were travellers there were travel *liars*.[13] It was extremely difficult to know which accounts to trust, not least because few authors signposted their fictions as clearly as, for example, Swift in *Gulliver's Travels*.[14] In this section it will be

[10] Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, 47-53.
[11] [Lawrence Rooke], 'Directions for Sea-Men, Bound for Far Voyages', *Phil. Trans.*, 1, 8 (1666), 140-43 at 140. See also Boyle, 'General Heads for a Natural History of a Countrey', *Phil. Trans.*, 1, 11 (1666), 186-9 and [John Woodward], *Brief Instructions For Making Observations in all Parts of the World* (1696).
[12] Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, ch. 2.
[13] Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (Berkeley, 1962). On the popularity of travel literature, see, for example, Margaret Hunt, 'Racism, Imperialism, and the Traveler's Gaze in Eighteenth-Century England', *JBS*, 32 (1993), 333-57; David Fausett, *Images of the Antipodes in the Eighteenth Century* (Amsterdam, 1994), chs. 2 and 3.
[14] See chapter 3, above. See also Peter Boerner, 'The Great Travel Collections of the Eighteenth Century: Their Scope and Purpose' in *SVEC*, 193 (1980), 1798-1805; Jonathan Lamb, Vanessa Smith, and Nicholas Thomas, 'Introduction', in eid. (eds.), *Exploration and Exchange: A South Seas Anthology* (2000), pp. xiii-xxv. Authors of travel accounts aimed to keep their readers entertained whilst retaining credibility. See Simon Schaffer, '"On Seeing Me Write": Inscription Devices in the South Seas', *Representations*, 97 (2007), 90-122; Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas* (2001), 49-75.

shown that a new standard of reliability emerged with the Cook voyages, facilitating the debunking of myths, but producing others of its own.[15] Empiricism did not necessarily connote objectivity: 'seeing' was an activity strongly related to, if not altogether determined by context.[16] Artistic representations of the voyages, for instance, moved from a neo-classical to romantic mode, producing greater authenticity, but such a movement owed much to changing European tastes.[17] This standard enabled European thinkers to place their trust in such sourcebooks of natural, ethnographic, and anthropological data as travel narratives.[18] This section will establish the situation faced by travel narratives prior to the 1770s, by discussing a prominent myth finally debunked by Pacific voyages. It will then proceed to outline Cook's own relation to the new empirical standard, both as its living embodiment and as an individual.

Tall Tales of Patagonia

The unreliability of travel literature prior to the 1770s can be demonstrated through a discussion of the myth, only finally dispelled in

[15] The emergence of this standard did not mean that editorialising and invention were absent from even the most rigorous of texts. See Philip Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage* (Cambridge, 1994), 219-25. See also Roy Porter, 'The Exotic as Erotic: Captain Cook at Tahiti', in G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter (eds.), *Exoticism and the Enlightenment* (Manchester, 1990), 117-44; Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, ch. 3. Cf. Neil Hegarty, 'Unruly Subjects: Sexuality, Science, and Discipline in Eighteenth-Century Pacific Exploration', in Lincoln (ed.), *Science and Exploration*, 183-97; Jonathan Lamb, 'Circumstances Surrounding the Death of John Hawkesworth', *ECL*, 18, 3 (1994), 97-113.

[16] See Porter, 'Exotic as Erotic'; Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 15-37; Bronwen Douglas, 'Slippery Word, Ambiguous Praxis: 'Race' and Late-18th-Century Voyagers in Oceania', *JPH*, 41 (2006), 1-29; Kathleen Wilson, 'Thinking Back: Gender Misrecognition and Polynesian Subversion aboard the Cook Voyages', in ead. (ed.), *New Imperial History*, 345-62 at 362.

[17] Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (Oxford, 1960); David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (2002), 123-50.

[18] According to Kathleen Wilson, these were instrumental in the shaping of English ethnicity. See her 'Pacific Modernity'.

Hawkesworth's text, of giant Patagonians.[19] Originating in the early sixteenth century, this myth was perpetuated into the eighteenth by the lack of European contact with Patagonia. The 1717 *Atlas Geographus* reprinted several reports all in favour of the existence of giants.[20] Thomas Salmon (who accompanied George Anson on his circumnavigation of 1740-44) reprinted Sir John Narborough's account of Patagonia in his *Universal Traveller* (1752-3), which argued that the natives of Patagonia were of regular stature.[21] John Callander's English translation of Charles de Brosses's *Histoire des navigations aux terres australes* (1756) included all of these different accounts and attempted a balanced summary of them, ultimately deciding against the existence of giants.[22] As is shown by the discussion of giants by Bougainville, Buffon and Maupertuis, the popularity of De Brosses's text, and Voltaire's stinging public correspondence to Maupertuis (reprinted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1773), the notion of giants in Patagonia was also popular in France.[23]

Enthusiasm for Patagonian giants reached a fever pitch by the late 1760s when there appeared an extremely popular unauthorised account of Byron's voyage, *A Journal of a Voyage round the World, In His Majesty's Ship The Dolphin* (1767).[24] This text so thoroughly argued for the existence of giants

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[19] The etymological roots of 'Patagonia' are uncertain, but it was widely believed in the eighteenth century that Magellan's choice of name was due to the supposed giants. See *OED*, s.v. 'Patagon'.
[20] *Atlas Geographus* (5 vols., 1711-17), v. 59, 97, 101.
[21] Salmon, *Universal Traveller* (2 vols., 1752-3), ii. 637-8. See also *An Account of Several Late Voyages and Discoveries* (1711), 50.
[22] [John Callander], *Terra Australis Cognita* (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1766-8), iii. 726-32.
[23] Adams, *Travelers*, 19-43; Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, *Histoire naturelle, générale et particuliére* (15 vols., 1749-67), iii. 508; Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, *Voyage autour du monde* (Paris, 1769), ch. 6; *GM*, 43 (1773), 640-1. Horace Walpole's satirical *Account of the Giants Lately Discovered* (1766) was enthusiastically reviewed in the *Journal Encyclopédique*, 8 (1766), 105-13.
[24] 'A Midshipman on Board the Said Ship', *A Journal of a Voyage round the World, In His Majesty's Ship The Dolphin* (1767); *GM*, 37 (1767), 495-7; *MR*, 49 (1773), 290-92. Monboddo's interest in Patagonians also testifies to the height of their popularity in the 1760s.

that, whilst being printed, a further fourteen leaves were inserted to boost the Patagonian content.[25] This was the only published account available of Byron's voyage until 1773, when Hawkesworth's compilation was published.[26] This text was commissioned in the wake of Cook's first voyage by the Admiralty, anxious to prevent European rivals from staking claims in the region. Hawkesworth addressed the question of giant Patagonians directly in the introduction. After extensively quoting Callander's text, Hawkesworth conclusively stated that 'the concurrent testimony of late navigators, … Gentlemen of unquestionable veracity, who are still living, and who not only saw and conversed with these people, but measured them, will put an end to all the doubts that have been hitherto entertained of their existence.'[27] There is no small ambiguity in this statement, given that Byron had claimed that giants *did* exist, but it was nevertheless successful in closing down the debate. The primary reason for this was not Hawkesworth's own discussion of the controversy, consisting solely of his extensive quote from Callander/De Brosses, but because his conclusions were lent empirical support by Wallis's own journal. Wallis described actually *measuring* Patagonians and finding that their height ranged from five feet ten inches to six feet.[28] With the onset of such 'scientific' reports, popular interest in Patagonian giants was fatally wounded.[29] Hawkesworth thus

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NLS Monboddo, MS 24536, ff. 60-63 ('Account of the Patagonians & Peyrou's Voyage. Edin[r] 29 Sept. 1766').

[25] These were inserted between pages 24 and 25 and exist within all surviving copies of the work. See ESTC (English Short Title Catalogue), T67285.

[26] W. H. Pearson, 'Hawkesworth's *Voyages*', in R. F. Brissenden (ed.), *Studies in the Eighteenth Century II: Papers Presented at the David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar, Canberra 1970* (Canberra, 1973), 239-57.

[27] John Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken … For Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere* (3 vols., 1773), vol. i. p. xvi.

[28] Hawkesworth, *Account*, i. 374.

[29] William Sturtevant, 'Patagonian Giants and Baroness Hyde de Neuville's Iroquois Drawings', *Ethnohistory*, 27 (1980), 331-348 at 333.

emphasised the continuing need for trust in the accounts of mariners, but demonstrated how at least one seafarer was worthy of this trust by describing his empirical methods. Whilst it remained impossible to avoid reposing trust in the printed text, Hawkesworth's account, by being an 'official' compilation of four separate voyages, and by describing the first naval voyage (that of the *Endeavour*) to feature civilian naturalists, marked the beginning of a new standard of empirical veracity.[30]

Cannibalism, Performance, and Certainty

Cook, as man and myth, was profoundly associated with this new empirical standard. Indeed, he was decidedly uneasy when it was challenged, for instance with the early scepticism concerning New Zealand cannibals.[31] Cannibalism had not been expected of South Seas populations, as some scholars have claimed, but was treated with a measure of disbelief by the public in 1773.[32] One indication that cannibalism was not treated seriously was its popular attribution to all Pacific peoples rather than solely to New Zealanders, a distinction which Hawkesworth and his contributors had been careful to make. A facetious anecdote about Mai stated that he was afraid to bow before

[30] *MR*, 49 (1773), 479-98. Cf. *GM*, 43(1773), 286-90 at 290, which puzzled over the irreconcilability of travel accounts, tellingly just before the serialisation of an abridgement of Hawkesworth began in July 1773.

[31] On cannibalism in New Zealand, see Ian Barber, 'Archaeology, Ethnography, and the Record of Maori Cannibalism before 1815: A Critical Review', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, 3 (1992), 241-92 esp. 245-64.

[32] C. Richard King, 'The (Mis)uses of Cannibalism in Contemporary Cultural Critique', *Diacritics*, 30 (2000), 106-23; Claude Rawson, 'Savages Noble and Ignoble: Natives, Cannibals, Third Parties, and Others in South Pacific Narratives by Gulliver, Bougainville, and Diderot, With Notes on the *Encyclopédie* and on Voltaire', *ECL*, 18, 3 (1994), 168-97. Hawkesworth and earlier leaked reports of the voyage had attempted to forestall these doubts by asserting the existence of cannibals. See Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 390, and *General Evening Post*, 8 Oct. 1771. Obeyesekere, in particular, has claimed Europeans expected to find cannibalism in the Pacific. See his *Cannibal Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas* (2005), 1-23. Cf. Thomas, *Discoveries*, 104-7.

George III, fearing he would be eaten.[33] Within two days of this report appearing, one correspondent responded angrily, calling it 'a most egregious falshood: besides, it imparts a prejudice against him, to the minds of the common people, as if he came from the nation of cannibals, who devour their own species, for which there is not the least foundation among the natives of that island.'[34] This anecdote also engages with the widespread belief that natives of the South Seas believed Europeans to be cannibals. A year later, in 1775, one newspaper hoped for Mai's successful return, if only to prove to other Pacific islanders that Europeans were not cannibals.[35] Such ease with the notion of cannibalism, to the point of self-attribution, demonstrates that the reports of it offered by Cook and (later Sir) Joseph Banks, the most important civilian on the *Endeavour*, were not taken seriously.

Cook responded to these doubts by seeking incontrovertible proof. At New Zealand in November 1773, a severed head was purchased by one of his officers from the local Maori. Bringing it aboard, a piece of flesh was cut from this head, grilled, and eaten by one of the natives before all the officers and most of the crew. Ashore at this time, Cook overcame his scruples when back aboard and ordered a repetition, 'being desirous of becoming an eye-witness of a fact which may doubted.'[36] With cannibalism confirmed by experiment, Cook was able to respond to his doubters, as he discussed with James Boswell at a Royal Society dinner in April 1776. As Boswell records, Cook

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[33] *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 4 Aug. 1774.
[34] 'J[oseph?]. B[anks?].', letter in *General Evening Post*, 6 Aug. 1774.
[35] *London Evening Post*, 22 July 1775. At least three other Pacific islanders had left for Europe between 1768 and 1771, none of whom successfully returned.
[36] James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World* (2 vols., 1777), i. 243-4; Thomas, *Discoveries*, 211-12. Banks later gave instructions to Vancouver to act as witness to anthropophagic consumption. See Obeyesekere, *Cannibal Talk*, 30.

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Figure 4.1 – Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook* (1794, original painting 1785).

candidly confessed to me that he and his companions who visited the South Sea Islands could not be certain of any information they got, or supposed they got, except as to objects falling under the observations of the senses; … He gave me a distinct account of a New Zealander eating human flesh in his presence … so that the fact of cannibals is now certainly known.[37]

[37] Charles Ryskamp and Frederick A. Pottle (eds.), *Boswell: The Ominous Years, 1774-1776* (1960), 341.

Cook's authorship of the account of this second voyage, *A Voyage Toward the South Pole* (1777) enhanced his reputation for veracity. His text benefited from some editorial assistance, but it was free from the taint of embellishment which had followed Hawkesworth to his grave in late 1773.[38] After the 1777 *Voyage*, belief in the existence of cannibalism became widespread and a different attitude towards such natives began to prevail.[39] The immediate catalyst for this hardening of attitudes, aptly characterised as a shift in perceptions of 'savages' from 'noble' to 'ignoble', was Cook's death at the hands of enraged Hawai'ians in February 1779.[40]

By this time Cook's reputation for reliability and accuracy was unassailable, and was explicitly mentioned in the elegiac responses to his death.[41] Cook's death was itself an opportunity for demonstrating the range and accuracy of ethnographic information he helped to bring to Europe, and theatre was the ideal medium for doing so. John O'Keeffe's popular pantomime *Omai, or, a Trip round the World* (1785), allegedly the most expensive production of its generation, was praised for being a 'stage edition' of Cook's travels.[42] It concluded with a grand procession, in which most newly discovered Pacific

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[38] J. C. Beaglehole, *Cook the Writer* (Sydney, 1970). Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, 96-102; Pearson, 'Hawkesworth's *Voyages*'.

[39] Harriet Guest has dated this shift in Cook's own attitudes to 1777. See Harriet Guest, *Empire, Barbarism, and Civilisation* (Cambridge, 2007), 137. But cannibalism was perceived as evidence of progress towards civilisation for the Forsters, and as a racial marker by later anthropologists. See, respectively Guest, *Empire*, 12-13, 133, and Peter J. Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter* (Basingstoke, 2007), ch. 4.

[40] Michael Sturma, *South Sea Maidens* (2002), 3; Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, ch. 3; Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity', 84-5. Cook's death was known to Europeans by January 1780. See *GM*, 50 (1780), 44-5.

[41] Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, ch. 2. See, for example, *An Ode to the Memory of Captain James Cook, Of His Majesty's Navy* (Dublin, 1780), 17.

[42] *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 21 Dec. 1785; William Huse, 'A Noble Savage on the Stage', *Modern Philology*, 33 (1936), 303-16; Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity', 71-8. There is some dispute as to whether *Omai* should be taken as straightforward imperial pedagogy or a more sophisticated piece. See Daniel O'Quinn, *Staging Governance: Theatrical Imperialism in London, 1770-1800* (Baltimore, 2005), ch. 2; David Worrall, *Harlequin Empire: Race, Ethnicity and the Drama of the Popular Enlightenment* (2007), ch. 6.

peoples were represented as part of Cook's apotheosis.[43] Following the procession, Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg's painting *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook* (1785; Figure 4.1) was lowered to accompany the concluding air in honour of Cook's memory. This painting and especially the procession demonstrate how Cook's voyages were seen as a paragon of scientific and navigational accuracy. The authenticity of the painting, enhanced by being linked with John Webber, artist on the third voyage, was not limited to the mere '*vraisemblance*' of its representation of Cook (as one reviewer put it), but its power to evoke genuine sensibility, even in the most hardened tar.[44] The procession was singled out for particular praise as a 'school for the history of man', in which 'the mind of the spectator has an opportunity of comparing at one view, the different nations with each other.'[45] Indeed, 'the materials are drawn from such authentic sources, … that the landscapes, scenery, dresses, characters and manners of the various people we may depend are most truly depicted.'[46]

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[43] John O'Keeffe, *A Short Account of the New Pantomime called Omai* (1785). On the expense of the pantomime, see *General Evening Post*, 15 Dec. 1785; *Whitehall Evening Post*, 20 Dec. 1785. On Cook's apotheosis, see the crucial debate between Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere in Sahlins, *Islands of History* (1985); id., *How 'Natives' Think: about Captain Cook, for example* (1995); Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (Oxford, 1992).

[44] Rüdiger Joppien, 'Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg's Pantomime "Omai, or a Trip round the World" and the Artists of Captain Cook's Voyages', in T. C. Mitchell (ed.), *Captain Cook and the South Pacific* (British Museum Yearbook, 3; 1979), 81-136. On Cook's likeness in the painting see *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 21 Dec. 1785. On its ability to reduce a sailor to tears see William Upton, *Poems on Several Occasions* (1788), 146-7. On sensibility, see J. G. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (1992).

[45] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 20 Dec. 1785; *Daily Universal Register*, 22 Dec. 1785. See also Mary Fissell and Roger Cooter, 'Exploring Natural Knowledge: Science and the Popular' in Roy Porter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Science*, iv: *Eighteenth-Century Science* (Cambridge, 2003), 129-58 at 136.

[46] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 20 Dec. 1785.

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Figure 4.2 – Tahitian Mourning Dress: (l) donated by the Forsters to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in 1776; (r) depicted in a costume design for *Omai, or, a Trip Round the World* (1785).

This was not mere uninformed bluster, the remarks of a set of ethnographically ignorant theatre reviewers who simply noticed the proximity of Pacific peoples on stage to those in the published texts. As Figure 4.2 shows, *Omai* took serious pains to represent at least Pacific artefacts faithfully, giving its pretensions to accuracy some foundation. What is of especial importance regarding the Cook voyages is that such claims could be verified, by the wealth and variety of diaries, journals, and official accounts; by art, which was often criticised when it noticeably embellished or romanticised its subjects; and by the artefacts and curiosities brought back from the Pacific.[47] Travellers who made unverifiable claims were liable to be roundly attacked, especially if these did not have the backing of rational plausibility. Such was the case with the unfortunate James Bruce, who was widely criticised by England's literati in the mid-1770s,

[47] Smith, *European Vision*, 53-8; Harriet Guest, 'The Great Distinction: Figures of the Exotic in the Work of William Hodges', *Oxford Art Journal*, 12 (1989), 36-58; Guest, *Empire*, 17-20, 91-123; Bronwen Douglas, 'Voyages, Encounters, and Agency in Oceania: Captain Cook and Indigenous People', *History Compass,* 6 (2008), 712-37.

even though it ultimately emerged that his account of Abyssinia was largely correct.[48] Bruce's problems in securing belief in his claims stemmed from a lack of proof. Prior to 1770 this may not have quelled all doubts, but nor would it have proved fatal to his account: with the new empirical paradigm it also became possible to doubt more comprehensively.

Producing Racial Subject Matter

In addition to exemplifying a new standard of empirical reliability, the Cook voyages contributed to the growing opacity of the racial and sexual body, discussed respectively in this section and the following. This contribution testifies to the dominance of the new empirical standard. The focus of much European scientific and exploratory endeavour on the Pacific, which took place as a consequence of the discoveries made there, coincided with the decades when recognisable racial theories were being constructed.[49] These theories owed much to the voyages of discovery, which makes Wahrman's tendency to take the texts emanating from the voyages at face value – situating them squarely within his 'ancien régime of identity' – somewhat misleading.[50] Not merely were the materia medica of such theories collected by travellers, but some voyagers were responsible for the distribution of these materials to racial theorists, and yet others were racial theorists themselves. The data brought to Europe, which included living specimens, were not accidentally of use for these theorists, and some were acquired to order. With the wealth of information that flooded

[48] See Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840* (Oxford, 2002), 54-101; Miles Bredin, *The Pale Abyssinian* (2001), 241-63; Bruce, *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* (5 vols., Edinburgh, 1790), iii. 295-305.
[49] See Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*, ch. 3.
[50] Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, ch. 1; Wahrman, *Making*, 99-100.

Europe in the wake of the voyages, thinkers were able to refine their racial models and sharpen their critiques of stadial and climatic orthodoxies. Such critiques benefitted from the negative turn in attitudes towards Pacific peoples following Cook's murder.

Describing Others in the South Seas

Travel accounts had long functioned as the primary resource of racial theory. Either travellers themselves speculated on questions of race, such as John Atkins in the 1730s, or racial thinkers compiled sometimes vast arrays of travel accounts in support of their views, for example Buffon.[51] However, the limitations of travel accounts, discussed in the previous section, prevented resultant racial theories from being entirely persuasive. Monboddo's opinions concerning 'orang outangs', for example, had a broad base in travel literature but failed to persuade most readers, who were predisposed against the humanity of apes and who could cite the unreliability of his source material.[52] With the new standard of reliability in travel literature came a new confidence in the data on which social, cultural, and scientific theories were based, and thus a new resilience in the face of sceptical readers.

It is arguable that the emergence of race after the 1760s is due, in no small part, to this confidence, testified by the prominence of the Pacific in racial theories. The first (1775) edition of Blumenbach's *De Generis Humani*

[51] Buffon, *Histoire naturelle*, ii. 371-530. See Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture, 1756-1830* (Oxford, 2006), 83.
[52] [James Burnet, Lord Monboddo], *The Origin and Progress of Language* (6 vols., Edinburgh, 1773-92), i. 268-78; NLS Monboddo, MS 24537, ff. 15-38 ('Of the Ourang Outang, & whether he be of the Human Species'); Ian Maxwell Hammett, 'Lord Monboddo and the Lockian Science of Man', *Bulletin of Hiroshima Jogakuin College*, 39 (1989), 63-80; id., 'Lord Monboddo's *The Origin and Progress of Language*: Its Sources, Genesis and Background, with Special Attention to the Advocates' Library' (University of Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis, 1985). On George Forster's opposition to Monboddo's ideas, see Guest, *Empire*, 117.

Varietate Nativa, for example, divided the peoples of the earth into four races (European, Sub-continental and South East Asian, African, and American).[53] The second (1781) edition revised this racial schema on the basis of the Pacific voyages, now identifying five races (Ethiopian, Malay, European, American, Mongolian), despite mention of Pacific islands in the first edition. The accounts published following Cook's second voyage, particularly Johann Reinhold Forster's *Observations Made during a Voyage round the World* (1778), appear to have directly caused this revision.[54] Notwithstanding recent claims that this text was somehow non- or pre-racial, Forster's bipartite division of the Pacific's peoples became an orthodoxy by the early nineteenth century, enshrined in Dumont d'Urville's 1832 division of the Pacific into three groups constituting two races (Micronesian and Polynesian on the one hand, Melanesian on the other).[55]

Like many racial theorists, Blumenbach was particularly remembered for 'his familiarity with voyages and travels.'[56] Nor was Blumenbach merely a reader of travel literature. He wrote a preface and explanatory notes to the German translation (1790) of Bruce's eventual publication, and wrote anxiously

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[53] *De Generis*$_1$, 99.
[54] *De Generis*$_1$, 99-100 n. 4; Michael E. Hoare, *The Tactless Philosopher: Johann Reinhold Forster (1729-98)* (Melbourne, 1976), ch. 8.
[55] J. d'Urville, 'Sur les îles du grand océan', *Bulletin de la société de géographie*, 105 (Jan. 1832), 1-21 at 5; Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, 10; Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 8. On Forster's *Observations* as pre-racial, see Douglas, 'Slippery Word'. Margaret Jolly has argued that all eighteenth-century voyage accounts were pre-racial. See her '"Ill-Natured Comparisons": Racism and Relativism in European Representation of ni-Vanuata from Cook's Second Voyage', *Anthropology and History*, 5 (1993), 331-64.
[56] K. F. H. Marx, *Zum Andenken an Johann Friedrich Blumenbach* (Göttingen, 1840), reprinted in Bendyshe, *Treatises*, 1-45 at 21. Blumenbach also collected Pacific artefacts following the Cook voyages. See John Gascoigne, 'The German Enlightenment and the Pacific', in Larry Wolff and Marco Cipolloni (eds.), *The Anthropology of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA, 2007), 141-71 at 164-5.

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Figure 4.3 – James Gillray, *The great South Sea Caterpillar, transform'd into a Bath Butterfly* (1795).

to Banks for further information on the veracity of Bruce's claims.[57] Doubts about Bruce evidently spread farther than details of the grounds on which they were based.

The role played by Joseph Banks in both the popularisation of the voyages to the Pacific and the emergence of racial theories was pivotal.[58] The association of Banks with the Pacific was profound: the *Endeavour* voyage was

[57] Marx, *Andenken*, 22. See also James Bruce, *Reisen zur Entdeckung der Quellen des Nils*, tr. J. J. Volkmann (5 vols., Leipzig, 1790-91); BL Add. MS 8097 (Banks Correspondence), ff. 261-2 (Blumenbach to Banks, 9 June 1790) at ff. 261^{v}-262^{r}. (Banks's correspondence can be found at BL Add. MSS 8094-9, 33977, and 33980.)

[58] John Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1994), ch. 4; Tim Fulford, Debbie Lee, and Peter J. Kitson, *Literature, Science and Exploration in the Romantic Era* (Cambridge, 2004), 33-45, 148.

commonly named "Banks's voyage" in early reportage, and a measure of the continued linkage of Banks and the Pacific in British culture is clear from James Gillray's cartoon, *The Great South-Sea Caterpillar* (1795; Figure 4.3).[59] Satirising his recent membership of the Order of the Bath on the basis of his association with the King, this cartoon presents Banks as a creature of the South Seas, juxtaposing his fine clothing, prominent sash, and star, to the flora and fauna in which he is draped, in an echo of his earlier reputation, briefly discussed later, as a 'botanizing macaroni'. Banks was the focal point of a wide network of correspondents, many of whom were natural historians and amongst whom information and specimens frequently passed. He corresponded not merely with Blumenbach, but also with Camper, Buffon, Bougainville, Benjamin Franklin, Johann Reinhold and George Forster, the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society (of which Charles White was a prominent member), and is known to have visited Monboddo.[60] However, the association with Blumenbach was his most significant link with emergent racial theories.[61] Banks's assistance was such that the preface of the third (1795) edition of Blumenbach's *De Generis* took the form of a lengthy dedicatory letter to Banks.[62] He had indeed furnished Blumenbach with several skulls, including one

[59] On the *Endeavour*'s as 'Banks's voyage', see, for example, *Public Advertiser*, 3 and 17 July 1773. See also Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity', 68.
[60] Letters to Banks from: Camper (23 Jan. 1786), Buffon (23 June 1783), Bougainville (25 June 1784), Franklin (21 Aug. 1784), Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society (24 June 1801) at (respectively) BL Add. MSS: 8096, ff. 257-8; 8095, ff. 153-4, 244, 282-3; 33980, ff. 297-8. Harold B. Carter, *Sir Joseph Banks, 1743-1820* (1988), 42, 96-7, 114, 168-9, 292, 376; Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks*, ch. 4. On the importance of the Forsters for emergent racial theories, see Gascoigne, 'German Enlightenment' and Guest, *Empire*, 11-13.
[61] On the importance of Göttingen as an entrepôt for English texts, see Bernhard Fabian, 'The Importation of British Books into Germany in the Eighteenth Century', in *SVEC*, 193 (1980), 1780-2; Thomas Biskup, 'The University of Göttingen and the Personal Union, 1737-1837', in Brendan Simms and Torsten Riotte (eds.), *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History, 1714-1837* (Cambridge, 2007), 128-60; pp. 40ff., above.
[62] *De Generis*$_3$, 149-54.

from Tahiti, despite the stiff competition for such crania from Camper and John Hunter.[63] On at least one occasion, Banks attempted to procure skeletal remains to order: in a letter to Banks of June 1790, Blumenbach complained that the mutiny on HMAV *Bounty* was 'unlucky for my particular interest as depriving me of some new valuable acquisitions by which You intended so generously to enrich my collection.'[64] He nonetheless continued to receive Caribbean and Pacific crania from Banks, who himself received Blumenbach in London for a visit in the early months of 1792.[65] Banks had hosted Camper in 1785 and introduced him to Sir Joshua Reynolds, all three apparently discussing the complexities of the facial angle (as Camper had with Blumenbach the year before).[66] A testament to British maritime dominance, Banks continued to act as a clearing house for skeletal remains from across the British Empire well into the early nineteenth century, particularly for Aboriginal remains from Australia, the colony whose settlement he had advocated since the 1770s.[67]

Armed with the wealth of empirical data distributed by Banks, racial thinkers were able to construct ever more elaborate theories. This process began in the Pacific itself, as Cook, Banks, and other officers and scientists compiled data in accordance with instructions they received. Significantly, the Forsters

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[63] BL Add. MS 8096, ff. 383-4 (Blumenbach to Banks, 20 June 1787) at f. 384^{r} (Banks's notes for his reply); Gascoigne, 'German Enlightenment and the Pacific', 166-7.
[64] BL Add. MS 8097, f. 261^{r-v} (Blumenbach to Banks, 9 June 1790).
[65] Carter, *Sir Joseph Banks*, 372; BL Add. MS 8098, ff. 8-9 (Blumenbach to Banks, 8 May 1792).
[66] Frank William Peter Dougherty, *The Correspondence of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach*, rev. and ed. Norbert Klatt (2 vols., Göttingen, 2006-7), ii. 185 n. 5; letters from Camper to Banks at BL Add. MS 8096, ff. 257-8 (23 Jan. 1786), 411-12 (19 Feb. 1787).
[67] Paul Turnbull, 'British Anatomists, Phrenologists and the Construction of the Aboriginal Race, *c.*1790-1830', *History Compass*, 5 (2007), 26-50; Patricia Fara, *Sex, Botany, and Empire* (Cambridge, 2003).

received no instructions of any kind.[68] The '*Hints* offered to the consideration of Captain Cooke, M[r] Banks, [and] Doctor Solander', written in 1768 by James Douglas, fourteenth Earl of Morton (then President of the Royal Society), act as a useful guide to the interests of both voyagers and racial theorists. In the first place, Morton dictated the investigative priorities of the *Endeavour* voyagers, echoing the Great Chain of Being in placing a study of human societies between that of astronomical phenomena and those things animal, vegetable, and mineral.[69] Also telling was Morton's prioritisation of human topics of interest. First appeared those features typically desirable for utilitarian seekers of knowledge: progress in arts or science, particularly tools, mechanics, astronomy, and alphabetical or ideographic communication. Then came human physical characteristics – 'Features, Complection, Dress' – before finally social and cultural features, such as religion, morals, and government.[70] Although this order undoubtedly reflected the interests of the Royal Society, the close proximity of mathematical and technical interests to those relating to human shape, form, and intellect clearly bore the imprint of a technical and quantitative approach to study of the human body.

Although Morton's injunction to non-violence soon fell into abeyance, voyagers for the most part followed these instructions closely. The top item on his list of human physical characteristics – 'features' – was subject to particular commentary. Praise of the Europeanesque features of the Society and Friendly

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[68] See Andrew S. Cook, 'James Cook and the Royal Society', in Glyndwr Williams (ed.), *Captain Cook: Explorations and Reassessments* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2004), 37-55; Beaglehole, *Journals*, i: *The Voyage of the Endeavour, 1768-1771*, pp. cclxxix-cclxxxiv, 514-19.
[69] Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, MA, 1936); Smith, *European Vision*, 14.
[70] Beaglehole, *Journals*, i. 516-17.

Islanders, and even admiration of the ferocity of the Maori, gave way to a harsher and more judgemental tone with the discovery of New Caledonia and the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) during the second voyage.[71] Cook's comments on the Malekulans[72] were typical: 'they are the most ugly, ill-proportioned people I ever saw, and in every respect different from any we had met with in this sea. They are a very dark-coloured and rather diminutive race; with long heads, flat faces, and monkey countenances.'[73] 'Complection' was likewise a focus of comment, and colour functioned in a straightforward manner, with white connoting beauty and black ugliness. Recognition of this fact acted, for George Forster, as a marker of civilisation.[74] 'Dress' was declining in importance vis-à-vis more intrinsic bodily structures by the 1770s.[75] What was significant was not the style or type of dress worn but how much and where. There was a direct correlation in the voyage accounts between the level of European admiration for a people and the extent to which they were fully clothed. If Tahitians were foremost, the bottom of the scale was occupied by the New Hebrideans, whose clothing was non-existent, consisting not even of the simple genital covering of the Aboriginal populations of Australia.[76] As will be clear in the next section, shame and modesty were important concepts for considering the place of sex in the Pacific voyages.

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[71] See Jolly, '"Ill-Natured Comparisons"'.
[72] Malekula is an island in the archipelago forming Vanuatu.
[73] Cook, *Voyage*, ii. 34. See also George Forster, *A Voyage Round the World* (2 vols., 1777), ii. 206. Guest, *Empire*, 117. Thomas, *Discoveries*, 239.
[74] Forster, *Voyage*, i. 257.
[75] Cf. Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race* (Philadelphia, 2000), 17-21.
[76] On Tahitian clothing see Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 191-2; Forster, *Voyage*, i. 431; Johann Reinhold Forster, *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World*, ed. Nicholas Thomas, Harriet Guest, and Michael Dettelbach (Honolulu, 1996), 273-9, 352-3; Cook, *Voyage*, i. 309, 376. On the New Hebrideans, see Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 206.

A final significant topic for Pacific voyagers was language.[77] As discussed in chapter one, the sophistication of a language was proportional to its speakers' state of civilisation.[78] But while a simple language connoted a primitive civilisation, 'primitive' could be viewed in different ways. The French were in no doubt that they had found in Tahiti the home of the noble savage, whose language was described as one of 'noble simplicity', more immediate and with fewer words – and hence ideas.[79] British voyagers tended to be less sanguine about the noble savagery of Tahitians, but they agreed with the overall assessment of the French.[80] European linguistic superiority was asserted throughout the literature of Pacific discovery, and South Seas visitors to Europe were frequently criticised or ridiculed for being unable to grasp European languages.[81] The most significant role played by language, however, was as a means of associating or distinguishing between different populations in the Pacific.[82] This began with the assertion in Hawkesworth of a genealogical relationship between New Zealanders and Tahitians, but was used in Forster's

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[77] On language see Hans Aarsleff, *From Locke to Saussure: Essays on the Study of Language and Intellectual History* (Minneapolis, 1982); id., *The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860* (1983); Nicholas Hudson, *Writing and European Thought, 1600-1830* (Cambridge, 1994).

[78] Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (1993), 117-40; Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks*, 172-6; David Paxman, '"Distance Getting Close": Gesture, Language, and Space in the Pacific', *ECL*, 26, 3 (2002), 78-97.

[79] Philibert de Commerson, 'Lettre de M. Commerson', *Mercure de France* (Nov. 1769), 197-207 at 199.

[80] Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 228; Karl H. Rensch, *The Language of the Noble Savage* (Canberra, 2000); id., 'The Language of the Noble Savage: Early European Perceptions of Tahitian', in Robert Blust (ed.), *Currents in Pacific Linguistics* (Canberra, 1991), 403-14.

[81] Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, *Voyage Round the World*, tr. J. R. Forster (1772), 264-5; Rensch, *Language*; see also pp. 246-251, below.

[82] This was done as early as the unauthorised account of the *Endeavour* voyage in 'Thomas Becket', *A Journal of a Voyage Round the World* (1771), esp. 105-6.

Observations (1778) as a means of distinguishing between the two races he identified.[83]

Metropolising Race

Travel accounts may have been informed and to some extent shaped by metropolitan scientific and racial interests, but they were not in themselves racial theories. Rather, they were compendia of source materials, edited and published within the metropole and used by metropolitan racial theorists. Such textual materials, newly reliable and in abundance, were but one type of data brought back from the Pacific. Other specimens contributed directly to the 'metropolisation' of race, whereby race was made a thoroughly European concept, albeit one based on the extra-European world. Foremost of these were those specimens which could directly interact with a metropolitan environment and enable all metropolitans to speculate about matters anthropological and ethnographic. These were the Pacific visitors to Europe, Ahutoru and Mai.[84] Ahutoru visited France following Bougainville's voyage and died on his way back to the Pacific.[85] Far more significant for British culture was Mai, who was brought to Britain as a direct consequence of Banks's failure to procure a living 'curiosity' during the *Endeavour* voyage.[86]

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[83] Gascoigne, 'German Enlightenment and the Pacific', 150-51. Banks had stumbled upon, but ultimately rejected this technique. See Hawkesworth, *Account*, iii. 473-7; Forster, *Observations*, 182-90; Rensch, *Language*, 66.

[84] On these visits, see esp. Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, ch. 5. See also Harriet Guest, 'Ornament and Use: Mai and Cook in London', in Kathleen Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History* (Cambridge, 2004), 317-44.

[85] Yves Giraud, 'De l'exploration à l'Utopie: notes sur la formation du mythe de Tahiti', *French Studies*, 31 (1977), 26-41; *GM*, 42 (1772), 107-10 and 45 (1775), 166-8.

[86] See esp. E. H. McCormick, *Omai: Pacific Envoy* (Oxford, 1977). See also Thomas, *Discoveries*, 80, 135; Michael Alexander, *Omai, Noble Savage* (1977), 44-7. Guest, *Empire*, 70.

Mai's visit to Britain was significant for several reasons. First, other such 'specimens' were either dead or were animals.[87] Second, the 1770s was a turning point in the history of celebrity culture, as the press began to make celebrities, and make them more accessible to a wider audience, as part of a development which recent scholarship has argued was characteristic of the romantic period.[88] Mai was a consummate celebrity, being lionised by Fanny Burney, playing chess with Samuel Johnson's friends, and spending a great deal of time with Banks, Solander, and Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty.[89] Third, Mai's celebrity was such that he was immortalised on the stage. Garrick first had the idea to use Mai as Harlequin, but the Covent Garden Theatre was to realise this almost a decade after Mai's departure. *Omai* was viewed by probably over a hundred thousand people, it apparently brought George III to tears, and was repeated several times by Royal command.[90] In *Omai*, Mai was not merely rendered the quintessential South Seas islander, but he was also a metonym for British imperial and maritime power: his very presence in Britain was testament to their continued vitality.[91] Finally, Mai was also a figurehead of South Seas islanders within racial theories of the later eighteenth century, theories which bespoke the growing confidence of the British intelligentsia to understand all humans. A picture of Mai was procured by Blumenbach for his

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[87] Thomas, *Discoveries*, 260-3.
[88] See Tom Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity: Industrial Culture and the Hermeneutic of Intimacy* (Palgrave, 2007), ch. 1. Cf. Leo Braudy, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History* (Oxford, 1986), which argues instead that fame has been a constant of Western history. See also Tom Mole (ed.), *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, forthcoming 2009).
[89] McCormick, *Omai*, 111-12, 114, 124-8, 159, 333.
[90] Garrick to George Colman the Elder, 29 Aug. 1775, in David M. Little and George M. Karhl (eds.), *The Letters of David Garrick* (3 vols., 1963), iii. 1031-2; Joppien, 'Loutherbourg's Pantomime', 83; Huse, 'Noble Savage'; Greg Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language* (Cambridge, 1994), 262-76; Worrall, *Harlequin Empire*, 139.
[91] Wilson, *Island Race*, 63-70; Guest, *Empire*, 1-27.

anthropological research from Banks, and one was included as a plate in William Lawrence's *Lectures* (1819), acting as the exemplar for the 'Malay' race in a work which borrowed Blumenbach's racial schema almost to the letter.[92]

Mai's celebrity and prominence, his metonymic relationship with both South Seas islanders and British imperial power, and the increasingly prominent activities of racial theorists, all contributed to the democratisation of anthropological speculation. Mai's press coverage enabled the reading public to formulate opinions concerning South Seas islanders, and to communicate these in print, thus creating a cultural dialogue of race. As we have already seen, at least one correspondent was frustrated with the condescending and stereotypical reportage about Mai, although they by no means had the last word.[93] 'Lyon' though he was, Mai was an ambivalent celebrity. Used in traditional fashion as a mouthpiece of satire and social criticism, there was nevertheless a strong current of opinion that viewed him negatively.[94] This facilitated a popular discussion of him in racial or ethnographic terms. Much of what appeared on Mai in the press between 1774 and 1776 was saturated with stereotypical imagery of non-Europeans, such as their lack of foresight, fickleness, stupidity, or hypersexuality.[95] Like Ahutoru, the native brought to France by Bougainville, Mai was criticised for being intellectually backward,

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[92] William Lawrence, *Lectures on Physiology, Zoology, and the Natural History of Man* (1819).
[93] See p. 232, above.
[94] G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter, 'Introduction: Approaching Enlightenment Exoticism' to eid. (eds.), *Exoticism*, 1-22; Smith, *European Vision*, 59.
[95] *St James's Chronicle*, 4 Aug. 1774, 29 June 1775; 'An Ode of Anacreon' in *Morning Chronicle*, 29 Aug. 1776; *Middlesex Journal*, 1 Dec. 1774; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 1 July 1776. On British perceptions of Mai, see Jocelyn Hackforth-Jones, 'Mai/Omai in London and the South Pacific: Performativity, Cultural Entanglement, and Indigenous Appropriation', in Joanna Sofaer (ed.), *Material Identities* (Oxford, 2007), 13-30.

unable to speak English or to understand Britain in anything other than his own terms.[96]

Related to this perception of Mai was his negritization in popular culture.[97] Both Mai's image and his speech were explicitly negritized in several representations, and his very presence in Britain was explained by some as a consequence of his negroid features: 'a flatness in his nose, which indicated a mixture of the negro breed and his family, and made him less respectable in those islands, where blood is considered in the highest degree, contributed to make him more ready to undertake this voyage.'[98] Great attention was paid to his metaphorical coinages, examples being those for ice ('stone water') and wasp ('soldier bird'). Perhaps because he was a potent representative of British imperial might, it was not Mai but another 'Otaheitean traveller' whose speech in *Omai* was a crudely caricaturised African patois:

> In de big canoe
> I o'er ocean swim me,
> Jack and merry crew
> Give good liquor to me.
> Over sand and rocks
> Teach me sail, no paddle;
> Teach me den to box,
> So to use my daddle [fist].[99]

[96] See, for example, *Omiah's Farewell* (1776), p. ii.
[97] Cf. Thomas Blake Clark who argued that Mai got whiter the more he was represented. See his *Omai, First Polynesian Ambassador to England* (Honolulu, 1940), 83.
[98] *London Chronicle*, 9 Aug. 1774. See also McCormick, *Omai*, 100, 105, 109, 121; Solander to Dr James Lind, 19 Aug. 1774, in Edward Duyker and Per Tingbrand (tr. and eds.), *Daniel Solander: Collected Correspondence, 1735-1782* (Melbourne, 1995), 333-5. For an account of nose flattening in the Pacific, see Cook, *Voyage*, i. 366-7; Forster, *Observations*, 332. For a play on this supposed feature of Omai and syphilitic noses, see [William Preston], *Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Seven* (1777), 12.
[99] O'Keeffe, *Short Account*, 16. See also McCormick, *Omai*, 335.



Figure 4.4 – Francesco Bartolozzi after Nathaniel Dance, *Omai* (1774).



Figure 4.5 – J. Page after unknown artist, *Omiah: A Native of Otaheite brought to England by Capt. Fourneaux* (*London Magazine*, Aug. 1774).

Nonetheless, in cheaper or printed pictorial representations of Mai, he was portrayed as black, as in Figures 4.4 and 4.5. His hair in both of these images is long and has a tendency to curl, but in no way could be mistaken for the 'wool' typical of representations of Africans in the period.[100] However, the notion that he was 'black' had taken so thoroughly that he was being referred to as such while still in Britain, and at least one horse owner named a black stallion 'Omiah'.[101] Although attitudes to Pacific peoples became less indulgent or friendly following Cook's murder, it is noteworthy that, as evidenced by Mai, there was a significant current of opinion which regarded Pacific peoples

[100] See David Bindman (ed. with Karen Dalton), *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, iii: *From the Renaissance to the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, MA, forthcoming). See also p. 76ff., above. I am grateful to Prof. Bindman for providing me with the manuscript for this volume.
[101] *Middlesex Journal*, 21 Dec. 1775; *Morning Chronicle*, 20 Sep. 1775.

negatively prior to the departure of Cook's third voyage. This negativity was never absolute, however, and it is arguably a consequence of the new European tendency to differentiate (racially) between Pacific peoples that the rehabilitation of Mai could be managed with such efficacy that he had become by 1785 the avatar of British imperial pride.[102] Although he emphasises that the 1780s marked only the start of the process whereby modern ideas of race were elaborated, these continuities in the representation of Mai highlight the limits of Wahrman's 'revolutionary' account of change.

Stabilising Sex

A stark omission from Wahrman's account is a consideration of the influence of the Pacific voyages on modern ideas of sex.[103] In a similar process to the 'metropolisation' of race, whereby racial data was not merely collected in the Pacific with metropolitan prejudices and agendas in mind but was brought back to Europe, the Pacific voyages also contributed to the production of European sexual identities.[104] Two main features of this will be discussed below: the naturalisation of the metropolitan sexual/gender order, and the stabilisation of the sexual body through the discussion of miscegenation and eugenics (here intended to mean simply the design of improving human groups by taking sexual advantage of the innate differences between them).[105] All this was

[102] A measure of the favoured status of Pacific islanders is perhaps offered by Hume's refinement of his 'racist footnote' to focus solely on 'Negroes' rather than all non-Europeans, as contained in the posthumous (1777) edition of his *Essays*. See Wheeler, *Complexion*, 186.
[103] He deals very briefly with the racialisation of gender distinctions in art arising from the voyages, but this is, again, squarely located within the 'ancien régime of identity'. See Wahrman, *Making*, 100-101.
[104] Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, 102.
[105] See *OED*, s.v. 'eugenic'.

possible because the Pacific was perceived as intrinsically sexual.[106] Myths of a uniquely sexualised social order in the antipodes had existed as long as belief in their existence.[107] Providing an unparalleled opportunity to study and discuss sex in all its forms, the voyages allowed commentators to explore what was and was not 'natural'. This contributed to the contemporaneous elaboration of the categories of male and female, which were produced, at least in part, from a naturalisation of bourgeois metropolitan gender norms.[108] Similarly, the voyages show both the progressive fixing of markers of identity on/in the body and the incompleteness of this process. As a result, they elaborate at least one way in which race, sex, and class were interrelated in the 1770s: as Tahitians came increasingly to represent British moral standards, undesirable elements of Pacific sexual morality were flung to the periphery of South Seas societies, delimited by class and race. The isolation of unacceptable sexual behaviour in an undesirable race was but one part of a discourse of miscegenation and eugenics, where race and sex were mutually definitive.

Naturalising the Metropolitan Gender Order

Following an initial period during which Britons found their cultural and geographical bearings in the Pacific (1767-76), changing metropolitan norms of sexual and social order began to be reflected onto Pacific societies. Conversely and as a result, the 'discovery' of the European bourgeois gender order in 'primitive' and 'natural' South Seas societies was a significant vehicle for

[106] Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, *passim*; Gagnon, 'Others'.
[107] Pamela Cheek, *Sexual Antipodes: Enlightenment Globalization and the Placing of Sex* (Stanford, CA, 2003), ch. 4; Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 1-22; Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, 83-90.
[108] Such indeed is Laqueur's thesis. See Laqueur, *Making*, esp. 149-54.

naturalising this order in the metropole. This was not a straightforward process, as European voyagers were unable to locate immediately any comparable sexual order in the Pacific. Their eventual ability to do so required considerable innovation, as they had to situate Pacific societies accurately in relation to their (the Europeans') own past, to marginalise unacceptable sexualities, or to employ a combination of both of these approaches. In seeking to make the European gender order seem natural, the importance of 'discovering' it in the Pacific was so great that attempts were made to defend even such highly objectionable Pacific customs as the *arioi*.[109]

Initial contact with the Pacific resulted either in the enthusiastic philhellenism of the French, convinced that they had found in Tahiti a 'New Cythera', or in the more level-headed, but ultimately confused, perspective of the British.[110] Indeed, in 1769 Cook found himself unable to understand Tahitian sexuality on any terms: 'there is a scale in dissolute sensuality, which these people have ascended, wholly unknown to every other nation whose manners have been recorded from the beginning of the world to the present hour, and which no imagination could possibly conceive.'[111] Particularly difficult to explain were instances of public sex, such as the 'Point Venus' ritual, where 'Queen' Oberea orchestrated the copulation of a young man and a reluctant, barely pubescent girl.[112] John Wesley nonetheless had faith in the

[109] See p. 256, below.
[110] Commerson, 'Lettre', 198; Bougainville, *Voyage* (tr. Forster), 256-7; Porter, 'Exotic as Erotic'; L. Davis Hammond (ed.), *News from New Cythera* (Minneapolis, 1970). See also Margaret Jolly, 'From Point Venus to Bali Ha'i: Eroticism and Exoticism in Representations of the Pacific', in Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly (eds.), *Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific* (Chicago, 1997), 99-122; Gascoigne, 'German Enlightenment', 141-71, 360-66.
[111] Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 207.
[112] Christopher Balme, 'Sexual Spectacles: Theatricality and the Performance of Sex in Early Encounters in the Pacific', *Drama Review*, 44, 4 (2000), 67-85.

existence of a natural (Christian) modesty: '"a nation … without any sense of shame! Men and women coupling together in the face of the sun, and in the sight of scores of people!" … *Hume* or *Voltaire* might believe this: but I cannot.'[113]

But attempts to understand confusing Pacific sexualities in European terms were already underway during the *Endeavour* voyage. Cook was more circumspect than Wesley, speculating that the 'Point Venus' ritual may help to decide the thorny question of whether shame is 'implanted by nature or superinduced by custom.'[114] Cook's dilemma is a noteworthy example of the provisionality of identity in the Pacific recently discussed by Jonathan Lamb: if shame is instinctive, then Tahitian sexuality rests upon an unknown custom sufficiently powerful to overcome instinct; if, however, it is customary, then European morality rests on an equally powerful and obscure custom.[115] This points to a fundamental obstacle for efforts to read Tahitian society in European terms. The unsophisticated attempt to identify Tahiti as a New Cythera failed to persuade, but on the other hand a view of Tahiti as the 'schoolroom of natural law,' and the consequent exemption of exotic females from European regulations, threatened to overturn European order.[116] Either Tahiti was unconvincingly identified with the classical past or it proved that European morality was not universal.[117]

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[113] *An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, From Sept. 13, 1773, to Jan. 2, 1776* (1791), 7; Guest, 'Great Distinction', 44-5.
[114] Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 128.
[115] See Lamb, *Preserving the Self*.
[116] On Richard Payne Knight's comparison of Tahiti and Greek society, see Smith, *European Vision*, 26.
[117] Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, ch. 2; Wilson, 'Thinking Back', 352.

Two possible responses to this dilemma existed. A more convincing model relating Tahiti to the European past could be applied, or it might be possible to argue that Tahiti's sexual order was fundamentally equivalent to that of Europe. Both of these were deployed in the textual responses to Cook's second voyage, the latter being Cook's own approach. He was at pains to exonerate Tahitian women from the promiscuity which had provoked so much prurient interest following the publication of Hawkesworth's account.[118] To do so, Cook stated that those who engaged in sexual commerce with European sailors were unmarried and prostitutes, and that married women were innocent of this behaviour.[119] He thereby confined aberrant sexual behaviour to the same margins it occupied in Europe, asserting the congruence of the European and Tahitian sexual orders.[120] This was reinforced by the replacement of the sexually suspect Banks as the British avatar of discovery by the thoroughly bourgeois and respectable Cook.[121]

Forster's *Observations*, on the other hand, deployed both possible solutions to the problem. The *Observations* made a crucial distinction between two 'races' (eastern and western) in the Pacific.[122] Central to Forster's bipartite racial division was the treatment of women and the consequent state of their morality.[123] While this had much in common with increasingly popular stadial theories (a far more convincing model for relating the European past to Tahiti

[118] Including that of Boswell. See Ryskamp and Pottle, *Boswell*, 308-10; James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* (2 vols., 1791), ii. 47-8.
[119] Cook, *Voyage*, i. 187-8.
[120] This shared by others: see Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, 25-8; Porter, 'Exotic as Erotic'; Thomas, *Discoveries*, 203-4.
[121] Bridget Orr, '"Southern passions mix with northern art": Miscegenation and the *Endeavour* Voyage', *ECL*, 18, 3 (1994), 212-31.
[122] Bougainville also distinguished between two groups. See Bougainville, *Voyage* (tr. Forster), 319-22; Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, 127.
[123] Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, ch. 4; Alan Bewell, 'Constructed Places, Constructed Peoples: Charting the Improvement of the Female Body in the Pacific', *ECL*, 18, 3 (1994), 37-54.

than Bougainville's), Forster discussed physical characteristics in much the same terms as contemporary racial theorists.[124] Coupled with a qualification of climatic determinism, his discussion of the Pacific was thus situated halfway between a conjectural history committed to universal laws of human progress, and racial theories which were beginning to argue for separate developmental paths.[125] He also made the same rank-based distinctions as Cook. By differentiating on the basis of race and social status, European commentators were able to retain a core social group in the Pacific – respectable Tahitians – in whom they could identify their own bourgeois sexual ideals. The taint of Pacific eroticism was however too strong for the teacher and writer Vicesimus Knox to be convinced. He bemoaned the fact that 'several celebrated writers have inferred the absurdity of many, not only innocent, but laudable and beneficial notions and practices, from their being unknown, or different from those established in savage nations in the state of nature. In order to imbibe ideas of decency and moral fitness, they have obliquely referred us to the groves of Otaheite.'[126]

Knox's comments were derisive, based on a negative vision of the island promoted by Hawkesworth's opponents. Hawkesworth had offended by denying the role of providence at several points in his text, and in his description of Tahitian sexuality, particularly the *arioi*, described as an

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[124] On stadial theory and the treatment of women see Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge, 1976); Silvia Sebastiani, '"Race", Women, and Progress in the Late Scottish Enlightenment', in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (eds.), *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* (Basingstoke, 2005), 75-96; Sylvana Tomaselli, 'The Enlightenment Debate on Women', *HWJ*, 20 (1985), 101-24. See also Pagden, *European Encounters*, 1,15, 141-81, and Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, 102.

[125] Kant's understanding of race is the best example of this. See Sara Eigen and Mark Larrimore (eds.), *The German Invention of Race* (Albany, NY, 2006), esp. essays in part 2; Robert Bernasconi (ed.), *Race* (Oxford, 2001); Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, 25-7.

[126] Vicesimus Knox, *Essays, Moral and Literary* (2 vols., 1795), i. 107.

infanticidal society devoted to free love.[127] 'A Christian', writing in the *Public Advertiser*, fulminated against the detail offered by Hawkesworth, but even for others less indignant, the *arioi* was a source of deep anxiety, existing as it did in the midst of an island society viewed, notwithstanding British snobbery over French fulsomeness, in paradisiacal terms.[128] At this time, British femininity was being reconfigured around maternalism, and pronatalist impulses were in full swing.[129] Such was the context to Hawkesworth's defence of female members of the *arioi* who were dishonoured because of their wish to keep their children, 'though none can be more honourable in the estimation of wisdom and humanity, of right reason, and every passion that distinguishes the man from the brute.'[130] It is remarkable that Hawkesworth was attacked for his description of the *arioi* despite this paean to maternalism and his description of other female members of the society as engaged in 'diabolical prostitution'.

Yet more remarkably, efforts were made, particularly after the second voyage, to explain the *arioi*, and in much the same way as the European gender order was projected onto and then read back from Pacific societies. Ever since the *Endeavour* voyage, for instance, Cook had limited membership of the *arioi* to the elite of Tahitian society.[131] As such it was either likened to a select society ('one may almost compare these men to Free-Masons'),[132] or associated with a social elite and thereby freighted with connotations of aristocratic libertinism

[127] Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, 93; Smith, *European Vision*, 27. Lamb, 'Circumstances'.
[128] Letter 'To Dr. Hawkesworth' from 'A Christian' in *Public Advertiser*, 3 July 1773.
[129] See chapter 2, above.
[130] Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 208.
[131] Hawkesworth, *Account*, ii. 207; Cook, *Voyage*, i. 358.
[132] Cook, *Voyage*, i. 358. Ironically, women have always been prohibited from masonic lodges in Britain. See Margaret Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 1991), ch. 5 (esp. p. 124).

and sexual excess.[133] A fuller explanation was provided by George Forster, whose unofficial *Voyage Round the World* (1777) was rushed into print in an effort to beat Cook's text to the bookshelves and thereby capture some of the royalties out of which the elder Forster felt cheated.[134] Although still clearly and strongly opposed to infanticide, Forster conjectured that, at its origin, the *arioi* was devoted to celibacy.[135] Being opposed to nature, celibacy was doomed to failure, but by destroying the offspring resulting from lapses, so Forster reasoned, the society was able to fulfil the intention of sexual abstinence.[136] He offered two possible reasons for the existence of the *arioi*. The first was that it was an elite group of warriors, who refrained from enervating sexual activity. The second reason introduced a racial element by arguing that the *arioi* existed 'to prevent the too rapid propagation of the race of chiefs.'[137] (Forster had previously condemned Tahitian chiefs for their indolence and gluttony in terms of racial purity.)[138] In this guise, the *arioi* was an institution pioneered for the preservation of liberty and the prevention of oppression resulting from a proliferation of chiefs, but its racial (i.e. eugenic) implications are clear.

Racial Stabilisation of the Sexual Body

The naturalisation of the metropolitan sexual order (and its resultant complexities) was but one cause of eugenic ideas. As should be clear, the Pacific

[133] A confused account of the *arioi* is contained in 'Becket', *Journal*, 47. For the aristocratic/elite connotations of sodomy, see Hegarty, 'Unruly Subjects', 189.
[134] Hoare, *Tactless Philosopher*, 151-66; Edwards, *Story of the Voyage*, 115-22. On George Forster's role as a German avatar of discovery, see Michael Hoare, '"Cook the Discoverer": An Essay by George Forster, 1787', *Records of the Australian Academy of Science*, 1, 4 (1969), 7-16; Gascoigne, 'German Enlightenment and the Pacific', esp. 159-64.
[135] Hugh West, 'The Limits of Enlightenment Anthropology: Georg Forster and the Tahitians', *History of European Ideas*, 10 (1989), 147-60.
[136] Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 129-30.
[137] Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 131.
[138] Forster, *Voyage*, i. 366-8.

was a primary site for the interaction of sex and race, and was an ideal setting for miscegenetic and eugenic utopias.[139] Miscegenation could be viewed optimistically, resulting in eugenic fantasies, or negatively, reinforcing both the negative racial image of Pacific islanders prevalent after 1779 and the notion of dangerous Pacific sexuality promoted by the *Bounty* mutiny a decade later.[140] In the background lurked the pronatalist and philoprogenitivist imperatives of European society, and Pacific populations were subject to praise, criticism, or policy.[141]

Eugenic fantasy took two shapes in Pacific discourses, centring either on the production of a quantity of people, or on refinement of their quality. Although elements of both were present in almost all miscegenetic utopias, the latter predominated in French examples. Diderot's *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* (1772), which circulated widely in manuscript in the early 1770s but was not published until the Revolution, is a case in point.[142] Diderot reversed the 'fatal impact' perspective of European-native contact which formed a strong (counter) current of Enlightenment thought (including Diderot's contributions to Raynal's *Histoire des deux Indes*), and which has characterised much modern scholarship on Pacific discovery.[143] He did so by establishing a

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[139] Cheek, *Sexual Antipodes*, chs. 4 and 5.
[140] Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*.
[141] See A. Owen Aldridge, 'Feijoo, Voltaire, and the Mathematics of Procreation', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 4 (1975), 131-8.
[142] It appeared in Grimm's *Correspondance littéraire* in late 1772 and early 1773. See Peter Jimack, *Diderot: Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* (1988); Ulla Kölving and Jeanne Carriat, *Inventaire de la Correspondance littéraire de Grimm et Meister* (*SVEC*, 225-7; 3 vols., Oxford, 1984); Denis Diderot, 'Supplément au voyage de Bougainville', in *Œuvres philosophiques*, ed. P. Vernière (Paris, 1964), 445-516.
[143] The classical work of this school is Alan Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact* (2000 [1969]). An early example is [Gerald Fitzgerald], *The Injured Islanders* (1779). The shift away from 'fatal impact' theses has been discussed in Lamb, Smith, and Thomas, 'Introduction'; Lee Wallace, *Sexual Encounters: Pacific Texts, Modern Sexualities* (Ithaca, NY, 2003), 19; Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, ch. 1. Bernard Smith endorses a reversed 'fatal impact' thesis, emphasising the devastating effect of Pacific discoveries on European concepts of human

utilitarian ethic of sexual reproduction in Tahiti, and explicitly advocating the copulation of Tahitians with intellectually superior Europeans.[144] European sexual exploitation is transformed into native agency, but the radicalism of this agency is blunted by the situation of Tahitians as desirous of sex with Europeans, in fulfilment of colonial fantasy.[145]

British eugenic thought, more fundamentally driven by the pronatalism described in chapter two, centred on a concern for the absolute increase of bodies.[146] This is not to say that there existed no examples of interest in the refinement of 'breeds'. The satirical pamphlets written over the course of the 1770s, which lampooned Joseph Banks's purported relationship with 'Queen' Oberea, evinced an enormous interest in the processes of miscegenation.[147] Mai was easily incorporated into this literature, providing a sexual focus as the topicality of Banks's behaviour gradually wore away. One pamphlet called explicitly for miscegenation as a means of countering both prostitution and effeminacy, advocating the mixture of 'southern passions' with 'northern art'.[148]

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difference. See his *European Vision and the South Pacific*, 2nd edn. (1985); Jolly, '"Ill-Natured Comparisons"'.

[144] Jenny Mander, 'No Woman Is an Island: The Female Figure in French Enlightenment Anthropology', in Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (eds.), *Women, Gender, and Enlightenment* (Basingstoke, 2005), 97-116 at 109-10. For another account linking Diderot's *Supplément* with ideas of race, see Robert Wokler, 'From *l'homme physique* to *l'homme morale* and back: Towards a History of Enlightenment Anthropology', *Journal of the Human Sciences*, 6 (1993), 121-38.

[145] Orr, '"Southern passions"'.

[146] See Gillian Russell, 'An "Entertainment of Oddities": Fashionable Sociability and the Pacific in the 1770s', in Wilson (ed.), *New Imperial History*, 48-70. In the absence of any other measures, Pacific voyagers estimated the Tahitian population on the basis of the island's naval strength. See Cook, *Voyage*, i. 348-50; Forster, *Voyage*, ii. 64-5; *MR*, 57 (1777), 20; Guest, *Empire*, 14-15.

[147] Colin Roderick, 'Sir Joseph Banks, Queen Oberea and the Satirists', in Walter Veit (ed.), *Captain James Cook: Image and Impact* (Melbourne, 1972), 67-89; Orr, '"Southern passions"'. Kathleen Wilson has argued that the pantomime *Omai* was a miscegenetic spectacle. See Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity'. See also *Town and Country Magazine* (Sep. 1773), 457-9. Banks freely, although privately, commented on Tahitian women. See National Library of Australia MS 9/4, ff. 1-17 ('Thoughts on the manners of Otaheite').

[148] [Preston], *Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Seven*, 25.

This literature was, however, cheap, satirical, and hardly representative. More pervasive was an interest in the absolute increase of bodies. Malthus's use of data on the South Seas fed into his arguments, testifying to the importance of these societies for questions of population.[149] Interest in the absolute size of the populace was also shared, to a certain extent, with the French. Editing the *Supplément* in the later 1770s, Diderot inserted a story which appeared in Raynal's *Histoire*, but which ultimately originated in the Anglo-American press in the 1740s. This was the fictional story of Polly Baker, a woman whose plea upon again being arrested for producing bastards was a paean to philoprogenitivism, secured her release, and even her marriage the following day to one of the judges.[150] Appearing in 1747 in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, this text was written by Benjamin Franklin, who in 1751 wrote an essay on the desirability of white population growth in America.[151]

The dangers of miscegenation were apparent from the first visit to Tahiti, and the sexual commerce of Tahitians and sailors endangered the existence of both. For Wallis's crew, simple ironware, particularly nails, soon became the commodity of exchange for sex, and inflation rapidly set in. Wallis had to intervene to prevent sexual activity when he found that nails were being pulled out of the ship.[152] Cook felt it necessary to issue a standing order to his crew before landing in Tahiti that no metal goods were to be exchanged for

[149] T. R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, ed. Patricia James (2 vols., Cambridge, 1989), i. 46-59.
[150] She had been prosecuted four times before.
[151] See Max Hall, *Benjamin Franklin and Polly Baker* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1960). See also 'The Speech of Miss Polly Baker' and 'Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind', in Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography and Other Writings*, ed. Ormond Seavey (Oxford, 1998), 246-50 and 251-60, respectively.
[152] Sturma, *South Seas Maidens*, ch. 2.

anything but provisions.[153] Miscegenetic sexual activity was no less dangerous for Pacific islanders, for two reasons: the negative perception of Tahitian women as prostitutes for engaging in this commerce, and the spread of venereal disease.[154] In the first case, sexual commerce facilitated the marginalisation, in terms of race and class, of South Seas women who engaged in this activity. This was to have devastating consequences with the onset of missionary activity and the racial policies of colonial powers in the nineteenth century.[155] European responsibility for the introduction of venereal disease was recognised as early as Bougainville's and Diderot's texts. The introduction of infectious diseases to colonised areas has been a staple of 'fatal impact' theses since the eighteenth century, and it acted as a source of British national guilt or of contempt for her European competitors.

In addition, miscegenation posed danger not just to life and limb, but also to social order at large. The powerful desire for miscegenetic sex was the motive force behind several, mostly failed, desertions during the Cook voyages. It was also widely blamed for pushing the crew of the *Bounty* to mutiny in April 1789.[156] By this time several Pacific peoples (Hawaiians and New Hebrideans, for example) had come to be viewed more negatively as a result of their lack of civilisation (which, as we have seen, was racialised) or for having killed Cook. With the *Bounty* came a powerful blow to the 'most privileged' status of Tahiti, as the hospitality for which it was famous was now perceived to be deleterious to naval discipline and a factor which enhanced the

[153] Beaglehole, *Journals*, i. 520-1.
[154] Gagnon, 'Others'.
[155] Philippa Levine, 'Sexuality, Gender, and Empire' in ead. (ed.), *Gender and Empire* (Oxford, 2004), 134-55.
[156] Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, ch. 3; Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, ch. 3; Smith, *European Vision* (1960), ch. 5.

degeneration consequent on distance from home.[157] This change in perception finally dispelled any lingering commitment to the noble savagery of Tahitians, yet further undermining models of human universality and reinforcing existing processes of embodying difference.

Conclusion: Unveiling the Scrutable Body

Part of the importance of the Pacific voyages derives from their timely contributions to rendering the human body a more stable substrate for racial and sexual identities. The emergence of a new empirical standard meant that what the voyagers said was taken more seriously than had been the case in the past, and what they said made an enormous contribution to ideas of race. Voyagers such as the Forsters theorised, where others were responsible for the distribution of materials to investigate. The texts addressed crucial topics of interest to racial thinkers, and the transportation of living human specimens back to Europe facilitated a widening of the discourse as every newspaper reader was able to form anthropological opinions. At the same time, the metropolitan gender order received a shot in the arm by being ultimately 'discovered' in 'nature' (i.e. Tahiti), a centrifugal process which marginalised non-bourgeois, non-domestic sexualities in the Pacific through assertions of class or racial identity. Miscegenetic fantasies were at once a manifestation of and a causal factor behind the embodiment of identities, being invoked to solve thorny anthropological problems (such as the *arioi*), reflecting pervasive philoprogenitivism, and contributing to the erosion of universalistic models of human progress at the hands of racial concepts and vocabularies.

[157] Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, 55-87.

The transformations which the Pacific voyages reflected and to which they contributed can be neatly encapsulated by two final examples which demonstrate the transition to a more stable mode for the human body. A flexibility of gender identity played a role in the discourses of Pacific discovery.[158] This has not gone unnoticed by Wahrman, who nonetheless fails to recognise the importance of the voyages for the emergence of modern modes of identity. Even the earliest voyages manifested this flexibility: on Bougainville's voyage, Baré (assistant to the voyage's naturalist, Commerçon), was outed as a woman by islanders almost immediately upon arrival in Tahiti.[159] In the popular press, Banks and Mai were both lampooned and attacked as macaronis: effete individuals whose foppish dress and penchant for peppering their speech with foreign terms earned them a reputation as ungendered.[160] Although, as Philip Carter has argued, this may not connote homosexuality, it nevertheless played a role in the voyage accounts.[161] Sodomy was a nautical stereotype difficult to dislodge, but certain Pacific sexual identities, such as the *aikāne* of Hawai'i, were particularly hard for European voyagers to comprehend with a binary (homo/hetero) conception of sexuality.[162] Despite such difficulties, early contact was characterised by relative ease and

[158] V. G. Kiernan, 'Noble and Ignoble Savages' in Rousseau and Porter (eds.), *Exoticism*, 86-116; Wilson, 'Thinking Back'; Guest, *Empire*, 38.
[159] Sturma, *South Sea Maidens*, 16.
[160] On macaronis, see *Oxford Magazine*, 4 (June 1770), 228-9; Thomas Wright, *Caricature History of the Georges* (1868), 257-62. See also Michèle Cohen, 'The Grand Tour: Constructing the English Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century France', *History of Education*, 21 (1992), 241-57; Fara, *Sex, Botany, and Empire*, 6-9; Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks*, 61-2.
[161] Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society* (2001); Jolly, 'From Point Venus'.
[162] *Aikāne* were politically and culturally influential same-sex friends of Hawai'ian chiefs, but who also performed homosexual practices. See Lee Wallace, 'Too Darn Hot: Sexual Contact in the Sandwich Islands on Cook's Third Voyage', *ECL*, 18, 3 (1994), 232-42; id., *Sexual Encounters*, *passim*; Robert J. Morris, '*Aikāne*: Accounts of Hawaiian Same-Sex Relationships in the Journals of Captain Cook's Third Voyage (1776-80)', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 19, 4 (1990), 21-54; id., 'Same-Sex Friendships in Hawaiian Lore: Constructing the Canon', in Stephen O. Murray (ed.), *Oceanic Homosexualities* (New York, 1992), 71-102; Porter, 'Exotic as Erotic'.

understanding. This soon gave way to a binaristic and judgemental code. By the 1820s at the very latest, what little relativism had been shown regarding same-sex activity had been obliterated as such activities were once again described as 'unnatural practices.'[163] Banks was criticised for his gaudiness into the 1790s and beyond, but never again suffered parody as a macaroni. This stereotype itself was on the wane by the end of the century, perhaps because it had become ontologically incompatible with an emergent gender order incredulous to fluidity or liminality.

Relating this cultural shift to the body, it is salutary to return to Diderot's *Supplément*. In the Diderotian sexual order, an immediately scrutible marker of sexual identity was available which told whether individuals could engage in legitimate utilitarian intercourse. An elaborate system of veils of different colours demonstrated whether a woman was fertile, sterile, or menstruating. However, and in keeping with the fluid, falsifiable, and ultimately inscrutible body, it bears stating that these veils were items of clothing. Assumable and disposable at will, their use as a solid marker of sexual identity within Tahitian society was thus of severely limited use. Remarkably, more permanent and corporeal markers of identity were *already* available. Bougainville had commented on tattooing in his *Voyage autour du monde* (1769), and it has been recently argued that although popularised as a result of the Pacific voyages ('tattoo' is itself a word originating in the Pacific), tattooing had never wholly disappeared from Europe after its heyday in antiquity.[164] It

[163] William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 2nd edn. (4 vols., 1831), i. 202.
[164] Nicholas Thomas, 'Introduction' in id., Anna Cole, and Bronwen Douglas (eds.), *Tattoo: Bodies, Art and Exchange in the Pacific and the West* (2005), 7-29; Jane Caplan, 'Introduction', in ead. (ed.), *Written on the Body: The Tattoo in European and American History* (2000), pp.

would have been quite possible for Diderot to mark the sterile with a tattoo rather than preserve their autonomy in the form of a veil. That he chose not to do so indicates that a corporeal mode of identity was not yet hegemonic. By the time Pacific sexualities were being embraced or repelled in a process of racial or class marginalisation, it is clear that such a corporeal mode was increasingly dominant.

Tattooing, itself the second example denoting a growing stability, marks a change of register in conceptualisations of the body.[165] But, as with so many of the developments charted throughout this chapter, tattooing was not an uncomplicated phenomenon. It simultaneously upheld and undermined the legibility and permanence of the skin.[166] On the one hand, the mechanics of tattooing seemed to prove racial theorists correct about where skin colour was located. Since Malpighi's work on the skin in the late seventeenth century, theorists had been convinced that the *rete mucosum* (nowadays the *stratum mucosum*) was the seat of skin colour, with pigmentation showing through a transparent epidermis. Tattooing seemed to prove this to be the case, as tattoos were situated beneath the surface of the skin yet were clearly visible.[167] Tattoos emphasised the permanence of skin coloration, and were freighted with exoticism, as an anonymous pamphleteer commented on the buttock tattoos of Tahitian women:

> And were we, gracious George, thy gallant crew
> And had we – damn it – nothing else to do

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xi-xxiii at xvi-xvii; Ronald Scutt and Christopher Gotch, *Skin Deep: The Mystery of Tattooing* (1974), 21-37.

[165] On tattooing as writing, see Schaffer, '"On Seeing Me Write"', 90-100; Hegarty, 'Unruly Subjects'.

[166] See Caplan, 'Introduction', xv.

[167] Alfred Gell, *Wrapping in Images: Tattooing in Polynesia* (Oxford, 1993), ch. 1.

> But turn thy great design to filthy farce,
> And seek for wonders on an Indians A[rse].[168]

In addition, tattoos were used for recognition by Europeans, as when James Burney discovered the fate of the *Adventure*'s cutter by identifying a tattoo on the severed hand of one of its crewmen (see Figure 4.6), and when William Bligh painstakingly recorded tattoos in his list of *Bounty* mutineers.[169] Europeans made tattoos their own in the Pacific, and one of the roles played by tattooing was indeed to foster a sense of group identity through sharing common symbols.[170]

However, tattooing also highlighted impermanence and autonomous self-fashioning. Notwithstanding cultural and peer group norms, individuals were at liberty to choose the designs of their tattoos, and indeed whether to be tattooed at all. Tattooing itself could never be a permanent site of identity, as individuals are not born tattooed, and tattoos could mislead as much as they could identify, as with those designs sufficiently extensive as to simulate clothing.[171] The support lent by tattoos for racial theorists' arguments concerning skin colour was also double-edged: the means of demonstrating how these arguments were correct – manipulation of the skin through tattoos –

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[168] Frontispiece to anon., *An Epistle from Mr. Banks, Voyager, Monster-hunter, and Amoroso*, 2nd edn. (1773/4). See also Wilson, 'Thinking Back', 360.
[169] Alexander, *Omai*, 59; Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, 68; Beverly Hopper (ed.), *With Captain Cook in the Antarctic and Pacific: The Private Journal of James Burney, Second Lieutenant of the Adventure on Cook's Second Voyage, 1772-3* (Canberra, 1975). See also Bentham's argument that nomenclature should be revised along utilitarian lines and that these names should be tattooed on the bodies of individuals, quoted in Jane Caplan, '"This or That Particular Person": Protocols of Identification in Nineteenth-Century Europe', in ead. and John Torpey (eds.), *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World* (Princeton, 2001), 49-66 at 64-5.
[170] Marc Blanchard, 'Post-Bourgeois Tattoo: Reflections on Skin Writing in Late Capitalist Societies', *Visual Anthropology Review*, 7, 2 (1991), 11-21; Gell, *Wrapping*, 22-6; Joanna White, 'Marks of Transgression: The Tattooing of Europeans in the Pacific Islands', in Thomas, Cole, and Douglas (eds.), *Tattoo*, 72-89.
[171] Gell, *Wrapping*, 38.

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Figure 4.6 – Detail from illustration in John Marra, *Journal of the* Resolution*'s Voyage* (London, 1775).

contributed to undermining the skin as a paramount marker of racial difference. The popularisation of body art after 1770 arguably accelerated the process by which the skeleton became a more reliable and eloquent repository of racial particularities.[172]

Overall, tattoos were a significant component of the discourses of Pacific discovery. For all their manipulability and ambiguity, they were a means of permanently marking the body and one need look no further than the Holocaust to see the intrinsic relationship between bodily difference and tattooing.[173] Tattoos, their ambiguities and contradictions, are arguably the most apposite analogy to the account which this chapter has attempted to provide. A new stability and rigour in voyage accounts, gender orders, racial theories, and in the body itself was tempered by the survival of earlier epistemological modes which were not destroyed by these changes. As with

[172] Bronwen Douglas, '"Cureous Figures: European Voyages and *Tatau*/Tattoo in Polynesia, 1595-1800', in Thomas, Cole, and Douglas (eds.), *Tattoo*, 33-52.
[173] This was the case on both sides of the racial equation. Not merely were those Jews in the death camps not immediately selected for extermination tattooed on their forearms, but SS guards had their blood group tattooed in their armpits. See Dora Apel, 'The Tattooed Jew', in Barbie Zelizer (ed.), *Visual Culture and the Holocaust* (2001), 300-20; Blanchard, 'Post-Bourgeois Tattoo', 16; Scutt and Gotch, *Skin Deep*, 163.

unacceptable Pacific sexualities, these epistemologies were rather consigned to the margins of society in a process which is arguably still incomplete. However, the 1770s marks the decade in which they were decisively dethroned in favour of those more empirical and corporeal, and the Cook voyages offer perhaps the best illustration of this process at work in eighteenth-century culture. This makes the scant attention paid to the voyages in Wahrman's account, especially regarding their role in the elaboration of modern sexual difference, somewhat puzzling. They are certainly no straightforward proof of rapid change, as demonstrated by the continuity-within-change of representations of Mai. However, they do represent the stabilisation of the racial and sexual body as a consequence of the improved repute of the empirical data (travel accounts) on which these are partly founded. Certainly still underway in the 1780s, this process did not originate in the later decade, and it therefore becomes unsafe to rely on the American war as an explanatory factor for modern identities, although it undoubtedly contributed to their continuing emergence.

5 Economies of Race and Sex in the Debate on Slavery, 1807-1833

Introduction

This chapter is a study of the discourses of slavery, abolition, and emancipation in Britain between the abolition of the slave trade (1807) and the passage of the Emancipation Act (1833), which freed all slaves in the British Caribbean by 1838. It has three distinct aims, each of which is intended to reinforce and supplement the argument provided by previous chapters. First, it will show that conceptions of the body had become so stable by the 1830s that slave societies became overconfident in its power to perform significatory work. Second, it will introduce a causal explanation to the relationship of race and sex, arguing that sex made race, if only in the British Caribbean. It did so in two distinct ways: first, sex between white and black people produced racial groups (the coloured population) which inhabited a system of racial gradations, and second, sex within the enslaved community promoted sexual customs as a racial characteristic. In addition, sex within the enslaved community became a primary focus for efforts to ameliorate the condition of slaves. The success of this amelioration would be signified by a growth of the slave population, and the third aim of this chapter is to show that the size of a population remained an important measure of social wellbeing well into the nineteenth century, particularly in debates on slavery.

The chapter is structured around the two ways in which sex made race. The first section explores the production of racial groups as a consequence of black-white sexual relations. A system of racial gradations between black and

white was widely utilised, and each of its categories was the product of sex with either a white (male) or a black individual. A sense of manifest difference between black and white was assumed by this model, which also reflected the realities of interracial sex on slave plantations. Nonetheless, this model was based on an overconfidence in the ability of the body – particularly skin colour – to represent a sophisticated set of identities. Although the racial model was undermined by the body's inability to bear so much signifying weight, it still demonstrates the existence of an ontologically stable body. In other words, contemporaries believed so well that the body could signify identity that they misjudged its limitations, making skin colour the signifier for a more variegated notion of race than it could possibly hope to encompass. The stability of the body was no guarantee against its misuse.

The second section explores the other way in which sex made race: sex as a racial characteristic. This was manifested in a discussion of sexual customs, not least in the context of debates concerning the natural increase of the slave population, a debate in which the (collective) body was put to better use than in the construction of racial models. Natural increase was seen as a sign of a healthy society, and the demographic context of slavery in the British Caribbean was disastrous. Slaves were often attacked for their poor reproductive habits, which often both reflected and fed into racial stereotypes. They were also blamed for the failure of the ineffective efforts by planters to encourage reproduction. Abolitionists blamed planters who themselves blamed slaves, but all sides were agreed that the growth of a population was a vital yardstick of its health and happiness. As such, the increase of the population was a more reliable empirical marker than skin colour.

This argument contributes to several trends in recent scholarship. Debate amongst historians of slavery has traditionally concentrated on politics and economics, especially the role of the latter in securing the abolition of the slave trade.[1] In recent decades historians have become interested in the intellectual and cultural history of slavery and abolitionism, particularly regarding issues of gender and race.[2] Study of gender and slavery has focused on the experience of slavery for women and, very occasionally, for men, and has more recently addressed the role of women as producers and reproducers.[3] This chapter will build on this historiography by demonstrating the importance of sex beyond the gendered experience of slavery, by relating reproduction in particular to race. The most common perspective on the relationship between slavery and race is based on Eric Williams's claim that slavery produced race.[4] On mainland America, the imperative for the elaboration of racial ideas came, it has been

[1] The economic debate was sparked by Eric Williams's thesis that the British only abolished slavery once it had become unprofitable. See Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1944). This was severely challenged by historians who argued that slavery was still very profitable when abolished. See Roger Anstey, 'A Reinterpretation of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade, 1806-1807', *EHR*, 87 (1972), 304-22; Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh, PA, 1977); id., *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilizaion in Comparative Perspective* (New York, 1987). For the classic political narrative of abolition see Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, 1760-1810* (1975).

[2] The following works are the briefest sample of this scholarship. See Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY, 1966); id., *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (1975); Philip D. Curtin, *Two Jamaicas: The Role of Ideas in a Tropical Colony, 1830-1865* (Cambridge, MA, 1955); Peter J. Kitson and Debbie Lee (gen. eds.), *Slavery, Abolition, and Emancipation: Writings in the British Romantic Period* (8 vols., 1999); Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); Hilary McD. Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (1989); Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

[3] See, for example, Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (1990); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in the Making of New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, 2004); Henrice Altink, *Representations of Slave Women in Discourses on Slavery and Abolition, 1780-1838* (2007); Kenneth Morgan, 'Slave Women and Reproduction in Jamaica, *c.*1776-1834', *History*, 91, 302 (1996), 231-53.

[4] Williams, *Capitalism*, 7. See also William A. Green, 'Race and Slavery: Considerations on the Williams Thesis', in Barbara Solow and Stanley Engerman (eds.), *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery* (Cambridge, 2004), 25-49.

argued, from the American Revolution.[5] To sustain slavery in a nation where all men were born equal, it became necessary to argue that slaves were lesser men than their masters, which produced a particularly virulent strain of polygenist thought in the antebellum South. No such imperative existed in the British Caribbean, which also differed from America in lacking a culture of settlement, in recognising grades of distinction between white and black,[6] and in the abysmal demographic performance of slaves until after 1807. Race emerged in the context of a political paradox in America, whereas in the British Caribbean, it will be argued, the interplay of sex and race was productive of racial distinctions, however clumsily they were affixed to the body.

This argument is made on the basis of British pro- and anti-slavery texts. Until recently, little scholarship had taken seriously the arguments offered in favour of slavery, which were viewed as ultimately spurious attempts to bolster an institution increasingly out of step with bourgeois liberalism.[7] Such a perspective reeks of the Whiggish interpretation of abolitionism recently critiqued by Christopher Brown, and however accurate an assessment it may be of a number of such texts, it is undoubtedly not so of them all.[8] Abolitionism has been much more widely studied than proslavery argument, but historians now acknowledge the need to recognise the heterogeneity of each group, and the wide variety of opinions which could be held in each.[9] As Peter Kitson has notably argued, those seeking evidence of racial theorising are better placed to

[5] See esp. Duncan J. MacLeod, *Slavery, Race, and the American Revolution* (Cambridge, 1974).
[6] See Winthrop D. Jordan, 'American Chiaroscuro: The Status and Definition of Mulattoes in the British Colonies', *W&MQ*, 3rd ser., 19 (1962), 183-200; id., *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1968), 167-78.
[7] This attitude changed with the publication of works such as Larry Tise's *Proslavery: A History of the Defence of Slavery in America, 1701-1840* (1987).
[8] Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006), 1-30.
[9] See Altink, *Representations*, 1-10.

find this in abolitionist, rather than proslavery literature.[10] This chapter is less interested in distinguishing pro- from anti-slavery argument than in surveying the range of opinions available on the issues which it will address. These issues are particularly tied to the period after 1807, when the need to promote population growth in the Caribbean became pressing (making the patchy adoption of pronatalist schemes even more remarkable), and when racial theories began to bloom in Europe. Proslavery argument became more virulent only as emancipation became a real possibility after 1823 (arguably as late as 1831), and the chronological scope of this chapter is designed to incorporate the gamut of texts produced to defend and destroy racial chattel slavery.

Interracial Sex and the Generation of Racial Categories

The purpose of this section is to show how sex created race in the Caribbean by producing racial groups through interracial intercourse. It begins by outlining the system of racial gradations operative in the region, one feature of which was that each category was based on intercourse with either a 'pure' white or black individual. The section proceeds to examine the (inevitably racialised) differences between these two groups, as perceived in the discourse on slavery. A widely available understanding of heredity meant that these differences were important in determining the nature of the groups described in the system of racial hierarchies. Another feature of this system was that the white participant in the imagined interracial intercourse was always male. The

[10] Peter J. Kitson, '"Candid Reflections": The Idea of Race in the Debate over the Slave Trade and Slavery in the late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century', in Brycchan Carey, Markman Ellis, and Sara Salih (eds.), *Discourses of Slavery and Abolition: Britain and its Colonies* (Basingstoke, 2004), 11-25, an updated version of which appears in Peter J. Kitson, *Romantic Literature, Race, and Colonial Encounter* (Basingstoke, 2007), ch. 3.

model thus reflected the social reality of interracial sex, which the section proceeds to explore. Female slaves in particular were almost always blamed for sexual misconduct, but they were able to gain a modicum of power on the basis of their sexual desirability. Desiring slaves because of their perceived proximity to whites fatally undermined the system of racial gradations, which relied on the unequivocal visibility of slave status. Confidence was reposed in the body to distinguish black from white, but it was less able to support a distinction as arbitrary as slave from free.

Jamaica and the Caribbean

The British debate on slavery focused, understandably, almost exclusively on the Caribbean. Despite the manifest diversity in the region, Jamaica occupies a prime position throughout this chapter for two reasons. First, its size and dominance in the British Caribbean make it of paramount importance. In 1807, there were approximately 775,000 slaves in the British Caribbean. Jamaica's share of this population was approximately 347,000 or 45 per cent.[11] Its closest rival had just over 10 per cent of the total.[12] Jamaica thus had at least four times as many slaves as its nearest rival in the British Caribbean, and almost half of the total number. Its white population was also the largest, amounting to 28,000, over 12,000 more than its nearest rival, Barbados.[13]

The second reason for the prominence of Jamaica in this chapter is its sophisticated racial hierarchy. British Caribbean colonies employed a complex

[11] B. W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Baltimore, 1984), 3, 77 [hereafter Higman, *Caribbean*].
[12] Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice (later united as British Guiana).
[13] Higman, *Caribbean*, 77.

system of racial categories to distinguish people of colour from their progenitor groups, 'Whites' and 'Negroes'. There was little agreement between or even within the colonies on the exact shape of this system.[14] However, thanks to widely read proslavery authors such as Edward Long and Bryan Edwards, the Jamaican variant is one of the best documented of these systems.[15] Long had spent twelve years in Jamaica and became a scientific correspondent and widely acknowledged expert on the colony, writing his notorious *History of Jamaica* in 1774.[16] Edwards had spent longer in Jamaica than Long, and like him was an historian of the West Indies – he wrote his *History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* in 1793 – and a wealthy planter.[17] Despite wide awareness of the heterogeneity of both slave and free populations, the brown or 'coloured' population remained the only inhabitants of the 'racial zone', in which slave status was presumed for all those who were not White.[18] This system, based on the elaborate typologies of the Spanish (from whom the English had taken Jamaica in 1655), had between five and six ranks: 'Negro' (also, but less often, referred to as 'Black'), 'White', and mixtures of these two, such as 'Mulatto', 'Terceron' (or 'Quadroon'), 'Quarteron' (or 'Mustee'), 'Quinteron' (or 'Musteephino'/'Mestizo') and 'Sambo'.[19] Apart from Sambo,

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[14] See Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, 134.

[15] On Long and Edwards's intended readership, see Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination* (Cambridge, 2002), 107; Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, 220 n. 6.

[16] Burnard, *Mastery*, 121-6; *GM*, 83 (1813), 659.

[17] Richard B. Sheridan, 'Edwards, Bryan (1743–1800)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8531>, accessed 28 Jan 2009].

[18] The diarists to be discussed later in this chapter mention white ethnicities throughout, and awareness of African ethnicities tended to be limited to proslavery writers. See Long, *History*, ii. 286-319 and Edwards, *History*, book 1.

[19] See B. W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807-1834* (Cambridge, 1976), ch. 7, esp. p. 153 [hereafter Higman, *Jamaica*]. See also Long, *History*, ii. 260-1; Edwards, *History*, ii. 15-16. For clarity, these categories will be capitalised throughout this chapter but not placed within quotation marks. Likewise, White and Black are capitalised

each was the product of a union of a white and another category. A Sambo was the offspring of a Mulatto and Negro (see Table 5.1), and that of a Sambo and Negro was a Negro, demonstrating both the ease with which one could be re-negritised, and the difficulty of becoming White. Assuming, as population theorists did at the end of the eighteenth century, that each new generation is produced after twenty-five years, it would take a hundred years for the descendents of an original Negro-White coupling to produce a child deemed White if every descendent coupled with a White.[20] It would take half this time to produce a Negro if each generation coupled with a Negro.

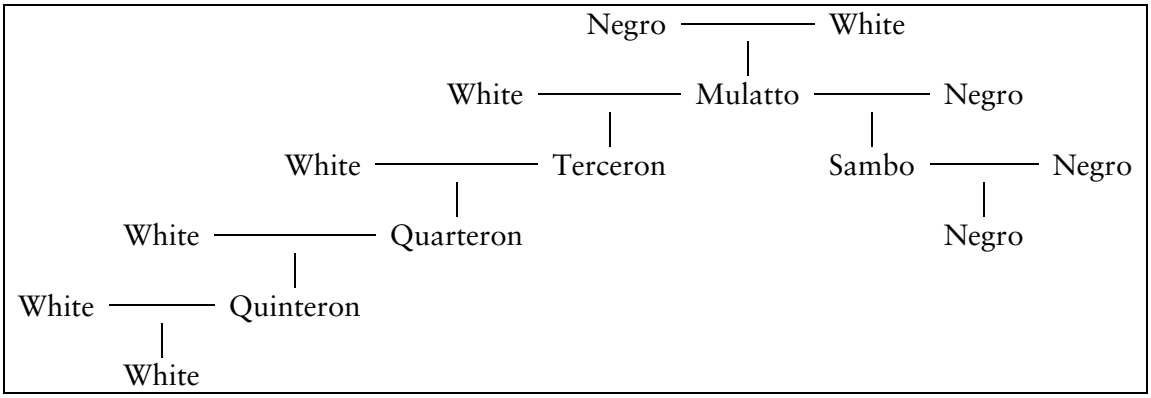

Table 5.1 – Jamaican Racial Gradations (source: Long, *History*, ii. 260; B. W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807-1834* (1976), 140-1).

Two features of this system are significant for the argument of this section. The first is that each category owes its existence to sexual intercourse, and this too with either a White or Negro. The production of 'coloureds' solely from relationships with 'pure' Whites or Negroes allowed authors such as Long and Charles White to argue that it was impossible for Mulattos to reproduce

where they refer to such categories, but not when they refer to white and black people in accordance with n. 86, p. 25 above.

[20] Especially Malthus. See chapter 2, above.

together.[21] As mentioned above,[22] Long's intention was to assert a separate species identity for black and white people via the interbreeding criterion.[23] But the observation on which this was based may simply have been a result of social circumstances which prevented endogamous 'coloured' relationships. As most contemporary writers on the Caribbean agreed, women of colour tended to pair off with those of a 'higher' racial group.[24] By arguing that people of colour could produce offspring, but only through an infusion of 'pure' blood (either black or white), Long was able simultaneously to assert a fundamental distinction between black and white and circumvent the greatest liability in his argument, the fecundity of people of colour.[25] Of note, however, is the way in which the taxonomy of races was used to emphasise this. By describing their schema as one in which only pure white or black people contributed to produce these ranks, such authors reified the notion that people of colour were unprolific. Their ability to reproduce with other people of colour was taxonomically prohibited.

The second feature is the fact that, in Long and Edwards's exposition of the racial zone, the White partner is always male. Indeed, Edwards's summary of the schema is a concise statement of the operation of Caribbean society *tout court*:

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[21] Long, *History*, ii. 335-6; Charles White, *An Account of the Regular Gradation in Man* (1799), 129. Long's *History* was widely read, and Matthew Lewis in 1816 twice mentioned his conclusions re. Mulattoes. See Matthew Gregory Lewis, *Journal of a Residence Among the Negroes in the West Indies* (1845), 55 (15 Jan. 1816), 88 (8 Feb. 1816).
[22] See p. 52, above.
[23] On the interbreeding criterion, see p. 49ff., above.
[24] Long, *History*, ii. 327; Edwards, *History*, ii. 22; John Augustine Waller, *A Voyage in the West Indies* (1820), 19-20; Thomas Cooper, *Facts Illustrative of the Condition of Negro Slaves in Jamaica* (1824), 8-16; Benjamin M'Mahon, *Jamaica Plantership* (1839), 293-4; Lewis, *Journal*, 87-8.
[25] Kitson, *Romantic Literature*, 108; Anthony J. Barker, *The African Link: British Attitudes to the Negro in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1550-1807* (1978), 52.

> A *Sambo* is the offspring of a Black Woman by a Mulatto Man, or *vice versa*.
> A *Mulatto* is the offspring of a Black Woman by a White Man.
> A *Quadroon* is the offspring of a Mulatto Woman by a White Man.
> A *Mestize* or Mustee is the offspring of a Quadroon Woman by a White Man.
> The offspring of a Mestize by a White Man are white by law.[26]

The only racial category which is the product of a coupling in which the mother can hold a 'higher' racial rank than the father is one in which neither partner is White and where the result is the rank closest to Negro (i.e. Sambo). In all other ranks, the pure White is male. This points to several features of Caribbean society which bears on the discussion in this chapter, namely the inability to contemplate a racial mix in which a White woman pairs with a coloured or Black partner,[27] the male-heavy white sex ratio in the Caribbean, the matrilineality of slavery, and also the ability of Whites to sexually assault slaves at will.[28]

The theoretical sophistication of this system should not disguise the fact that it was rarely deployed in a consistent manner. In particular, a range of racial terms were used in slave registration returns (introduced throughout the British Caribbean from 1813). Apart from those we have already met, these include 'Yellow', 'Red', 'Cabre', 'Mongrel', 'Brown', 'Castee', and 'Indian'. The most statistically significant was 'Yellow', which appears frequently in literature

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[26] Edwards, *History*, ii. 16. Note how an equivalent rank to 'Quinteron' is absent from this schema, pointing to the lack of agreement on its exact shape.
[27] See Jordan, *White Over Black*, esp. ch. 4; id., 'American Chiaroscuro'; MacLeod, *Slavery*, ch. 2. For a desperate attempt to stoke fears of miscegenation in the last years of slavery, see Anthony Davis, *The West Indies* (1832), 26. For an example dating from the late eighteenth century, see [James Tobin], *Cursory Remarks upon the Reverend Mr. Ramsay's Essay* (1785), 118-19 n. Cf. letter from Olaudah Equiano to *The Public Advertiser*, 28 Jan. 1788, reprinted in Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*, ed. Vincent Carretta (2003 [1794]), 330-32; Wheeler, *Complexion*, 285.
[28] Slaves inherited their slave status from their mother, which provided a further reason why sexual relationships between invariably free White women and slaves were so furiously anathematised.

emanating from the colonies throughout the period.[29] In addition, the terms 'Mulatto' and 'Coloured' are used widely to denote all people of colour, even including Blacks. The question therefore arises of how it is possible to reconcile this terminological diversity with the seeming fixity of the system of racial hierarchies. The lack of agreement on terminology points to a range of levels of engagement with the racial schema. As this section will demonstrate, confusion of terminology was not solely the result of comparative apathy or enthusiasm with the racial schema, but rather a consequence of its uncertain empirical basis.

The Blackness of Slaves

The system of racial gradations attributed each category of 'coloured' person to a mixture of white and black. Axiomatic for this system was the notion that there were real and consequential differences between black and white people which fed back into the system of racial gradations and gave meaning to its categories. Of the existence of such differences both pro- and anti-slavery writers were agreed. The purpose of this subsection is to establish the extent of these differences and thereby to appreciate the significance of attributing a mixture of blackness and whiteness to people of colour.

The foremost of the differences between black and white was based on the climate. The belief that black people were better suited to labouring in the

[29] Higman, *Caribbean*, 155. Examples of the use of 'Yellow' in colonial literature include Waller, *Voyage*, 106; Frank Cundall (ed.), *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred and Thirty-Eight Years Ago*, 3rd edn. (1939) [hereafter Nugent, *Journal*], 18 (31 July 1801). 'Yellow' was also used in metropolitan discourses. See, for example, James McQueen's letter to T. F. Buxton, *Glasgow Courier*, 20 Oct. 1825, in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444 (Thomas Fowell Buxton Papers), vol. 39 (Newspaper Cuttings, 1822-7), f. 34.

Caribbean than white was ubiquitous.[30] Modern scholars of slavery have cautiously acknowledged that this was not entirely spurious, as immunity to tropical diseases may have conferred on Africans a selective benefit.[31] Contemporaries recognised this to a certain extent, but the debates of the early nineteenth century focused squarely on the heat of the climate. 'Let us hear no more then of white men working,' wrote David Collins in 1803, 'where they have so much difficulty to exist, even without work.'[32] Indeed, 'heat not only extinguishes the power, but the will, for exertion.'[33] So associated with this was the Caribbean that a new verb, 'Creolise', was coined to describe the lassitude characteristic of white people.[34]

It was, in part, as a consequence of the African's ability to labour in the Caribbean that many commentators identified 'black' with 'slave'.[35] The blackness of its victims was the chief characteristic of what was termed 'negro slavery' in the period.[36] More explicit ties between slave and black were made by authors of all shades of opinion. For example, the generally sympathetic Lady Nugent, wife of Jamaica's Lieutenant-Governor, referred to slaves uniformly as 'blackies' despite clearly recognising people of colour.[37] The synonymy of slave and black was widely understood by members of the

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[30] See, for example, George M. Fredrickson, *Racism* (Oxford, 2002), 39; Higman, *Jamaica*, ch. 1; Richard B. Sheridan, *Doctors and Slaves: A Medical and Demographic History of Slavery in the British West Indies, 1680-1834* (Cambridge, 1985); Philip D. Morgan, 'Slaves and Livestock in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica: Vineyard Pen, 1750-1751', *W&MQ*, 3rd ser., 52 (1995), 47-76.
[31] Sheridan, *Doctors and Slaves*, ch. 1; Higman, *Caribbean*, 322-4.
[32] [Dr. David Collins], *Practical Rules for the Management and Medical Treatment of Negro Slaves, in the Sugar Colonies* (1803), 35.
[33] [Collins], *Practical Rules*, 35.
[34] Nugent, *Journal*, 273 (14 Sep. 1804).
[35] See Wheeler, *Complexion*, 248.
[36] See, for example, [Sir Rose Price], *Pledges on Colonial Slavery* (Penzance, 1832); John Gladstone, *Facts, Relating to Slavery in the West Indies and America*, 2nd edn. (1830); and [William Alexander], *Address to the Public, On the Present State of the Question Relative to Negro Slavery, in the British Colonies* (York, 1828).
[37] Nugent, *Journal*, *passim*.

coloured population.[38] Consequently, so several commentators on Jamaica argued, it was only with difficulty that one could find a free person of colour who laboured in the fields.[39] Some historians have argued that their use as field labourers by the late 1820s was a direct cause of the 1831-2 slave revolt in Jamaica, as slaves of colour had the one feature which reconciled them to the slave system – their superiority to black slaves – undermined by immediate production goals.[40]

The broad and unsophisticated association of black and slave took place in the face of a wider recognition of African ethnic specificities. Planters frequently associated particular African groups, such as Ibos and Coromantis, with certain traits. Coromantis were generally held to be warlike, and Ibos crafty.[41] Nevertheless, and despite the acknowledged difficulties in tracing the 'true character and dispositions of the negro,' they were usually discussed in the aggregate.[42] Both pro- and anti-slavery authors were equally likely to homogenise the black population.[43] Benjamin M'Mahon, who wrote of his experiences as a plantation worker in Jamaica before and after emancipation, was clearly aware of ethnic diversity – he spoke in one instance of a 'ferocious

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[38] It was common elsewhere in the Americas. See, for example, Thelma Wills Foote, *Black and White Manhattan: The History of Racial Formation in Colonial New York City* (New York, 2004), 194.

[39] This attitude was also enshrined in the legislation which abolished slavery and replaced it with a period of 'apprenticeship': predial (field) slaves were to be apprenticed for two years longer than non-predial slaves. See Henry Edward Sharpe, *On the Abolition of Negro Apprenticeship* (1838), 25. For contemporary comment on field labour and slavery, see Davis, *West Indies*, 91; [Alexander], *Address*, 8; Gladstone, *Facts*, 7; *The Speeches of Mr. Barrett and Mr. Burge* (1833), 32.

[40] J. R. Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: The Process of Amelioration* (Oxford, 1988), ch. 6. See also Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, NY, 1982), esp. part 4.

[41] [John Stewart], *An Account of Jamaica, and its Inhabitants* (1808), 236; Long, *History*, ii. 403-4.

[42] [Stewart], *Account*, 235.

[43] For an example of this by a pro-slavery author, see Rev. George Wilson Bridges, *The Annals of Jamaica* (2 vols., 1828), ii. 400.

Ebo' slave driver – but he too wrote in terms of 'the negroes', of 'negro feeling', and indeed of 'the black and the white'.[44] Metropolitan authors habitually spoke in general terms of 'the negro' or 'the slave'.[45] This was particularly the case with antislavery argument, which was rarely interested in the specific ethnic composition of the slave population, but which did wish to assert the broad racial basis for slavery, in order that proslavery authors became associated with still risqué racial theories.[46]

Another of the mainstays of emancipationist argument, which had evolved from abolitionism to attack the system of slavery qua a system, was to emphasise the brutalisation of slaves.[47] This was not merely a statement of humans being treated cruelly, but rather an earnest belief that slaves were actually and literally brutalised, viz. turned into animals. Emancipationists continually emphasised that slaves were treated the same as brutes.[48] There is disagreement between certain scholars on the extent to which slaves and animals were linked in the planters' minds.[49] Certainly there were intriguing parallels between slaves and animals in planter thought, particularly on racial or moral lines. In 1816, when Matthew ('Monk') Lewis first visited his estates in Jamaica, he commented on the widely held opinion that, like slaves, the only cattle that could labour in the West Indies are those 'which have a great deal of

[44] M'Mahon, *Jamaica Plantership*, 221, 242, 56, 58, 207.
[45] Much to the chagrin of planters like Long. See Long, *History*, ii. 444.
[46] See Kitson, '"Candid Reflections"'.
[47] On the argument attacking slavery as a system, see Drescher, *The Mighty Experment: Free Labor versus Slavery in British Emancipation* (New York, 2002); Bush, *Slave Women*, 13.
[48] See, for example, reports of antislavery meetings in *Liverpool Mercury* (28 Apr. 1826) and *Birmingham Chronicle* (?Mar. 1824), and letter to editor of *British and Colonial Weekly Register* (5 June 1824), all in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 39. See also anon., *Exposure of the Arguments, Why Murder and Blasphemy, as Essential to West Indian Prosperity, Ought not to be Forbidden* (Aberdeen, 1825).
[49] Morgan, 'Slaves and Livestock'; Trevor Burnard, 'Slave Naming Patterns: Onomastics and the Taxonomy of Race in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 31 (2001), 325-46.

black in them.'[50] Also, in a parliamentary debate of 1826, the Unitarian MP for Norwich, William Smith, drew the House's attention to the fact that the Attorney-General of Demerara 'was shocked to hear a lawyer declare, at the trial of a slave, "that there was no more harm in killing a negro than a dog."'[51] Immediately following this particular debate was introduced a bill to prevent the mistreatment of dogs.[52] It is possible to overstate the interrelation of domestic animals and slaves, but it remains important to emphasise the fact that, insofar as slavery is concerned, 'dehumanisation' is not simply a euphemism for cruel treatment. Humanity was wrested from the victims of slavery, and, even for emancipationists, meaningful humanity was possessed by slaves only *in potentia*.[53]

The contingency of humanity for slaves was not emphasised solely through parallels with animals. Slaves were likened to other such provisional groups, particularly children.[54] George Canning's speech before the Commons of 16 March 1824 asserted this connection directly, whilst likening slaves to Frankenstein's monster:

> We must deal with the negro as with a person possessing sense, but the sense only of an infant; and, before he is prepared for the enjoyment of well-regulated liberty, to turn him wild in the fulness of his physical passions, and in the infancy of his uninstructed reason, would be to imitate the man who is described in the romance … who constructed a human form … but, being unable to impart to it a soul, he found that he had created only a savage giant,

[50] Lewis, *Journal*, 100 (27 Feb. 1816). Higman, *Jamaica*, 1-5.
[51] *Hansard*, 2nd series, 1826, xv, 503; *The Times* (21 Apr. 1826), 3; Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 39, ff. 46-7. See also Bridges, *Annals*, 508 on the equation of black slaves with monkeys.
[52] See Morgan, 'Slaves and Livestock', 75-6; Joanna Swabe, *Animals, Disease, and Human Society* (1999), esp. ch. 6; Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World* (1984), ch. 4; Karl Jacoby, 'Slaves by Nature? Domestic Animals and Human Slaves', *Slavery and Abolition*, 15 (1994), 89-99.
[53] See Gilbert Mathison, *Notices Respecting Jamaica, in 1809-1810-1811* (1811), 100, and [Samuel Estwick], *Considerations on the Negroe Cause* (1772), 41-2.
[54] Children had also been the best example of a Lockean *tabula rasa*. See Locke, *Essay*, I.ii.5 (pp. 60-1), I.ii.23-7 (pp. 70-3), I.iv.11 (p. 96), II.i. (pp. 109-21).

> from which he himself recoiled with horror. That would be the effect of sudden and unprepared emancipation.[55]

The infantilisation of slaves was common, both explicitly as in Canning's speech, or more implicitly, referring to slaves as 'children of nature' or 'children of Africa'.[56] Either sense conveyed an understanding of the slave as fundamentally unable to govern himself, which was also manifested in much planter discussion of the materialistic whimsicality of slaves, endlessly talking nonsense and governed by their passions and spite.[57] However, at least when trying to convince metropolitan audiences of the legitimacy of slavery, planters held that the slaves were indeed incompetent to govern themselves but not irredeemably so.[58] Those views of slaves as animals must be qualified by others, more prevalent, of them as children. The latter do not imply the permanence of the former, thereby emphasising the slaves' potentiality for humanity, and explaining the popularity of the 'slave-as-child' image amongst emancipationists.

Significant differences between white and black were asserted in pro- and anti-slavery discourses. These gave meaning to 'black' and 'white' as entities,

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[55] See *Speech of the Right Hon. George Canning … on Wednesday, The 17th of March, 1824* (1824), 26; *Hansard*, 2nd series, 1824, x, 1103. On the reference to *Frankenstein*, see H. L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, CA, 1996), ch. 1.

[56] See, for example *Speeches of Mr. Barrett*; *First Report of the Female Society for Birmingham* (Birmingham, 1826), 15-16 (in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 6 [Scrapbook of Slavery Miscellanea]); *Address on the State of Slavery in the West India Islands* (Leicester, 1830), 14-15; Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 4. (Lucy Townsend Papers, Scrap Album on Slavery), ff. 131-2; *Considerations on Negro Slavery* (Edinburgh, 1824), 7.

[57] This fed into the planters' hostility to the idea of allowing slaves to give evidence. See pp. 311-312, below. On the loquaciousness of slaves, see Lewis, *Journal*, 95-6 (23 Feb. 1816); Nugent, *Journal*, 96 (12 Mar. 1802); Edwards, *History*, ii. 83; H. T. De la Beche, *Notes on the Present Condition of the Negroes in Jamaica* (1825), 36. On their passions and spite see, for example, [Bernard Martin Senior], *Jamaica, As it Was, As it Is, and As it May Be* (1835), ch. 4; Bridges, *Annals*, ii. 398-436; Mathison, *Notices*, 2; [Stewart], *Account*, ch. 20; id., *A View of the Past and Present State of the Island of Jamaica* (Edinburgh, 1823), 251-2.

[58] See Gordon K. Lewis, *Main Currents in Caribbean Thought: The Historical Evolution of Caribbean Society in Its Ideological Aspects, 1492-1900* (1983), 116-23; Ward, *British West Indian Slavery*, ch. 3; Davis, *Age of Revolution*, 113-19.

and fed into the system of racial gradations through the articulation of a primitive concept of heredity. This was stated most clearly by proslavery authors, such as the Jamaican John Stewart, who in 1823 wrote of people of colour possessing 'the mingled natures of the two original stocks from whence they spring.'[59] Here again is the understanding that people of colour owed their origin, or at least their significant traits, solely to white and black progenitors. Stewart's contention regarding people of colour, that the darker differ little from the Negro, and that the lighter do likewise from the White, was echoed in some abolitionist plans to compulsorily emancipate the lighter people of colour, who were, it was thought, more enlightened and ready for freedom.[60] The immediate context of these discussions was a renewed campaign by people of colour for their civil rights in Jamaica, provoking sympathy from white people in the metropole and hostility from those in the colonies.[61] Nevertheless, many emancipationists still felt the need to engage with the idea of the inheritance of racial traits, which had been enthusiastically deployed by planters to emphasise the legitimacy of their enslavement of people who looked white. More than one commentator, including Stewart himself, emphasised the whiteness of certain people of colour, an issue both central to the argument of this chapter, and to be revisited at the end of this section.[62]

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[59] Stewart, *View*, 324-5.
[60] See letter from T. S. Winn, *New Times*, 10 May 1824 (in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 38 (Newspaper Cuttings, 1821-4), f. 34); Edwards, *History*, ii. 25n.
[61] Many of these rights had only disappeared since the 1710s. See esp. Gad Heuman, *Between Black and White: Race, Politics, and the Free Coloreds in Jamaica, 1792-1865* (Oxford, 1981), 3-53; Melanie Newton, '"The Children of Africa in the Colonies": Free People of Colour in Barbados During the Emancipation Era, 1816-54' (University of Oxford D.Phil. thesis, 2001), chs. 1, 2.
[62] Stewart, *View*, 324; Waller, *Voyage*, 93-4.

Interracial Sex in British Caribbean Slave Societies

Not merely were the varieties of 'coloured' people in the system of racial gradations produced by a mixture of white and black, but the white partner was male. The purpose of this subsection is to analyse the discussion of white-black sex in pro- and anti-slavery discourse, in order to discern the extent of interracial sexual relations in slave societies. In so doing, gendered asymmetries of power in both colony and metropole will become apparent, helping to explain the widespread assent (if not observance) commanded by the system of racial gradations.

One of the most significant features of white Caribbean society was the unbalanced sex ratio. In 1844, at the time of the first census in Jamaica, the white sex ratio stood at 143.1 males per 100 females, ranging from 107.5 in Kingston to 298.1 in Vere parish.[63] This imbalance was probably greater under slavery, and points to the necessity for many white men to look outside their own racial group for sexual gratification.[64] Plantation practices positively encouraged this on several grounds. First, as with domestic servants in Britain, plantation bookkeepers and overseers were expected to be single, causing sexual frustration which, when combined with the geographical isolation of most plantations, led white men to couple with slaves.[65] Second, the composition of the slave population aggravated the situation, females being either in abundance or in demand. In the last decades of the slave trade, 150-180 males were imported for every 100 females.[66] In the years after 1807, the number of male

[63] Higman, *Jamaica*, 144-5.
[64] Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery* (1967), 33-51; Burnard, *Mastery*, ch. 1; Altink, *Representations*, ch. 3; Bush, *Slave Women*, ch. 4.
[65] Higman, *Jamaica*, 147; Altink, *Representations*, 75; Bush, *Slave Women*, 110-18.
[66] Higman, *Caribbean*, 115-21.

slaves fell such that by 1832 there were less than 95 per 100 females in Jamaica.[67] Single white male plantation employees were thus faced either with a shortage of both white and black women, leading to inevitable resentment on the part of slaves when they chose a mate from amongst the slave population, or they were presented with an abundance of female slaves and thus a wealth of sexual temptation. Both possibilities were discussed at length in pro- and anti-slavery literature.[68]

The extent of white sexual activity with slaves is abundantly clear from demographic statistics alone. Between 1810 and 1830, the white population fell by roughly 9,000 and as a proportion of the total population, from 6.9 to 5 per cent.[69] In the same period, the coloured population grew by just over the same number, increasing from 30,000 to 40,000.[70] The real growth spurt for the coloured population took place between 1790 and 1820 when it seems likely that the coloured population more than tripled.[71] As Higman has observed, the extent of black parenthood of coloured children was limited by the proportion of slaves that were coloured, or by the sex of mulatto children.[72] Correspondingly, it seems likely that a significant proportion of the coloured population was fathered by white men, even though this varied according to the

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[67] Higman, *Caribbean*, 116.
[68] On slave resentment, see Bush, *Slave Women*, 110-18; *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter*, 5 (31 Oct. 1825), 36; Cooper, *Facts*, 35-42; Thomas Roughley, *The Jamaica Planter's Guide* (1823), 77. See also Olaudah Equiano's complaint of a racial double standard in his *Interesting Narrative*, 104. On white sexual temptation, and the need to avoid it, see esp. Long, *History*, ii. 330-4.
[69] There were 15,776 whites in Jamaica in 1844, a significant fall from 1830, but still half the number estimated by contemporaries. See R. Montgomery Martin, *The British Colonial Library*, vi: *The History of the West Indies, vol. 1* (1836), 92; Higman, *Caribbean*, 77.
[70] Higman, *Caribbean*, 77.
[71] Heuman, *Between Black and White*, 9.
[72] If mulatto children were male, they were much more likely to pair off with black women; if they were female, it is likely that they would find a white mate or one of 'higher' racial standing. See Higman, *Caribbean*, 156.

size of the slave population.[73] This all points to a lack of anxiety about what was later to be termed 'miscegenation'.[74] Unlike in the US, the white population was not only falling in Jamaica, but it contained far fewer females than males. Also, the overall planter ideology was not one of settlement, but of temporary residence in the colonies in order to acquire wealth prior to a return to Britain.[75] These two features combined to render unrealistic the prospect of interracial sex involving a white female. As in the US, when contemplated this possibility was viewed with horror, but the above structural factors prevented this from spilling over into a broad anti-miscegenation ideology.

Criticism of interracial sexual activity was nonetheless trenchant, and emanated even from quarters deeply implicated in this behaviour. Sexual misconduct became a liability for planters keen to keep the emancipationist wolf from the door, and led to an attempt to fracture white colonial identity on the basis of social rank.[76] For planters, the lower ranks of white males – bookkeepers and overseers – were convenient scapegoats for the sexual abuse inflicted on slaves.[77] When they were not guilty of directly debauching slaves, these men were accused of setting a poor example of sexual conduct.[78] This

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[73] In old sugar colonies, with larger slave populations, whites would have been responsible for fewer coloured births than in the new sugar colonies. In Tobago (1819), whites were responsible for 92.3 per cent of coloured births. See Higman, *Caribbean*, 156.

[74] The term was coined in an anonymous anti-Republican political pamphlet circulated in late 1863 in protest at the Emancipation Proclamation. *OED*, s.v. 'miscegenation'.

[75] Hence high rates of absenteeism. See Patterson, *Sociology*, 33-51; Curtin, *Two Jamaicas*, ch. 1; [Stewart], *Account*, ch. 16.

[76] On class/rank in Jamaican society, see Cecily Jones, 'Contesting the Boundaries of Gender, Race and Sexuality in Barbadian Plantation Society', *Women's History Review*, 12 (2003), 195-232; Patterson, *Sociology*, 33-51; Curtin, *Two Jamaicas*, 47-51; Burnard, *Mastery*, ch. 1.

[77] [Stewart], *Account*, ch. 12; id., *View*, ch. 11; Davis, *West Indies*, 68-70 (refers to such arguments by negation); De la Beche, *Notes*, 36-40. Lady Nugent, although not proslavery, remonstrated with young white men for their behaviour on 10 Aug. 1803. See Nugent, *Journal*, 223-4.

[78] See, for example, M'Mahon, *Jamaica Plantership*, 134; James M. Phillippo, *Jamaica: Its Past and Present State*, intr. Philip Wright (1969 [1843]), 148; letter from 'Anglus', *New Times* (n.d. [?April 1824]), in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 38, f. 16.

perspective was often shared by abolitionists and emancipationists, at least prior to 1831, when they sought to obtain a consensus, including planters, in favour of gradual emancipation.[79] There was, however, little consistency amongst either pro- or anti-slavery activists on these questions, and this prevented a distinction on the basis of rank from superseding that based on race. A more or less unified white identity was thus left intact to face a seemingly far less divided black identity.

Slaves were roundly and indiscriminately condemned for their sexual behaviour. Both sides of the emancipation debate condemned slave immorality, manifested in polygamous sexual relations and a deprecation of Christian matrimony.[80] Where they differed was over the causes of this behaviour. As can be expected, proslavery commentators blamed the slaves themselves, where antislavery authors, particularly after 1807, tended to condemn the system of slavery.[81] Often, however, there was little to distinguish between the two positions. In 1825, the planter and geologist Henry de la Beche wrote of his difficulty in convincing slaves to marry: 'their African ideas lead them to prefer polygamy and promiscuous intercourse to marriage, as it exists in Christian

[79] See esp. Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 4, f. 72 (extract of letter from a Merchant of Bristol, 28 June [?1824]); Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 38, f. 16 (letter from 'Anglus' in *New Times*); William Wilberforce, *An Appeal to the Religion, Justice, and Humanity of the British Empire, in behalf of the Negro Slaves in the West Indies* (1823), 16-21, 76.
[80] Phillippo, *Jamaica*, ch. 13; Captain Henderson, *A Brief View of the Actual Condition and Treatment of The Negro Slaves, in the British Colonies* (1816), 18-19; *Some Remarkable Particulars Concerning the Rapid Civilization of the Negroes, in the Colony of Sierra Leone* (Retford, 1821), 13; [Collins], *Practical Rules*, ch. 9; De la Beche, *Notes*, 17-18.
[81] Examples of antislavery condemnation of the system of slavery include *Account of a Shooting Excursion … in the Month of October, 1824!!!* (1825), 14; *A Concise View of Colonial Slavery* (Newcastle, 1830), 9-10; *Address on the State of Slavery*, 25; *Considerations on Negro Slavery*, 5; Cooper, *Facts*, 9. Examples of proslavery blame of the slave include Bridges, *Annals*, ii. 483-515; Davis, *West Indies*, *passim*.

countries.'[82] In like fashion, an antislavery pamphlet of 1830 stated clearly that 'the ordinance of marriage is scarcely known among [slaves]; while the most unrestrained licentiousness and profligacy of manners, as well in their intercourse with each other, as with the Whites, is indulged and encouraged.'[83] The broad agreement on the existence, extent, and resultant degradation of slave immorality inexorably led to the slave being blamed. The tendency of anti-slavery argument, to find fault squarely with the system of slavery rather than with the slaves themselves, was more of an ideal than a consistently held position.

Under these circumstances, immorality soon became part of the perceived identity of the slave. Many argued that the status of slave *produced* immorality, and the strength of the association of 'negro' or 'black' with 'slave' meant that discussions of slave morality almost always focused on black rather than coloured slaves.[84] This tendency was heightened in proslavery literature, where most planters claimed that the African roots of slaves were responsible for immorality.[85] By the early 1830s, when slave imports from Africa had been illegal for a quarter of a century, some proslavery authors argued that the creole offspring of Africans were just as immoral, thereby racialising immorality and collapsing the distinction between African and creole. The retired military officer Bernard Martin was representative of this development: 'we are well

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[82] De la Beche, *Notes*, 17-18. De la Beche's text enjoyed some influence, being cited in public antislavery meetings as a source of information on colonial slavery. See Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 39, f. 39.
[83] *Address on the State of Slavery*, 11.
[84] See Wilberforce, *Appeal*, 20; [Alexander], *Address*, 20; Cooper, *Facts*, 12; *First Report of the Female Society*, [3]-4; review of various antislavery texts in *Quarterly Review*, 32 (Oct. 1825), 506-43 at 531-2; also, by way of rebuttal, *To the People of Great Britain and Ireland* (1831), 12-14.
[85] See De la Beche, *Notes*, 17-18; [Martin], *Jamaica, As it Was*, 36, 42-3; Davis, *West Indies*, 80-8; Gladstone, *Facts*, 4-5.

aware that the offspring of parents habitually vicious, frequently follow them in their evil inclinations. In like manner, no one would feel ambition to purchase a Saragossa colt, so long as the sire's reputation remained sullied, and notorious for vice.'[86] Martin eschewed an explanation of the inheritance of immoral behaviour which emphasises cultural practices, such as poor parenting, in favour of one which privileges a biological explanation.[87]

Female slaves were viewed as particularly culpable of sexual misconduct. Discussion of enslaved women was conducted primarily through the use of stereotypes. Several historians have examined the range of these available in pro- and anti-slavery discourse, identifying as the most prominent the seductive 'Sable Venus', the dangerous 'She-Devil', and the more realistic 'Drudge'.[88] Almost all of these scholars, however, have neglected slaves of colour in their analyses.[89] This is particularly surprising given the prominence of such women as domestic slaves,[90] who were frequently stereotyped as the sexually available 'Sable Venus' or the potentially lethal 'She-Devil' poisoner.[91] One stereotype which illustrates most clearly the extent to which slave women, of whatever racial group, were viewed as black was 'Quasheba', the female equivalent of the

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[86] [Martin], *Jamaica, At it Was*, 36. 'Sire' is here understood not in the sense of the owner of the horse, but of its male parent. See *OED*, s.v. 'sire *n.*[7]'

[87] See Martin, *Jamaica*, 37; Stewart, *View*, 250, 303-4; Bridges, *Annals*, ii. 401; *Concise View*, 14; Cooper, *Facts*, 9. See also p. 306, below.

[88] See esp. Beckles, *Natural Rebels*; Barbara Bush, ' "Sable Venus," "She Devil," or "Drudge"? Black Slavery and the "Fabulous Fiction" of Black Women's Identities, *c.*1650-1838', *Women's History Review*, 9 (2000), 761-89; Hilary McD. Beckles, 'White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean', in Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles (eds.), *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World* (Oxford, 2000), 659-69. Note how the titles of these works perpetuate the invisibility of the coloured women.

[89] Henrice Altink's recent book is one exception. See Altink, *Representation*. Although Beckles makes much the same point as I do here (*Natural Rebels*, 135), her focus is overwhelmingly on 'Enslaved Black Women in Barbados' (to quote the subtitle). For her discussion of women of colour, see *Natural Rebels*, 131-8.

[90] Few slaves of colour worked in the fields, typically being domestics if female or tradesmen if male, see p. 281, above.

[91] On poisoning, which was often seen as part of African religion, see Patterson, *Sociology*, 265-6; Bush, *Slave Women*, 73-7; Bridges, *Annals*, ii. 404; Davis, *West Indies*, 33.

'Quashee' stereotype.[92] The very name, popular among slaves and derived from the Twi word for 'Sunday', was oriented around the assertion of African roots. The licentious, treacherous, and scheming nature of 'Quasheba' was related directly to African traits, and the description of any female slave as 'Quasheba', even if she was one of the undoubtedly few Quinteron slaves, stamped an African identity upon her.[93] This was the case notwithstanding fashions in the use of these stereotypes, the balance of which shifted within sexual discourses of slavery according to time, location, and political standpoint. Such stereotypes were of use to both sides of the slavery debate and were consequently deployed widely.[94]

This was the case even with female abolitionists, the most innovative and outspoken branch of the antislavery community.[95] The use of stereotypes, almost by definition, entails a lack of recognition of particularity and a tendency to homogenise the populations described by them. Assertions of homogeneity were indeed the avowed *aim* of many female antislavery campaigners. As the *Annual Report of the Sheffield Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society* (1830) put it, 'distinction between the negro and the white man is the very principle of slavery; – if that distinction continue, it may be a seed large enough for the Upas again to spring from.'[96] Female antislavery campaigners were just as guilty as their male colleagues of paternalism, which facilitated the homogenisation of white and black groups, and perpetuated the male-female

[92] For an early analysis of 'Quashee', see Patterson, *Sociology*, 174-81.
[93] Ibid.; Bush, *Slave Women*, 52-63.
[94] On the shifting balance of these stereotypes across time, see Altink, *Representations*, 5-6. Barbara Bush has argued that slaves often deployed these stereotypes to their own advantage. See Bush, '"Sable Venus"'.
[95] See Clare Midgely, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870* (1992).
[96] *The Fifth Annual Report of the Sheffield Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, for 1830* (Sheffield, 1830), 12.

power differentials inherent within slavery and the racial system. The most common abolitionist and emancipationist stereotype which acted in this fashion was that of the helpless and kneeling slave. Endemic to all antislavery propaganda, this stereotype was adapted by female abolitionists to highlight the plight of female slaves.[97] Use of this stereotype allowed female abolitionists to channel middle-class sentiment by demonstrating that slavery offended values of thrift, modesty, and maternalism. One example from 1825 stated that the average, indifferent woman 'will surely be peculiarly anxious to help the poor slaves, when you hear that in the West Indies the most essential and most important of all the maternal duties [feeding], if performed at any other time than the prescribed hours of the overseer, is an offence punished by cruel stripes on the bare body of the unhappy mother.'[98] In an equivocal fashion typical of abolitionist propaganda, this image shocked not merely for the injustice of the beating, but also because of the immodesty of the display of female flesh. Abolitionists attempted to assert that it was the *system* of slavery which caused this lack of morality and due care about nudity, but the assumption that slaves could potentially have resisted this brutalisation (an assumption reinforced by the fact that some slaves *did* resist) made the paternalistic trope of the helpless (or indeed grateful) slave a necessity.[99]

[97] For a useful overview of the culture of antislavery, see Kitson and Lee (eds.), *Slavery, Abolition, and Emancipation*.
[98] *A Dialogue between A Well-Wisher and a Friend to the Slaves in the British Colonies* (1825), 3-4.
[99] On the system of slavery, see n. 81, p. 290, above. On the trope of the grateful slave, see George Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (Cambridge, 2008).

Desire, Power, and the Overloaded Body

Despite the systematic use of race as a means of social division, barriers thus constructed were continually breached as a consequence of human sexual desire. This was often unedifying, as in the case of Thomas Thistlewood (1721-86), a diarist and livestock pen owner who settled in Jamaica from 1750.[100] In his diary, he meticulously recorded every act of sexual congress he had with prostitutes, other men's wives, and, most often, with slaves. In his thirty-seven years in Jamaica, Thistlewood engaged in a total of 3,852 acts of sexual intercourse with 138 women. In an average year he had sex 108 times with 14 different partners. His long-term partner was a creole black slave, named Phibbah, who was owned by another individual and remained so until after Thistlewood's death: his will directed for her purchase and manumission.[101] Thistlewood's sex with slaves was often coercive (physically or psychologically), he often paid his partners, and he rated his conquests on a two-point scale: if the sex did not meet with his approval (possibly because of the resistance of his partner/victim) he recorded 'sed non bene' ('but not good') in his diary, otherwise he was silent.[102] For all his sometimes sadistic cruelty, Thistlewood was capable of tenderness, especially to Phibbah, who came to enjoy a measure of independence (especially financial).

Thistlewood presents an ambivalent picture. On the one hand, his violent sexual behaviour represents that side of white-slave sexual encounters

[100] On Thistlewood see Burnard, *Mastery*; Morgan, 'Slaves and Livestock'; Douglas Hall, *In Miserable Slavery: Thomas Thistlewood in Jamaica, 1750-86* (1992).
[101] Thistlewood's will is reproduced in Hall, *Miserable Slavery*, 314-15.
[102] His payment of slaves might have been a means of justifying to himself that there was some equality in the 'exchange' taking place. On female slave resistance, see esp. Bush, *Slave Women*, ch. 5; Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, ch. 8. Thistlewood's slave Sally is a prominent example of a slave who resisted his advances: he consistently records his intercourse with her as 'non bene'. See Burnard, *Tyranny*, 218-21.

dictated by the enormous power differential between white master and non-white slave. On the other hand, where this power play was less evident, as with Phibbah, he was capable of sensitivity, tenderness, and even love. The basis for power in a social order where one's status as slave depended on skin colour was the system of racial gradations. In this system, each rank looked down on that beneath it: white male Jamaicans, for example, often took pleasure in explaining to readers in Britain how black slaves much preferred their 'massa' to be 'buckra' (white) rather than coloured, female, or juvenile.[103] Notwithstanding this condescension, endemic to a system in which power flowed down from a white male fountainhead, certain forms of power worked in the opposite direction.

The foremost of these was the control of desire. In a society where there were fewer white women than men, and where the latter had to look to the non-white population for sexual partners, those women who appeared most white commanded the most authority.[104] Coloured women were able to supplant white women as the most desired through the combination of two factors.[105] First, they were sufficiently proximate to white women to meet the aesthetic criteria of white men.[106] And, just as important, they were at the same time sufficiently un-white to be sexually available, controllable, and unmarriageable. Although the scope for self-determination was inevitably limited, particularly for enslaved women, there is much evidence to suggest that

[103] De la Beche, *Notes*, 34-5; Stewart, *View*, 262; unknown newspaper (?May 1826) in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 39, f. 44.
[104] Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, 131-8.
[105] Sambo women were always associated with Negroes. On the continuing attractions of mulatto women, see Patricia Mohammed, '"But most of all mi love me browning": The Emergence in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century Jamaica of the Mulatto Woman as the Desired', *Feminist Review*, 65 (2000), 22-48.
[106] Although, as Thistlewood manifestly demonstrates, few whites would scruple to disregard these criteria.

some coloured women extracted the maximum possible social and financial capital out of association with white men. Coloured women commanded the highest prices as prostitutes, and several reportedly eschewed relations with black men altogether, in order that their descendents became progressively whiter.[107] Several enslaved women of colour scarcely needed to employ this stratagem, as they were already indistinguishable from whites for some commentators.[108]

The aesthetic premium on whiteness here stretches the system of racial gradations to breaking point: women whose colour supposedly designated their status as slaves were desired as a consequence of *and* despite their colour. The problem here was as simple as the solution. The racial system, so elaborately detailed by Long and Edwards, depended on the *visibility* of slave status being maintained from Negro to Quinteron. Without this empirical marker, it became impossible to tell whether an individual who appeared white was truly so, or was a member of one of the categories of the enslaved. It became necessary to know an individual's genealogy to determine their status as slave or free, which completely undermined the empirical value of skin colour.[109] Not merely was skin colour an unsatisfactory racial marker, as metropolitan racial theorists had already come to realise, but the explosion of the free coloured population from the end of the eighteenth century also problematised the association of dark skin with slavery. Such a situation could result in the promotion of alternative empirical markers (such as odour) or in the destabilisation of the racial system.

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[107] Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, 138; Burnard, *Mastery*, 228-40; Waller, *Voyage*, 93-4.
[108] Waller, 93-4.
[109] On the need to genealogical knowledge to distinguish between slave and free, see Kay Dian Kriz, 'Marketing Mulatresses in the Paintings and Prints of Agostino Brunias', in Felicity A. Nussbaum (ed.), *The Global Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, 2003), 195-210 at 206-7.

Mark Smith has argued that the former took place in the antebellum South, but such was not the case in the Caribbean.[110] Notwithstanding the body of racial thought which dealt at length with the odour (for example) of black peoples and slaves,[111] the system of racial gradations there remained too intricate for *any* bodily marker to reliably signify. The inevitable result of this situation was a confusion of terms beyond the most basic and immediately apparent categories (White, Negro, Mulatto, and Sambo), hence the frequency of uses of 'yellow' to refer in general to the coloured population.[112] The extent to which this confusion was due to planter apathy with the system is now impossible to determine, but this apathy was itself a consequence of the inherent limitations of the system of racial gradations. Whatever the motive for terminological confusion, the system was no less undermined.

Notwithstanding the ultimate failure of the attempt to map the complexities of slave society on the body, confidence in the body to signify is clear throughout the discourses of slavery, abolition, and emancipation. This was the case even though exactly what it signified could be highly contested. The association of blackness with slavery went unquestioned, and the black body was perceived to be far better suited to labouring in the tropics than the white. The brutalisation and infantilisation of the black body was part of the movement to assert differences between white and black, which fed into the system of racial gradations via a form of primitive heredity. The creation of race at the hands of sex was further assisted by blaming black people (which even abolitionists did) for sexual misconduct in the face of white depredations, and

[110] Mark M. Smith, *How Race is Made: Slavery, Segregation and the Senses* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2006), 4-5.
[111] See p. 77, above.
[112] Higman, *Caribbean*, 155.

despite plantocratic efforts to censure their own white employees. This hints at the discussion of sex as a racial characteristic, the second means by which sex created race, and the subject of the following section.

Population and Pronatalism

Sex within enslaved communities is another way in which sex made race in the British Caribbean. This featured in discourses of race and slavery in two key ways, both discussed in part one of this thesis. First, the sexual customs of a population acted as markers of its racial identity. Second, sexual activity featured more crudely as part of philoprogenitivist debates. This section is an examination of both of these sexual topics within discourses of slavery, abolition, and emancipation. As will be shown, reproductive sexual behaviour contributed significantly to the image of the feckless and uncaring slave, and was blamed for the frustration of the planters' limited efforts to augment the slave population after 1807. Racial stereotypes permeated discussion of slave reproduction, and were used to explain the failure of programmes to augment the slave population during the period of amelioration (roughly 1790-1830). This section will examine, in turn, the demographic context of slavery from 1807, the discussion of slave reproduction within pro- and anti-slavery texts, those attempts made by planters to increase the slave population by promoting reproduction, and the pivotal role of the principle of population in debates on slavery. It will be shown that, despite Malthus, the size of the population remained an important measure of social wellbeing. Indeed, the increase or decrease of human bodies of a certain type was more powerful evidence used in

debates on slavery than the external appearance of those bodies: natural increase was a more formidable empirical entity than skin colour.

Slavery and Population

As discussed in chapter two, the principle of population – the notion that economic strength derived from the largest possible population – was a guiding force in eighteenth-century culture. Within Britain, the drive to augment the population focused squarely on reproduction, as suggestions of promoting immigration came to nothing, halted by impregnable British xenophobia.[113] Slavery depended on a workforce sufficiently large to turn a profit, and questions of population were obviously crucial to this end. The population dynamics of the Caribbean were a curious inversion of those operative in contemporary Britain. On the one hand, and partly because of the eradication of the aboriginal population, immigration was essential.[114] Initially this took the form of encouraging migration from the British Isles and implementing a system of indentured servitude, but it soon became clear that these measures were insufficient to meet the demand for labour.[115] By the late seventeenth century, therefore, planters turned to the slave trade to meet their labour requirements, and in these early days planters purchased slaves with a view to producing a

[113] See p. 116, above.
[114] The destruction of these populations has a long and complicated history which ultimately produced the 'black legend' of the Iberian colonisation of the Americas. By the time the English captured Jamaica in 1655, no original natives of the island remained. See Margaret R. Greer, Walter D. Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan (eds.), *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires* (Chicago, 2007); Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge, 1990).
[115] Ward, *British West Indian Slavery*, ch. 2; Patterson, *Sociology*, 16-51; Long, *History*, ii. 286-319; Edwards, *History*, ii. 3-9.

self-sustaining workforce.[116] When sugar monoculture became established in the islands, these efforts ceased and a male-heavy purchasing pattern emerged.[117] With the onset of abolitionism, some planters sought to encourage their slaves to breed, and these efforts and their limited success are discussed later in this section. However, the existence of illegal slave trading in the British Caribbean after 1808, and of attempts to bend rules prohibiting an intercolonial trade, shows that these old habits died hard.[118]

Such structural factors are not the only ways in which slavery had a complicated engagement with British populationist thought. Slavery as a concept played a significant role within the eighteenth-century debate on population. This was provoked by two things in particular. First, there was wide assent given to the view that ancient nations, societies in which slavery played a central part, had been more populous than modern. Fuelled by the absence of reliable population statistics, a pessimism about the size of the modern populations was a Europe-wide phenomenon.[119] Second, Montesquieu had precipitated a mid-century debate by commenting, in his *Esprit des lois* (1748), on the suitability of various forms of government for promoting population growth.[120] Montesquieu contended, in particular, that tyranny and despotism were the worst sorts of government for this purpose, paradoxically

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[116] See p. 287, above.
[117] Ward, *British West Indian Slavery*, ch. 2; Higman, *Jamaica*, ch. 1; Burnard, *Tyranny*, 215; George W. Roberts, *The Population of Jamaica* (Cambridge, 1957), 220-34.
[118] Eric Williams, 'The British West Indian Slave Trade After its Abolition in 1807', *Journal of Negro History*, 27 (1942), 175-91; David Eltis, 'The Traffic in Slaves between the British West Indian Colonies, 1807-1833', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., 25 (1972), 55-64; Marika Sherwood, 'The British Illegal Slave Trade, 1808-1830', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* [*BJECS*], 31 (2008), 293-305.
[119] See esp. D. V. Glass, *Numbering the People: The Eighteenth-Century Population Controversy and the Development of Census and Vital Statistics in Britain* (Farnborough, Hants., 1973).
[120] This debate is discussed in chapter 2. See esp. p. 125ff., above.

asserting both the populousness of ancient nations *and* the importance of liberty for sustained population growth.[121] All participants in the debate on this contention nevertheless recognised the significance of slavery for the population question and vice versa.[122]

The particular feature of plantation slavery in the Caribbean which perhaps attracted most comment before and after 1807 was the diminution, sometimes rapid, of the slave population. The demographic contrast between the Caribbean and the American colonies has been made by many historians of slavery.[123] The slave population of South Carolina, for example, reached a state of natural increase by the mid-eighteenth century, where that of the only Caribbean colony to reach this state prior to emancipation, Barbados, did not do so until *c.*1810.[124] The ability of the slave population of the American colonies to grow was to prove a significant thorn in the side of emancipationist campaigners eager to assert a one-to-one correspondence between slavery and depopulation.[125] Abolitionist campaigners had paradoxically asserted the

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[121] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, tr. and ed. Anne M. Cohler, Basia Carolyn Miller, and Harold Samuel Stone (Cambridge, 2004 [1748]), esp. 21-30 (I.iii.), 427-56 (IV.xxxiii). See also B. W. Higman, 'Slavery and the Development of Demographic Theory in the Age of the American Revolution', in James Walvin (ed.), *Slavery and British Society, 1776-1846* (1982), 164-94.

[122] See in particular the debate between David Hume and the Scottish clergyman, Robert Wallace. See [Robert Wallace], *A Dissertation on the Numbers of Mankind in antient and modern Times* (Edinburgh, 1753), 84-7; David Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis, 1987), 400 (Essay XI: 'Of the Populousness of Ancient Nations'). See also Clarence J. Glacken, *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (1967), 625-32.

[123] It was also exploited by Wallace in the mid-century debate on population, when he related his arguments to slavery as it existed in mainland America, ignoring the Caribbean entirely. See [Wallace], *Dissertation*, 207-8. See also Altink, *Representations*, 77, 93; Higman, *Caribbean*, chs. 1, 11; Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 1-11; Michael Tadman, 'The Demographic Cost of Sugar: Debates on Slave Societies and Natural Increase in the Americas', *AHR*, 105 (2000), 1534-75; Morgan, 'Slave Women and Reproduction'; Richard Follett, 'Heat, Sex, and Sugar: Pregnancy and Childbearing in the Slave Quarters', *Journal of Family History*, 28 (2003), 510-39.

[124] Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 104; Higman, *Caribbean*, 307-14.

[125] This was exploited by the anonymous and proslavery 'West Indian', *Notes in Defence of the Colonies: On the Increase and Decrease of the Slave Population of the British West Indies*

opposite prior to 1807, eager as they were to persuade planters that the abandonment of slave imports from Africa would exercise little effect on the size of the slave population in the Caribbean.[126]

Stereotypes of Slave Reproduction

There has been much debate on the respective roles of the slave woman as producer and reproducer.[127] This is, in part, testament to the contemporaneous perspective of reproduction as 'women's work', and therefore to the place of gender in reproductive debate.[128] This subsection will analyse the discussion of reproduction in the discourses of slavery, abolition, and emancipation, and demonstrate the extent to which stereotypes of *both* sexes permeated this discussion and informed expectations of slave fertility and reproductive behaviour.

An assumption that Africans were hyperfertile lay at the bottom of much discussion of reproduction. Lewis's comments on this were typical. After no more than seven days in Jamaica, he felt able to state that 'I really believe that the negresses can produce children at pleasure; and where they are barren, it is just as hens will frequently not lay eggs on ship-board, because they do not like their situation.'[129] The notion that black women did not reproduce because of their capriciousness was widespread, and the assumption that they produced children at will and gave birth to them with as little complication as livestock

(Jamaica, 1826), esp. chs. 1, 5. America was also problematic for proslavery interests who wished to assert a racial basis for slave depopulation. See Drescher, *Mighty Experiment*, 49.
[126] Drescher, *Mighty Experiment*, 46-7.
[127] Altink, *Representations*, ch. 1; Bush, *Slave Women*, 132-7; Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, ch. 5.
[128] Altink, in particular, examines debates on slave women in the light of what she rather monolithically views as metropolitan sexual ideology. See Altink, *Representations*, *passim*.
[129] Lewis, *Journal*, 41 (8 Jan. 1816).

not only reinforced the linkage of Africans and animals, but explains some of the more frustrated planter comment on the failure of their slaves to reproduce.[130]

This frustration arose from the supposed perversity of slaves who, as people that could almost spontaneously reproduce, engaged in behaviour which hindered this process. It does not appear that deliberate infanticide, abortion, or contraception was a major cause of depopulation, or was claimed as such.[131] Of more significance was the existence of sugar monoculture, the labour demands and seasonal malnutrition associated with which did more to prevent reproduction than almost any other factor.[132] However, typical of proslavery authors was Captain George Henderson, who emphasised slave morals in his list of causes for the failure of planter attempts to promote reproduction: 'of such, in a moral view, some are fatally at variance, for the unlicensed intercourse and habits of polygamy these people indulge, are deplorably great.'[133] It is notable that when pro- and anti-slavery writers wrote of polygamy, they were almost always referring to polygyny. Despite the fact that in such a system of marital relations it is men who are promiscuous, slave women were subject to considerable criticism for their supposed promiscuity.[134] One commentator stated that 'negro women have ardent constitutions, which dispose them to be liberal of their favours; and it has been found by experience,

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[130] See Cooper, *Facts*, 35-42; Mathison, *Notices*, 91-2; and the references in n. 80, above. On African ease of parturition see p. 62, above.
[131] Despite a broad commentary on the supposed female hostility to child-rearing in slavery. See Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, 97. Benjamin M'Mahon even asserted that slave women were deliberately promiscuous in order to avoid having children. See M'Mahon, *Jamaica Plantership*, 240-1.
[132] Higman, *Jamaica*, 121-6; id., *Caribbean*, ch. 9; Ward, *British West Indian Slavery*, ch. 5; Tadman, 'Demographic Cost of Sugar'; Follett, 'Heat, Sex, and Sugar'.
[133] Henderson, *Brief View*, 18.
[134] Altink, *Representations*, 66.

that they who resign themselves to the indiscriminate caresses of men, are seldom very prolific.'[135] Blame was laid with women for *resigning* to men's indiscriminateness, as childbearing was seen by both sides of the slavery debate as something solely within the slave woman's domain. Although hyperfertility (or at least hypersexuality) was widely attributed to Africans as a whole, the focus in debates on slavery and abolition was predominantly female.

Indeed, one of the most deeply ambivalent figures in the discussion of childbirth practices was the slave midwife. According to Altink, the figure of the slave midwife directly corresponded to that of the traditional midwife in England, whose ignorance and superstition were savagely criticised by the new man-midwives who progressively monopolised what came to be termed obstetrics.[136] In addition, the metropolitan trope of the sexually dangerous midwife was matched, even in emancipationist writings, by the claim that slave midwives acted as procuresses.[137] However, ameliorationist planters saw the slave midwife as a crucial individual, on whom the success of ameliorative efforts depended. Much as older midwifery customs died hard in Britain, so too were slave midwives in attendance, even on the highest in the land, as late as the nineteenth century.[138] The planter view of slave midwives drastically improved if she was creole or, better still, coloured.[139] As one commentator wrote, cases of lockjaw were unknown if the midwife was an 'intelligent Creole, who, by

[135] [Collins], *Practical Rules*, 155.
[136] Altink, *Representations*, 18-20. See Adrian Wilson, *The Making of Man-Midwifery* (1995); Lisa Forman Cody, *Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science, and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* (Oxford, 2005). On the aversion to black women as wet nurses, see Bush, *Slave Women*, 15 and ead., '"Sable Venus"', 764 cf. Follett, 'Heat, Sex, and Sugar', 527. Long commented negatively on wet nurses in Long, *History*, ii. 276-7. See also Marcus Wood, *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography* (Oxford, 2002), 145.
[137] Cooper, *Facts*, 41-2.
[138] One slave midwife attended Lady Nugent. See Nugent, *Journal*, 165.
[139] Altink, *Representations*, 14-20; Bush, *Slave Women*, 132-7; Beckles, *Natural Rebels*, 103; Morgan, 'Slave Women', 250-3; [Collins], *Practical Rules*, 159-60.

living in families of white people, had learned a cleanly judicious method of managing infants,' otherwise neonates were likely to fall victim to 'prejudice and mismanagement.'[140] Notwithstanding the positive appraisal of creole midwives, attitudes to them remained mixed with a good measure of contempt, as most pronatalist initiatives involving slave midwives entailed providing them with a pecuniary reward, an attitude based on the supposed avariciousness of black people.[141]

Inattention to the needs of infants was a criticism made of midwives but which was directed primarily at parents. Once again, women bore the brunt of this.[142] Lewis told of a slave mother who received a reward for ensuring the health of her child until it was ten days old (the most critical period), at which point she went to a dance on a neighbouring estate, abandoning the child, which subsequently perished.[143] The avariciousness of the mother is reinforced by her unthinking superficiality in abandoning her baby for a dance. In keeping with the broader view of black people as intellectually backward and bound to their sensory impressions – a perspective which fed into the bestialisation of Africans – music and dance were seen to cast a dazzling spell on the average slave.[144] Both this and their supposed avarice were based on powerful racial assumptions.

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[140] Mathison, *Notices*, 29.
[141] See, for example, *To the People of Great Britain and Ireland*, 5-6; Lewis, *Journal*, 66 (20 Jan. 1816).
[142] See esp. Patterson, *Sociology*, 168; Stewart, *View*, 303-4; Cooper, *Facts*, 15; Lewis, *Journal*, 65 (20 Jan. 1816); Long, *History*, ii. 353; Edwards, *History*, ii. 67-8 n.
[143] Lewis, *Journal*, 65 (20 Jan. 1816).
[144] Bridges even attributed the success of nonconformist missionaries in gaining slave converts to their deployment of music. See Bridges, *Annals*, ii. 442 n. 3. On music and its connections with racial theory, see Andrew Wells, 'Masculinity and its Other in Eighteenth-Century Racial Thought', in Heather Ellis and Jessica Meyer (eds.), *Masculinity and the Other: Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2009), 85-113.

Men were involved in these discourses in different ways. Male planters featured as providers of the facilities demanded by ameliorationists.[145] As slaves, however, men were forcefully attacked, perhaps the clearest example being the treatment of slave children by their parents. In addition to their perceived carelessness, slave parents were often thought to either love or detest their offspring. Lack of consistency with these views was common, and they could even vary within the same text. At one point in Stewart's *View of the Past and Present State of the Island of Jamaica* (1823), for example, he praises African mothers for their love of their children, but criticises African fathers as they supposedly sold their children to European slave-traders.[146] Later on, however, slave mothers are accused of deliberately infecting their children with yaws in the hope that they might be excused labour.[147] The charge of parents using their children as an excuse to be idle is repeated elsewhere in proslavery discourse, as indeed is that of fathers selling their children into slavery.[148] Stewart's *Account of Jamaica* (1808), by contrast, attempts to mitigate white immorality by pointing to the paternal care displayed by planters with mulatto children.[149] The comparison between his two texts is clear: African fathers sell their children into slavery where white fathers release theirs from it. The only significant part male slaves were given in the discussion of reproduction was as a treacherous paterfamilias. Their presence in these discussions is significant, as much recent

[145] For example, see [Collins], *Practical Rules*, part 1; Roughley, *Jamaica Planter's Guide*, ch. 2.
[146] Stewart, *View*, 250.
[147] Stewart, *View*, 303-4.
[148] On use of children to gain exemption from labour, see [Martin], *Jamaica*, 37. On parents selling children into slavery see Bridges, *Annals of Jamaica*, ii. 401.
[149] [Stewart], *Account*, 200.

scholarship analysing discourses of slave childbirth has, rather one-sidedly, focused solely on the place of slave women in these discussions.[150]

Racial stereotypes were a fundamental component of the discussion of reproduction in pro- and anti-slavery discourses. Expectations of hyperfertile slaves led to planter disappointment when these were not realised, and slave practices were blamed. More specifically, women footed the blame for their superstitious practices and carelessness far more than men, who were nevertheless present in the discussion on plantation childbirth practices. In these discussions, women were blamed for polygamous promiscuity and men reneged on their paternal duty by selling their offspring, in direct contradistinction to the generosity and magnanimity of planters. These views of slave parents as fecund but feckless were of importance in shaping the expectations of slave reproduction.

The Tentative Encouragement of Breeding

As abolition became more likely at the end of the 1780s, planters began to consider measures to stem the decline of their slave populations. Earlier efforts in this regard were revived, and some colonies implemented measures that, in the case of Barbados, at least coincided with (if they did not directly cause) the achievement of natural increase shortly after the end of the slave trade. However, in the majority of cases, planters were no more than lukewarm in their efforts, despite appearing gravely concerned in print. The purpose of this subsection is to explore pronatalist efforts, and to analyse the reasons for their failure. Reliance on racial stereotypes was key to this argument, given the

[150] See references in n. 127, above.

simultaneous need of planters to assert that they were doing everything that they possibly could to promote slave reproduction, and the priority accorded by them to not introducing Christianity to their slaves (despite appearing to do so).[151]

The evident lack of sustained pronatalist initiatives is remarkable. It was certainly the case that planters were not unaware of the benefits of obtaining an increase in their slave population without requiring an initial outlay of capital, the amount of which had grown enormously since the mid-eighteenth century.[152] With the steady supply of replacement slaves cut off, the price of sugar falling by the mid-1820s (which would have made it more difficult to purchase slaves illegally), continuing natural decrease, and the threat of abolitionists resuming their activities and aiming to end slavery once and for all, their apathy seems unaccountable.[153] It was also the case that various figures recognised the need for these initiatives, and attempted to secure colonial legislation to promote them. Most of these initiatives took a similar shape, and the Jamaican 'Consolidated Slave Act' (1792, although based on a statute of 1788), was typical. Sections 35 and 36 of this Act contained provisions rewarding masters and slaves, respectively, for any natural increase. Section 35 established an annual registry of slave deaths, and the overseer of a plantation was to receive three pounds for each slave born over and above those which simply replaced those who died over the same period. This was to be paid by

[151] See esp. Davis, *Western Culture*, ch. 6; id., *Age of Revolution*, ch. 1.
[152] By 1815, the average price of a young healthy field worker was £100, compared to £40 in *c.*1750. See Ward, *British West Indian Slavery*, ch. 3.
[153] See Ward, *British West Indian Slavery*, ch. 3; Higman, *Caribbean*, *passim;* Debbie Lee, 'Introduction' in Kitson and Lee (eds.), *Slavery, Abolition, and Emancipation*, iii: *The Emancipation Debate*, pp. vii-xvii. The issue of planter self-interest is one of the most common tropes of both pro- and anti-slavery discourse. See Kitson and Lee (eds.), *Slavery, Abolition, and Emancipation*, esp. vols. iii and ii.: *The Abolition Debate*.

the proprietor, whose taxes were reduced commensurately. Section 36 of the Act, which had had no counterpart in the 1788 law, enacted provisions designed to encourage slaves to reproduce. It is difficult, however, to see where this differed in any significant extent from the encouragement to overseers in section 35. Female slaves with six surviving children were to be exempted from labour and provided 'with the means of an easy and comfortable maintenance'. The remainder of the section, though, continued to describe the tax breaks for the owner, who no longer had to pay taxes of any kind on the slave as long as she genuinely did have the requisite number of children and was comfortable.[154] Notwithstanding the onus placed in this act on the financial wellbeing of the owner, the statute was a dead letter from the moment it was passed. The financial outlay and benefits for planters were only relevant if there existed a mother with six surviving children, and there were so few of these that the provisions of the statute were hardly ever implemented.[155]

Pronatalist initiatives were characterised by this studied lack of practicability. Lewis's efforts were even more elaborate and were based on the racist belief that Africans were at heart materialistic and ostentatious. He established a reward system whereby the midwife and mother of a baby (if it survived to fourteen days) each received a dollar,[156] in addition to their usual allowance of clothes and provisions, and he 'also gave each mother a present of a scarlet girdle with a silver medal in the centre, telling her always to wear it on

[154] This is all derived from the reprint of this statute in Edwards, *History*, ii. 151-98, esp. 174-6.
[155] See Betty Wood and Roy Clayton, 'Jamaica's Struggle for a Self-Perpetuating Slave Population: Demographic, Social, and Religious Changes on Golden Grove Plantation, 1812-1832', *Journal of Caribbean Studies*, 6 (1988), 287-308 at 302-3. From figures contained in Patterson, *Sociology*, 60-1, based on a snapshot of Green Park Estate, Jamaica, for a single week in 1823, four women were listed as 'indulged', having six children. Of an adult slave population in excess of 260, this corresponds to 1.5% of all adults, or (assuming a 50:50 male:female ratio), 3% of all adult women.
[156] 8 Spanish reales (a 'piece of eight'), equivalent to between 5 and 6 shillings in this period.

feasts and holidays, when it should entitle her to marks of peculiar respect and attention.'[157] The more children a woman had, the more medals were to be placed on the girdle, such that precedence went to women with the most.[158] Lewis was aware that this was fanciful, but allowed himself to be convinced by his manager that it was a sensible system. His disappointment, on returning to Jamaica in 1818 to find barely a dozen births from upwards of three hundred slaves, almost seeps off the page.[159]

Two connected reasons indicate why planters nonetheless remained cool to the prospect of naturally increasing their slave population, even at this critical juncture. First, there was the immediate political situation. With the commitment of the Imperial Government to gradual emancipation after 1823, the proslavery strategy shifted to providing reasons as to why slaves were not yet ready for freedom.[160] Implementation of ameliorationist measures would have undermined these delaying tactics, so planters began to ignore even more intently the statutes which were intended to enact these measures and which were so loudly trumpeted in such pamphlets as *To the People of Great Britain and Ireland* (1831).[161]

The second reason for planter apathy to the promotion of natural increase relates more closely to a guiding assumption at the heart of the question of population. Throughout the eighteenth century, there was a

[157] Lewis, *Journal*, 66 (20 Jan. 1816).
[158] Ibid.
[159] Lewis, *Journal*, 140 (24 Jan. 1818).
[160] See the references in n. 58, above.
[161] See *To the People of Great Britain and Ireland*, *passim*. Other examples of the proslavery argument that planters were complying with ameliorationism include Davis, *West Indies*, 70-3; Henderson, *Brief View*, 51; *Substance of the Speech of Ralph Bernal, Esq. in the Debate in the House of Commons, On the 19th of May, 1826* (1826).

widespread assumption that only marital sex was productive of offspring.[162] This assumption lay at the heart of the criticism of African 'polygamy', which was often invoked as *the* reason why slaves were not naturally increasing.[163] Planter ethnocentrism prevented the recognition of the conjugal practices of slaves as marriage. In consequence, the only legitimate form of marriage, which was itself culturally the only legitimate way to produce offspring, was Christian. Despite vehement protestations to the contrary, many planters refused to Christianise slaves, which provoked furious reactions from abolitionists and emancipationists, groups which originated in nonconformist Protestantism (especially Quakers) and through which ran a clear vein of evangelical Christianity.[164]

The reasons for planter antipathy to the Christianisation of their slaves are not difficult to determine, as abolitionists made abundantly clear.[165] Not merely would the fact of widespread slave Christianity, by demonstrating the improvement of the slave population, have been sufficient to bring slavery itself to a speedy conclusion, but the interior logic of Christianity itself preached the equality of all men before God. Furthermore, Protestant Christianity was especially dangerous for slavery as it privileged the individual interpretation of scripture, for which an ability to read was a prerequisite. To thus advance a system of belief preaching equality and literacy (thereby ensuring that slaves could at least fully understand abolitionist propaganda), was a prospect the planters viewed with dread. Furthermore, the most serious challenges to the

[162] See ch. 2. For the view that marriage increases fertility, see Higman, *Caribbean*, 351-2. For a contemporary example, see esp. Wilberforce, *Appeal*, 18.
[163] See refs. in n. 80, above.
[164] Turley, *Culture*; Davis, *Age of Revolution*, esp. ch. 5.
[165] For example, see Wilberforce, *Appeal*, 24.

slaveholding order, the risings of 1816, 1823, and 1831-2, were indelibly associated with black and coloured Christians.[166] Hence, perhaps, the peculiarly sectarian fractures appearing in white Jamaican society as emancipation loomed.[167]

The chequered history of pronatalism in the early nineteenth-century Caribbean embodies an ambivalence typical of those aspects of pro- and anti-slavery discourse discussed so far in this chapter. Planters showed limited interest in encouraging their slaves to reproduce, which might explain the apparent absence of infanticide, abortion, and contraception in their discussions of slave parenthood, which instead relied on stereotypes of slave ignorance and thoughtlessness. The ambitious but unfeasible provisions enacted by various colonial legislatures to promote slave reproduction fell on the stony ground of planter indifference. This indifference itself can be explained in part by the need to halt amelioration once the prospect of (gradual) emancipation emerged, and, more seriously, by the need to avoid Christianisation at all costs. An enthusiastic engagement with pronatalism on the terms laid down by both metropolitan and colonial culture entailed the eventual destruction of slavery itself.

Principles and Population

Wherever one sat in the spectrum of opinion regarding slavery, upon one thing all were agreed: that the larger the population, the better. This was the case notwithstanding the seismic shift wrought by Malthus's *Essay*, the role of

[166] See the references listed in n. 282, above, and Michael Craton, 'Slave Culture, Resistance and the Achievement of Emancipation in the British West Indies, 1783-1838', in Walvin (ed.), *Slavery and British Society*, 100-22.
[167] Altink, *Representations*, 8-9; Curtin, *Two Jamaicas*, ch. 5.

which in debates on slavery was limited, as Malthus made it clear both to Parliament and the public that he was not a supporter of slavery.[168] The enormous power of the principle of population was such that Thomas Fowell Buxton (leader of the parliamentary abolitionists after 1823), appearing before the House of Lords in 1832, was prepared to make it the sole authority in questions on slavery.[169] Given the mass of conflicting testimony offered by pro- and anti-slavery commentators,[170] he explained to the Commons on 15 April 1831, that the natural increase or decrease of the slave population was a full and objective test of the extent of 'misery'.[171] In stating the obvious in this fashion, Buxton sought to counter the complaints of the proslavery lobby that they were unable to gain a fair hearing for their cause due to the popular clamour for emancipation. Buxton circumvented such cynical tactics by providing an impartial and empirical basis for concluding that amelioration had not been successful and that emancipation was a necessity.

The breadth of agreement with the notion that the increase or decrease of population could provide this measure was truly staggering. Emancipationists extracted as much political capital from this as they possibly could. In pamphlets, newspaper articles, books, and at public meetings, a whole range of people sympathetic to antislavery voiced their understanding of and

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[168] He added an appendix to this effect to the 1806 edition of the *Essay* and approached Wilberforce to clarify his position to the Commons. See Higman, 'Slavery and the Development of Demographic Theory'; *Hansard*, 1st series, 1807, viii, 993-4; Thomas Robert Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, 3rd edn. (2 vols., 1806), ii. 505-59; p. 131, above.
[169] *Parliamentary Papers* (Lords), 1832, 'Select Committee on the State of the West India Colonies', ii. 828, quoted in Higman, 'Slavery and Demographic Theory', 182.
[170] And even offered to parliamentary committees. See the testimonies of William Taylor and William Shand in *Parliamentary Papers* (Commons), 1831-2, 'Select Committee on the Extinction of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, Report, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, Index' (721), xx. 27-8, 43-4, 466-8.
[171] *Hansard*, 3rd series, 1831, iii, 1410.

assent to the principle of population.[172] With such consensus, proslavery campaigners were forced by emancipationists to do battle on the terrain of population. Thus, they had to resort to a complex series of counterarguments (such as African barbarism, an imbalanced sex ratio, and a rebuttal of the increasingly widespread perception that sugar cultivation was responsible for depopulation), recently surveyed by Seymour Drescher.[173] In *Notes in Defence of the Colonies* (1826), one of the most sophisticated proslavery discussions of population, the anonymous 'West Indian' managed to argue in favour of the principle of population whilst questioning its evidentiary weight, at the same time as deploying Malthusian theory. There were 'few subjects … more important than the laws which govern the increase and decrease of mankind,' yet, 'increase in numbers is a *presumption*, not a *proof, of happiness*, according as a society is instituted, as certain customs are prevalent in it, so does it increase or decrease.'[174] Nevertheless, this law of nature acted in predictable ways, as 'the faculty of mankind to increase in a *geometrical* or *compound ratio*' would ensure that the decrease of the slave population would cease before it fell as low as 300,000, before a permanent increase was to take place.[175] Where this argument was most powerful was in its rejection of the significatory power of the increase of the population. Unlike almost all other uses of the principle of population, this argument got closest to fully undermining it as axiomatic for the debate.

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[172] For examples of each, see [Alexander], *Address*, section 2; Letter from 'Anglus', *The New Times* (n.d. [?1824]), n.p. (in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 38, f. 17); James Stephen, *The Slavery of the British West India Colonies Delineated* (2 vols., 1824-30), ii. ch. 3; report on a borough meeting held in Derby on 13 Dec. 1825 in *Derby Mercury*, 14 Dec. 1825, 2.
[173] Drescher, *Mighty Experiment*, 49-52.
[174] 'West Indian', *Notes*, 17.
[175] 'A West Indian', 'Notes in Defence of the Colonies', *The Jamaica Journal,* 5 June 1824, 130 (in Bodl. MSS Brit. Emp. s. 444, vol. 39, f. 10).

Arguments such as that of the 'West Indian' threatened to demolish almost a half-century of abolitionist and emancipationist logic. As early as 1786, Thomas Clarkson's *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* was one of the first abolitionist texts both to link slavery with depopulation *and* elevate this fact to one of paramount importance.[176] By the early 1830s, this principle became so ingrained as to be practically invulnerable to proslavery assault. Planters and proslavery apologists tried, and it is significant that, according to Drescher, emancipation became a legal reality only once the central Buxtonian thesis had gone off the boil.[177] However, population and its increase were particularly strong entities on which to base claims against slavery. In light of the equivocal proof of racial identity offered by skin colour (even though this was based on an unshakeable confidence in the signifying power of the human body), the natural increase or decrease of slaves was arguably a more potent empirical entity than skin colour.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that sex created race in the British Caribbean. Interracial sex produced a coloured population which was taxonomised in the system of racial gradations. The taxonomic categories were given meaning by the apparently clear differences between black and white, in terms of climate, suitability for enslavement, and proximity to animals and children. The demographic structure of slave colonies encouraged interracial intercourse even if commentators such as Long did not, but ultimately slaves bore the brunt of

[176] Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (1786), 235-6.
[177] Drescher, *Mighty Experiment*, 53.

condemnation for this behaviour. Female slaves were often held to blame for sexual misconduct, and sexual behaviour in this manner was racialised, as discussed in the second half of the chapter. The miniscule amount of sexual power which female slaves had the opportunity to exercise was no recompense for their brutal treatment at the hands of slaveowners. The desirability of female slaves on the basis of their proximity to whiteness ultimately undermined the system of racial gradations, which sought to map each of the myriad taxonomic categories on the body in the form of skin colour. This was hopelessly ambitious, as skin colour is a far more equivocal source of meaning than fine distinctions of anatomy or physiognomy, but that such attempts were made testifies to the power of the body, by the 1830s, to signify identity.

In addition to the role of interracial sex, that which took place within enslaved communities also contributed to the production of race. As was discussed briefly in the first half of the chapter, sexual customs became racialised and were themselves markers of identity. The hyperfertility of Africans, their polygamy, superstition (in the shape of the midwife), inattention, and even hostility to their children, were all racial stereotypes simultaneously fed and deployed by discourses of slave reproduction. Reproduction was half-heartedly encouraged by planters as a means of surmounting the difficulties imposed by the abolition of the slave trade, and the ambivalence about this was part of a complicated relationship between slavery and population, explored at the beginning of the second half of the chapter. Fundamentally, planters were reluctant to undertake seemingly the most progressive step towards encouraging natural increase – allowing their slaves to marry as Christians – because of concerns about the consequences of mass-Christianisation. Membership of a

faith which preached human equality and, by privileging individual interpretation of scripture, placed emphasis on an ability to read, was several steps too far for most planters, even in the name of maintaining a profitable enterprise. Immediate political reasons, such as the attempt to delay and frustrate abolitionism, also played into this lack of commitment to promoting population growth. Natural increase nevertheless became a cardinal virtue, and one of the strongest weapons in the emancipationists' arsenal.

The creation of race by sex was enacted through the emergence of a system of racial gradations, based on the sexual transmission of physical and moral characteristics (amongst which were sexual customs). The congruence between the differences of slave and free, and of black and white in the Caribbean perhaps led automatically and intuitively to a system of difference based on skin colour. This proved too elaborate for skin colour adequately to encapsulate. However, concepts of the body had nonetheless become so stable by the early nineteenth century that, notwithstanding the obvious flaws in its implementation, a system of difference was scarcely conceivable which did not involve the body as a signifier. The importance of the sexual production of bodies was shown by the critical significance of the principle of population to abolitionist argument, and the fatal consequences to slavery of planter apathy towards promoting natural increase. The linkage of sex and race, and the progressive stabilisation of the body, detailed respectively in the two halves of this thesis, are thus encapsulated within the early nineteenth-century discourses on slavery.

Conclusion

All is race; there is no other truth.

(Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred*, 1847)[1]

At midnight on 31 July 1834, slavery in the British Empire officially came to an end. Forms of servitude were to persist, but the death knell had been sounded for British slavery. One question to have occupied historians of this period is how, within a decade of the final victory over slavery, could race have become so central to Western culture?[2] Disraeli was not alone in testifying to the cultural power of race in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. It has been easy to argue for a mutually referential relationship between race and slavery in America, where emancipation did not occur until the 1860s, by which time race had become paramount. But in Britain, where the end of slavery entailed neither civil war nor the transformation of a (Southern) way of life, it is more difficult to account for the growing dominance of race.

At the heart of the problem is the perceived distance of race from the fabric of metropolitan British life in the period. One of the consequences of the argument advanced in this thesis is the considerable reduction of this distance. It has shown how race and sex were fundamentally connected on an epistemological and ontological level, meaning that whatever one cared to say about sex had implications for thought on race, and vice versa. This thesis shows that a study of ideas about one concept enables further understanding of the other. Indeed, the parallels between race and sex become more striking as the nineteenth century progressed: as racial identities became ever more

[1] Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred: or, the New Crusade* (3 vols., 1847), i. 303.
[2] See, for example, Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Cambridge, 2002).

particularised and pathological, so too were sexual perversions under the keen taxonomising eye of the sexologists.

This thesis fills a gap in scholarship on the interrelationship of sex and race, and thereby provides an alternative account of the emergence of biologically distinct races and 'opposite' sexes. It first established the contours of the race-sex interrelationship by examining the role of sex within racial theories, and found that an empiricist epistemology was fundamental to thinking on bodily identities throughout the period. Empirical markers were located on and beneath the skin, and, as in the case of the sexual identities discussed in chapter two, many such markers were embodiments of moral standards. This corporealisation of morals reflected both the prominence of an empiricist epistemology within sexual discourses, but also the fundamental importance of the body. An alternative measure of the significance of the body was provided by the discussion of philoprogenitivism, the ubiquity and influence of which can hardly be exaggerated during the period. Having thus outlined the sex-race relationship, the second half of the thesis proceeded to show how far it permeated eighteenth-century culture. The three case studies demonstrated the wider relevance of the discourses in which this relationship is seen to thrive, and also offered an explanation of the emergence of modern racial and sexual identities. These chapters testified to the importance of a stable concept of the human body for race and sex to perform any signifying work, and showed how such a body emerged over the course of the eighteenth century. The convergence of the epistemological and ontological foundations of modern racial and sexual identities ensured that the necessary materials had been gathered from which such identities could be constructed.

In concluding this argument, three separate issues require brief comment. First is the question of why this convergence took place in the eighteenth century. Although the emphasis throughout this thesis has been on the significance of intellectual and cultural factors, more traditional arguments also appear important. Well treated by other historians who have addressed race and sex (particularly Dror Wahrman, Thomas Laqueur, Nancy Stepan, and Londa Schiebinger), politics (including imperial expansion) and the development of science across the period were of undeniable influence. Although they tend to use it somewhat monocausally, Wahrman's and Laqueur's insistence on the importance of politics appears sound. An imperative to exclude both women and black peoples did result from political and socio-economic changes at the end of the eighteenth century, and it did play a role in the formulation of sexual and racial identities. The development of science, addressed in part throughout this thesis, was also crucial. Over the course of the eighteenth century, scientists acquired a more detailed knowledge of the body and its capacities, and were able to eliminate or demote various previously cherished explanations for biological phenomena, such as the role of climate in shaping skin colour, or that of the mother's imagination in moulding the unborn foetus. External and contingent factors were gradually pruned away to leave the human body and its intrinsic nature. Political and scientific imperatives indeed helped to shape the conditions necessary for the hegemony of empiricism and for the emergence of a stable body. However, this thesis moves away from the assertion that science and politics *directly* caused the appearance of modern race and sex, to posit a more diffuse and mediated process of emergence. Political and scientific developments may have been

important preconditions for the epistemological and ontological conjunction described here, but it was this conjunction that was the immediate cause of modern racial and sexual identities.

The second issue relates to why the convergence did not take place earlier, notwithstanding the points made above about scientific and political developments. As discussed in the introduction, many historians have indeed argued that it is possible to identify race in times and places other than the post-Enlightenment Anglo-American world. Many historians have in the past employed a somewhat hidebound perspective, attempting to describe the 'origins' of race within their own period and discounting the appearance of the phenomenon in others. By contrast, this thesis offers an escape from such parochialism by pointing to the cultural and intellectual prerequisites of race and sex. In theory, where confidence in the body to signify identity is conjoined to a mechanism for reading and interpreting that body, racial and sexual (that is, corporeal) identities can emerge. They may not be recognisable as race and sex as they have existed since the eighteenth century, for it is quite another thing to assert the permanence, innateness, and unbridgeability of these identities, or indeed to rank them in terms of superiority or inferiority. But this argument does suggest that scholars who have identified distinct races or opposite sexes in historically and geographically exotic locales may not have erred as egregiously as some have suggested.

The final issue to be considered briefly concerns the reasons for the persistence to this day of the late-eighteenth-century convergence of an ontologically stable body and an empiricist epistemology. Here, it should be remembered that embodied identities are both signified and known by the

human body. Not merely are the bodies of others made to signify, but the confidence we repose in our own bodies and their senses reassures us that such signs are real and that we have interpreted them correctly. It is sobering to reflect that the basis of race and sex in an epistemology absolutely central to modern thought, and in a biological entity from which escape is impossible, may mean that the struggle against discrimination on the basis of race and sex entails a struggle against both how we think and what we are.

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