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**Defining Americans:
Nation, State, and the Politics of Racial Mixture, 1885-1905**

by

Lauren L. Basson

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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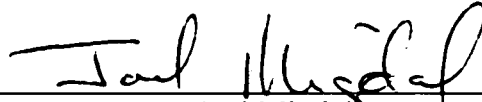
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Abstract

**Defining Americans:
Nation, State and the Politics of Racial Mixture, 1885-1905**

By Lauren L. Basson

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee

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Prevailing understandings about what it meant to be American underwent significant changes at the turn of the 20th century. This study examines how challenges posed by racial mixture contributed to defining and redefining the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state between 1885 and 1905. Specific political and legal cases involving people and places perceived as racially mixed became sites of contestation where policymakers, press members and other participants articulated, debated and reconfigured their visions of citizenship, nationhood and statehood. Universalistic and particularistic principles became intertwined in these debates and featured in ideological perspectives that ranged across the political spectrum, including liberalism, republicanism and anarchism. The concepts of fitness for self-government, private property, and white supremacy also played controversial and critical roles in debates about racial mixture. They structured the fluctuating logics of inclusion and exclusion that ultimately determined which individuals were accepted as full members of the nation and which territories were accepted as full members of the state.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Many of the word and phrases that I use in this dissertation are terms that come directly from the late 19th and early 20th century cases that I examine. These include phrases such as racially mixed, political competence, fitness for self-government, and a host of others. I also use many contemporary terms, including America and American, whose conventional usage I do not necessarily endorse. My purpose in introducing these terms in this dissertation is to provide a critical assessment of their contested meanings and of their contributions to definitions of the U.S. nation and state. In an attempt to indicate that my intention was to interrogate rather than to uncritically adopt this terminology, I began by placing many of these terms in quotation marks throughout the text. Out of concern that the overuse of quotation marks might be distracting to the reader, however, I left some terms unmarked although my stance toward these terms was still a very critical one. As I reviewed the text, I realized that my choice of which terms to place in quotation marks and which to leave unmarked seemed unjustifiably haphazard. (For instance, I had placed quotation marks around the words racially mixed, but not around the words racial mixture.)

Matthew Frye Jacobson has commented on the “unexamined racial certainty” that such selective practices denote and has observed, “A principled consistency on this score is rendered very difficult by the culture within which we operate” (Jacobson 1998, *Note on Usage*). Following Jacobson’s precedent, I have ultimately decided to leave all terms, including archaic phrases, unmarked unless they represent direct quotations. My dilemmas about the use of terminology are, in large part, a reflection of the limits of our current sociopolitical vocabulary and the challenges involved in attempting to provide a critical assessment of dominant conceptual frameworks in language that will be readily understood but not uncritically employed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Phew! What a long and winding journey this has been. In retrospect, however, despite all of the self-imposed obstacles and delays, I do not think I would have done it any other way. The detours I have taken in pursuing my goal of completing a doctoral degree have often proven to be the most valuable learning experiences of all. In fact, I simply could not have written this dissertation had I followed a more conventional route. The ideas and perspectives that appear in these pages are a reflection of all that I have learned along the way.

While the journey has at times been a lonely one, it would not have been possible at all without the encouragement, advice and immense support of many, many people, only a few of whom will be mentioned here individually. First, and counter to all conventions, I thank my family. Family always deserves to come first but all too often among us academics, unintentionally and unfortunately, comes last instead. I thank my mom for teaching me to contemplate, critique, and celebrate the world in writing. And I thank her for taking such good care of my children and me while I pursued this degree. I thank my dad for teaching me the joy of learning new languages and how to make it to the tops of all sorts of mountains. I thank both of them and all of my grandparents for instilling in me the love of learning and the dedication that has inspired me to pursue this path. Thank you to my sister for sharing so many important life journeys, including this academic one, with me.

I was more than seven months pregnant with my son when I went to the UW graduate school to fill out the paperwork for completion of my Master's degree nine years ago. The receptionist told me about how she had become a mother at a young age and raised her children alone after her husband passed away. When I commented on how difficult that must have been, she replied, "My children raised me well." I was not quite sure what she meant at the time. Now I understand.

Thank you, Benjamin and Ayelet, for raising me so well. You have taught me more than you may ever realize. I love you always. I thank my husband, Ezra, for bringing me the greatest joys that I have ever experienced and for showing me that there are always alternate and often better ways to reach one's destination. Thank you for teaching me to climb fences and for staying with me through all of the ups and downs that this bumpy trip has involved. I look forward to continuing the journey with you at my side.

Second in importance only to the support provided by my family has been the encouragement and assistance I have received from many, many people in the academic world who have been there for me throughout the years. I am profoundly grateful to my advisor, Professor Joel Migdal, who has provided me with expert guidance and unflagging academic and moral support all along the way. His confidence in me, his patience, his wisdom, and his acceptance of the unconventional routes that I have chosen to take in pursuit of my goals have made this dissertation happen. In addition, it is as a result of Joel's assistance and support that I published my first academic article, taught my first college course, gave my first conference presentations, and received my first fellowships. I am immensely thankful that Joel has been my mentor and the chair of my doctoral committee.

I also thank the other members of my dissertation committee, Professor Christine Di Stefano and Professor Michael McCann, for all of their support, assistance and encouragement. In particular, I thank Christine for reassuring me early in my graduate career that it was acceptable to pursue an interpretive rather than an explanatory approach to political science - and for explaining the difference between them. I thank Michael for his willingness to join the committee at a later stage, after the direction of my dissertation took yet another sharp turn, and for his enthusiasm and insightful comments about my research questions and interdisciplinary methodology.

Many other people have read and provided valuable comments on drafts of various portions of this dissertation and related manuscripts. Their insights and suggestions have shaped my thinking about the issues of citizenship, nationhood and race in extremely

important ways. I thank Professors Andrea Simpson, Nihkil Singh, France Winddance Twine, Priscilla Wald, Jonathan Warren and the many others whose instructive and constructive comments have contributed to this project.

I have also learned a great deal and received enormous support from my fellow graduate students. I want to thank all of the participants in the women's dissertation writing group and the graduate student group organized by Professor Joel Migdal. A very special thanks goes to Dr. Patricia Woods who stuck by me and stayed in touch through all the trials and tribulations that pursuing a doctoral degree entails.

I sincerely thank the entire staff at the University of Washington libraries for their assistance and patience with my seemingly endless use of all the resources the library had to offer. In particular, I thank Glenda Pearson for going out of her way to help me locate and order obscure newspapers from the 19th century.

I have written most of this dissertation about what it means to be American while living in Israel during the 2001-2002 academic year. I arrived in Israel before the September 11th attacks in the United States and have lived here during some of the most intense episodes of the second intifada. It is also the year during which I have probably had the least contact with others who view their primary national identity as American. Although I do not mention my experiences and perspectives living in this particular place at this particular time directly in the following pages (though I have recounted them elsewhere), they have undoubtedly shaped this dissertation in significant ways. Despite the challenges involved, I believe that writing about what it means to be American from outside of the United States has provided a critical distance and comparative dimension that have improved this manuscript and I recommend this approach to other scholars of U.S. politics and society.

I am very grateful to the Fulbright Program and the Lady Davis Foundation for providing the funding that has enabled me to complete my dissertation research and writing. During this year, I have further developed the theoretical approach to citizenship and national membership in multiethnic democracies that guides this study. With the

generous assistance of my advisors in Israel, Dr. Aref Abu-Rabia and Professor Baruch Kimmerling, I have also conducted comparative research focused on the Negev Bedouin in Israel from which I have drawn significant insights included in this dissertation. In addition, this latter research has provided an important bridge to my next, post-doctoral research project. The journey continues.

To all mothers pursuing or thinking about pursuing their own educations:

YES YOU CAN!

Introduction

What does it mean to be American? How have these meanings emerged, persisted and changed over time? In the following pages, I will address these questions through a close examination of case studies involving people and places perceived as racially mixed at the turn of the 20th century. These controversial cases offer unique insights into how diverse constituencies constructed and contested the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state at their margins. I define these boundaries as the sociopolitical and territorial limits of the nation and state. Through their policies and protests, their decisions and debates, the people engaged in the cases considered in this study contributed in significant ways to defining and redefining what it meant to be American at a critical turning point in the history of the United States.

Government officials often presented an image of the U.S. nation and state as natural and eternal entities that embodied the universalistic, democratic concepts espoused by the country's founders. Yet despite this image of permanence in space and time, officials were simultaneously engaged in perpetual efforts to preserve, strengthen, and sometimes revise the boundaries that constituted the nation and state. Why was there such a discrepancy among official proclamations, policies and practices? Why did the boundaries of the nation and state often appear so fuzzy and why did they continue to fluctuate despite repeated efforts by powerful groups to portray them as sharp, stable and

settled? One reason for the discrepancy is that there were always people and places in the United States that did not conform to the basic categories on which those boundaries were premised. The official image of the nation and state was based on the unquestioned assumption of a homogenous, racially pure, white citizenry. The presence of racially mixed people and places in the United States disrupted this image by challenging prevailing assumptions about the existence of naturally separate races and demonstrating the frequently unacknowledged heterogeneous character of the country. Racially mixed people and places also exposed and challenged the closely connected universalistic and particularistic dimensions of prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation and state.

One well-known illustration of the challenges posed by racial mixture was the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* case in which Homer Plessy challenged a Louisiana law requiring equal but separate accommodations on railroads, on the basis of the 13th and 14th Amendments. Plessy was of predominantly European ancestry and looked white, but the fact that he had one great-grandparent of African descent caused authorities to classify him as black and declare him ineligible to sit in passenger cars reserved for whites. In his decision about the case, Justice Henry Billings Brown upheld the Louisiana law on the basis that natural “racial instincts” might lead to hostilities without legislated separation (Smith 1997, 378; see also *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 1896). On the other hand, Brown failed to provide any definition of the supposedly natural boundaries between races, instead leaving the crucial definitions of whiteness, and non-whiteness “to be determined under the laws of each state” (quoted in Smith 1997, 379; see also *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 1896). His decision suggests some of the difficulties that cases

of racial mixture posed to laws, policies and definitions of the nation and state based on mono-racial categories. It also demonstrates how responses to these difficulties often involved efforts to justify and strengthen racial divisions rather than to question and dismantle them.

This dissertation investigates how racially mixed people and territories revealed, resisted, and sometimes contributed to revising prevailing U.S. definitions of nation and state at the turn of the 20th century. In particular, it focuses on the challenges posed by indigenous people of mixed descent and by mixed race territories that U.S. policymakers debated about whether or not to annex. These racially mixed people and places defied the constructed boundaries of the mono-racial categories that formed the underlying foundations of many aspects of U.S. political and social life. By transgressing these boundaries, they exposed the crucial role that artificial racial divisions played in defining the nation and state and the discrepancies between public promises of universalistic, democratic political processes and the exclusive, racist policies and practices that permeated U.S. governance. The physical presence and political activities of racially mixed people challenged ascriptive definitions of the nation and state and highlighted the seemingly mixed messages about what it meant to be American to which these definitions contributed.

U.S. policymakers, press members, scholars and other European Americans applied similar, racist logics of inclusion and exclusion to people and territories. They distinguished between people and territories governed by the United States and those

eligible for full participation in the governing process. Racially mixed people and territories complicated these distinctions and highlighted the constructed and inconsistent character of U.S. policies and practices regarding citizenship, national membership and statehood.

I approach my investigation of changing definitions of nationhood and statehood from a comparative perspective, both in terms of place and time. The analytical concepts and lines of inquiry that I bring to this dissertation have been developed through consideration of what it means to be a citizen and member of the nation across a range of states and time periods.

In particular, my analysis of challenges to prevailing definitions of nation and state in the United States at the turn of the 20th century has benefited greatly from comparative research that I have conducted on similar issues in contemporary Israel and France. In fact, I wrote the bulk of this dissertation in Israel while conducting research on the ambiguous national status of the Negev Bedouin and the challenges they have posed to conventional definitions of the Israeli nation and state. Although the results of this latter research project will be written up and published separately, they have informed my thinking about the challenges posed by racial mixture in the United States a century ago in very important ways. My research on the Negev Bedouin has highlighted both the similar challenges that indigenous peoples have posed to the concept of the nation-state across time and space and the specific logics of inclusion and exclusion that government authorities have employed in response to those challenges, revealing their own

particularistic definitions of nation and state. I am hardly the first scholar to recognize the significant insights that can be gained by considering the issues of race, ethnicity, nation and state in Israel and the United States from a comparative perspective (see e.g. Dominguez 1986 & 1989 and Kook 1995 & 1998).

My comparative approach to issues of citizenship, nationhood and statehood is both an empirical and theoretical one. In particular, my thinking about the relationship between nation and state has been informed by the state in society approach introduced by Joel Migdal (Migdal 2001). This conceptual approach to the state emphasizes the frequent disjunctions between everyday state practices and the image of the state that its official representatives seek to convey. It focuses on how interactions between state officials and diverse members of society continually contest and reconstruct existing sociopolitical and territorial boundaries. In order to effectively analyze these interactions, I have adopted the strategy proposed by Migdal and others of focusing on narrative processes as a means of overcoming the limitations associated with conventional notions of methodological rigor (see e.g. Migdal 2001, Somers 1992, and Somers & Gibson 1994).

The phenomenon of racial mixture has been an issue of concern throughout U.S. history and has received considerable scholarly attention. One focus of these studies has been general historical and literary analysis of the phenomenon of racial mixture (see e.g. Berry 1963, Forbes 1989, Nash 1995, Peterson and Brown 1986, Sollers 2000, Sollers 1997, Spickard 1989, and Williamson 1995). Another body of literature has focused

predominantly on the individual psychology, social status, and experiences of people involved in mixed marriages or of mixed descent (see e.g. Barron 1946 & 1972, Berger and Hill 1998, Johnson and Warren 1994, Root 1996, and Zack 1995). Although many of these works have provided useful information and perspectives, this study departs from both of these bodies of literature in several ways.

First, this study does not attempt to conduct a comprehensive, empirical analysis of the phenomenon of racial mixture in the United States. That would be a very worthy project in its own right but one that goes far beyond the intent of this dissertation. The greatest threat of racial mixture, in the popular, European American imagination, stemmed from relationships between African Americans and European Americans and many studies of racial mixture have focused on this dimension of the issue (see e.g. Sollers 1997 and 2000). It is the black-white axis of racial discourse that dominated contemporary thought at the turn of the 20th century and continues to define discussions of race in the United States until this day. While I fully acknowledge the importance and dominance of this aspect of U.S. histories and discourses, I have chosen to focus on another aspect of the perceived threat of racial mixture in the hope of illuminating significant dimensions of the definitional process of nation and state that have historically and institutionally received less attention. This study, therefore, does not address the issue of mixture between people of African and European descent in any depth nor does it investigate the widespread phenomenon of mixture as it applies to many other inhabitants of the United States, including people of Asian and Latin American descent.

Instead, my analysis of racial mixture among people in the United States has a very narrow empirical focus, concentrating mainly on mixture between indigenous peoples and Europeans. The decision to focus on this particular form of racial mixture was driven by theoretical and analytical concerns. I chose this emphasis because debates about this particular type of racial mixture intersected in unique and critical ways with debates about land use and allocation, territorial expansion and the definition of the state. By concentrating on cases involving indigenous people of mixed descent, I was able to investigate how questions concerning racial mixture influenced the definitions of both the U.S. nation *and* the U.S. state.

Second, the purpose of this study is to examine diverse responses to racial mixture as a means of investigating the broader sociopolitical processes of defining race, nation and state. One of the ways in which I address these issues is by analyzing turn-of-the 20th century debates that took place at the highest levels of the U.S. government about whether or not to annex the racially mixed Northwest Territories and Hawaii. These debates highlighted the intersections among racism, imperialism and territorial expansion in the United States.

Many other scholars have also examined these intersections and have concluded that counter to mainstream interpretations, racist and imperialist tendencies did not represent an anomaly but rather a consistent pattern in U.S. history (see e.g. Drinnon 1990, Horsman 1981, Jacobson 2000, McFerson 1997, and Weston 1972). One of the major arguments put forth by these authors was that the engagement by the United States in

overseas expansion and imperialism at the turn of the 20th century did not constitute a new phenomenon but rather a continuation of the racist, colonial policies and practices that the U.S. government had been pursuing toward indigenous peoples on the American continent for centuries.

Indeed, an enormous body of literature has documented the racist approach of U.S. authorities toward American Indians, leading to strenuous efforts to dispossess indigenous peoples of their land and assimilate them into European American society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (see e.g. Berkhofer 1978, McDonnell 1991, Hoxie 1984, Prucha 1984, Wilkins 1997 and Williams 1990). A subset of this literature has addressed the roles that mixed blood Indians played in this process and U.S. policies and practices adopted toward those defined in this manner (see e.g. Bieder 1980, Hagan 1985, Rice 1998, Smits 1991, and Unrau 1989).

The reinterpretation of the era of U.S. overseas expansion has been accompanied by new interpretations of the meaning and functions of territorial boundaries and frontiers. Challenging the conventional frontier thesis, recent scholars have conceptualized territorial boundary areas as fluid borderlands in which diverse populations meet and interact (see e.g. Anzaldúa 1999, Cayton and Teute 1998, and White 1991; see Turner 1920 for conventional frontier thesis). What these interpretations tend to overlook are the divisive and exclusive functions of new state-imposed territorial boundaries. Not only do they define the nation and state in terms of which populations and territories they include but also in terms of those populations and territories that they deliberately exclude.

Frequently, territorial boundaries have attempted to create new states and nations by dividing and thus destroying the existing homelands of indigenous peoples.

In the context of these patterns of expansion and exclusion, I argue that new understandings of what it meant to be American emerged during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The distinction between citizens and territories deemed fit to govern themselves and those deemed fit only to be governed by the state became more overt and problematic as a result of many factors. These included the emancipation of slaves and the granting of citizenship to African Americans, the end of the continental frontier era and the gradual granting of U.S. citizenship to American Indians, overseas territorial expansion, industrialization and massive European immigration.

During earlier periods, U.S. authorities had relied on the visibility of racial, territorial and institutional boundaries to distinguish citizens from non-citizens, Americans from non-Americans. These visible boundaries, however, were rapidly disappearing. The American state could no longer be equated with the American continent and American citizens could no longer be defined exclusively as white, property-owning men of European descent. Slavery and the continental frontier no longer existed, race was increasingly defined in terms of blood quantum rather than appearance, and some legal U.S. citizens were declared un-American on the basis of their political beliefs.

Amidst this confusion, the links that had once connected prevailing definitions of the American nation and state to visibly distinguishable human and territorial bodies became increasingly tenuous. They were replaced by a more abstract, ideological and

disembodied definition of what it meant to be American. U.S. policymakers, press members and other observers increasingly treated Americanism as a possession, a form of property that included both ascriptive and ideological aspects. Critical race scholars have made the important observation that race, and particularly whiteness, has been historically treated as a form of property (see e.g. Harris 1995). Americanism also became a form of property that conferred specific rights and responsibilities on those who possessed it, including legitimacy and membership in the U.S. nation.

As the material links between the definitions of the U.S. nation and state and visually distinct populations and territories weakened, U.S. observers sought to clarify the emerging abstract, ideological definitions of nation and state (see Chapter 5). One way in which they pursued this goal was by associating new definitions of un-American ideologies with visible, ascriptive characteristics. For example, the designation Reds increasingly referred to those who held socialist, communist and anarchist political beliefs rather than to American Indians (see e.g. Kovel 1997, Rogin 1975, Rogin 1987, and Slotkin 1994). The racialized connotations of this designation did not disappear, however. The links between ascriptive traits and ideology played an important function in efforts to make visible the boundaries of the newly emerging properties of Americanism.

The following chapters will investigate these changing understandings of what it meant to be American through careful analysis of a series of political and legal cases involving challenges posed by racially mixed people and territories to conventional

definitions of the U.S. nation and state. Although all of these cases took place between 1885 and 1905, many of the questions that they raised about what it means to be American continue to reverberate today.

Next Chapters

Subsequent chapters in this dissertation will examine how the threat of racial mixture challenged and sometimes changed conventional definitions of citizenship, nationhood and statehood. In order to analyze the critical connections among the concepts of property, land, and race and how these contributed to defining the boundaries of nation and state, I have focused on four legal and political cases that concern indigenous people of mixed descent and the territories in which they lived. These cases often had direct implications for the definition of land claimed by the U.S. due to the status of indigenous people as the original occupants of that land and their dispossession.

As mentioned earlier, racial mixture was by no means limited to indigenous people. Indeed, the debates concerning and involving indigenous people of mixed descent had implications that went far beyond the individuals directly concerned or even the groups of which they were members. Some of these debates were heavily influenced by black-white racial politics and contributed to changes in those politics. Similarly, debates about the territorial status of Hawaii were influenced by and had important implications for decisions concerning other territories, including Alaska, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. All of these debates stimulated greater unity and resolve among some European-Americans intent on maintaining their racial dominance, while displaying and

exacerbating the disagreements and tensions among others. They led to new understandings of who should be included in the nation that affected the boundaries of the state, and new ideas about which territories to include in the Union that affected the boundaries of the nation. It is to this complex process of defining and redefining land, peoplehood, and race in the language of nation and state that I will now turn.

Although the phenomenon of racial mixture has been ignored by mainstream histories of the United States, it has always existed (Nash 1995). Relations between indigenous peoples and those of European ancestry have been more common throughout U.S. history than relations between other racially defined groups such as blacks and whites. There were plenty of cases of the former type of racial mixture at the turn of the 20th century.

I chose to focus on the specific cases discussed in this dissertation for a combination of theoretical and practical reasons. First, I selected cases that highlighted the intersections among concepts of land, race, nation, state and property that I was interested in investigating. Second, I selected cases that received national attention, an indication of their importance in the minds of U.S. authorities. Third, I selected cases that involved people of mixed descent who achieved a relatively powerful public, and, often, political voice. I believe that only by including the voices of those people challenging the prevailing definitions of nation and state in my analysis can the processes of redefinition and change be fully understood. Fourth, I selected cases about which sufficient documentation existed to conduct an analysis. Due to the hidden nature of this topic, it

has been far less documented than topics that conform to and support conventional understandings of the history of the U.S. nation and state.

Chapter One introduces the theoretical underpinnings of this study. First, it discusses how the broad questions that motivate this investigation have emerged from recent literature on citizenship and nationhood. Second, it presents the various conceptual approaches that I have incorporated into my examination of the challenges posed by racial mixture to prevailing definitions of nation and state. In particular, I discuss the vital roles that the concepts of property and possession have played in defining the U.S. nation and state and how they have been integrated into ideological perspectives across the political spectrum. Both of these concepts were heavily racialized and gendered. They were also intimately linked to notions of fitness for self-government. One way in which the connections between these abstract and seemingly universalistic concepts and ascriptive qualifications were naturalized was through dominant understandings of the human body, health and acceptable vs. unacceptable forms of movement. The chapter concludes with an assessment of my methodological approach.

Chapters Two through Five examine four case studies concerning challenges posed by indigenous people of mixed descent and racially mixed territories. Demonstrating the nuances of racial mixture and the dominant paradigms through which it was interpreted, two of the cases involve individuals who could pass as white and two concern individuals often labeled as black. This distinction had serious implications for the challenges posed by these individuals as well as for their political and personal opportunities.

The first and fourth cases that I consider specifically involve women of mixed descent. In the first case, Jane Waldron, a woman of European and American Indian descent argued that she was not white but Indian in order to legitimate her claim to a land allotment that was designated exclusively for Indians as a means of assimilating them into a European American way of life. In the final case, Lucy Parsons, a woman of Mexican and U.S. American Indian descent rejected assertions that she was black and identified herself as an indigenous American, an identity that she used to promote her anarchist beliefs. In both cases, the women exposed the difficulties associated with attempts to assign them to particular, mono-racial categories but also experienced the limits of a sociopolitical system in which no alternative to mono-racial categories existed and in which each of these categories played its own role in maintaining conventional definitions of the nation and state.

The two middle cases concern men of mixed descent and mixed territories that U.S. policymakers debated about annexing. The first of these cases concerns the Northwest Territories, an area to which a friendly European power also had a claim and in which the local political leadership consisted of indigenous people of mixed descent. The second case concerns Hawaii, a territory that the U.S. feared Japan might dominate and in which European American men of U.S. descent dominated the local political leadership. These factors played important roles in the U.S. decisions to annex the second territory but not the first and in the divergent political careers of the indigenous leaders of mixed descent who strove to represent indigenous inhabitants during these transitional periods.

It is perhaps not coincidental that in addition to focusing on individuals of mixed descent, all of these case studies also focus on geographical areas at the margins of the state. Three of them took place in areas in or near the Western states, while the fourth case concerns Hawaii. In this sense, the study is very much about how the nation and state are defined at their margins.

Chapter Two argues that debates about the national and racial status of mixed blood Indians produced complex logics of inclusion and exclusion that defined the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state through a process of partial assimilation that granted mixed bloods citizenship but not full membership in the nation. In particular, the chapter examines a pair of legal disputes involving Jane Waldron and Barney Traversee, mixed blood Indians who filed claims for individual allotments in the wake of the dissolution of the Great Sioux Reservation in 1889. The disputes led to a debate conducted at the highest levels of government about whether the original claimants were Indians or whites. The implications of this debate were critical because they involved not only the eligibility of mixed bloods to receive individual allotments but also the validity of many treaties concluded between the U.S. government and various Indian tribes. These debates revealed how definitions of private property ownership, racial boundaries, and eligibility criteria for national membership became combined in the fluctuating concepts of political competence and fitness for self-government.

The discussion about whether mixed bloods should be considered legally Indian or white demonstrated the U.S. government's reliance on a system of distinct racial logics

employed in the administration of its policies toward different, racially defined categories of U.S. citizens. The contested allotment disputes showed that this system of separate racial logics played a key role in determining which citizens were accepted as members of the nation and which were not. Proposed bills that emerged from these disputes linked race directly to definitions of political competence, a prerequisite for unencumbered property ownership and full participation in the political life of the nation.

Chapter Three argues that in making decisions about how to categorize people of mixed descent and whether to annex particular mixed territories, U.S. policymakers sought to balance their commitments to preserving whiteness as a valuable form of property and a defining feature of the boundaries of the nation with their interest in expanding the U.S. property in land and, thus, the boundaries of the state. The possibilities for annexing new territories often brought these two goals into conflict and debates about how to resolve these conflicts revealed the growing tensions at the heart of conventional definitions of the nation and state.

In particular, this second case study examines how U.S. policymakers and the national press defined Louis Riel, leader of the Metis, an indigenous people of French and American Indian descent, as a friendly foreigner on the basis of his Canadian citizenship, but sought to exclude him as a member of the U.S. nation despite the fact that he also held U.S. citizenship. I argue that the U.S. government refused to intervene in Riel's execution by the Canadian government for his leading role in a militant, Metis protest on the basis of his mixed racial status and the unwillingness of the U.S. to

jeopardize its relationship with a friendly, Anglo power. Likewise, the chapter argues that the U.S. decided not to pursue annexation of the Northwest Territories that Riel represented on behalf of the Metis inhabitants, because of their mixed race leadership and the rival claim presented by Canada. In other words, the bonds of whiteness that the U.S. shared with Canada and England outweighed both the interest in territorial expansion and the commitment that the government was willing to make to one of its own mixed race citizens.

Chapter Four considers a case in which the opposite conditions applied. The U.S. Congress decided to annex Hawaii largely on the basis of a perceived threat of domination of the territory by Japan and the fact that despite Hawaii's mixed population, European-American men of U.S. descent dominated its political leadership. Nevertheless, the decision to incorporate Hawaii into the United States was highly controversial as revealed in Congressional debates about the appropriate form of government for the new possession. These debates revolved around the question of whether Hawaii was fit for the same form of self-government granted to other, continental U.S. territories or whether its mixed population required a more limited form of self-government. This chapter demonstrates how the same logics of inclusion and exclusion that were applied to individual human bodies were also applied to territorial bodies.

The second part of this case study investigates the controversial political career of Robert Wilcox, a man of indigenous Hawaiian and European American descent, who

became the first representative to Congress from the newly annexed Hawaii. In particular, it documents the challenges he posed to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state by disrupting the European-American political dominance of Hawaii through participation in the formally egalitarian political institutions of the United States. It also demonstrates how U.S. policymakers responded to these challenges and managed the tension between the egalitarian principles that granted U.S. citizenship to Wilcox and permitted him to become Hawaii's first official Congressional representative, and ascriptive assumptions that barred him from full membership in the nation. I argue that once again they employed a policy of partial assimilation in order to allow Wilcox formal, but superficial, participation in the political process while still barring him from both the exercise of any significant political power and entry into the nation.

Chapter Five, the final case study investigates responses to the perception of a new threat of mixture in the large, industrializing U.S. cities of the turn of the 20th century. This perceived threat stemmed from the increasing numbers of anarchists and socialists, mixed in with the more conventional capitalists, who sought to address the growing socio-economic disparities in the newly industrializing democracy. This chapter argues that the political challenges posed by the anarchists threatened conventional definitions of the state and nation and led to reconceptions of the meanings of both American and foreign.

This final case study focuses on the challenges that Lucy Parsons posed to mainstream, capitalist attempts to define socialists and anarchists as foreign, and thus to

redefine the nation and state in exclusively capitalist terms. Parsons, a spokeswoman for the anarchist movement in the late 19th century, described herself as an indigenous woman of Mexican and Indian origin though most contemporary observers contended that she was of at least partial African descent. By joining her self-identity as an indigenous woman and her advocacy of anarchist principles, Parsons exposed the tensions between democratic, egalitarian claims made by U.S. officials and their efforts to restrict definitions of the nation and state by barring those who advocated anti-capitalist political beliefs and construing these anarchist and socialist beliefs as a foreign, ascriptive trait.

The concluding chapter of this dissertation summarizes the key insights into the process of defining and redefining the U.S. nation and state at the turn of the 20th century provided by the four case studies concerning racial mixture. In particular, it emphasizes how multiple, seemingly inconsistent and contradictory political perspectives and discourses contributed to the creation of a sociopolitical system in which U.S. citizenship, national membership and statehood were firmly linked to the institutions of white supremacy and private property. It demonstrates that contestations about how to define nation and state stemmed not from conflicts between universalistic and particularistic principles but rather from conflicts between the desire for territorial expansion and the commitment to the preservation of white supremacy. Finally, it suggests how this study of the changing properties of Americanism might contribute to broader comparative understandings of the processes of defining nation and state in self-declared multiethnic democracies.

Chapter 1

Who Is American and Where Is America?

Racial Mixture and Fitness for Self-Government

Introduction

At the turn of the 20th century, many European Americans perceived a distinct threat to their nation and state. Fears of racial mixture preoccupied policymakers, scholars, lawyers, scientists, and members of the press. People proposed new policies and published articles, created laws and conducted experiments – all aimed at protecting their visions of a racially pure nation and state, and preventing racial mixture. But their efforts were largely unsuccessful. People and territories perceived as racially mixed stubbornly challenged the standard, mono-racial categories that organized so much of U.S. political and social life. Policymakers and other officials became so concerned about how to categorize and control racially mixed individuals and territories that they debated these matters at the highest levels of government. Racial mixture seemed to threaten the very boundaries that defined U.S. citizenship, national membership and statehood.

Why did the idea of racial mixture pose such a threat to conventional understandings of the nation and state? How did racially mixed people and territories challenge and

sometimes change the boundaries of nation and state and, thus, the most basic ideas about what it meant to be American and to live in the United States of America?

My argument is twofold. First, the ambiguous status of mixed people and places contrasted sharply with policies and proclamations premised on assumptions of clearly defined racial boundaries. The dissonance and anxiety triggered by this contrast led to debates that challenged the conventional mono-racial categories and the definitions of nation and state to which they contributed. Political and legal cases involving racially mixed people and places became sites of contestation over the boundaries of race, nation and state.

Second, these contestations exposed, in a very explicit way, the coexistence of universalistic, voluntaristic principles that promised equality to all U.S. citizens and ascriptive, racist principles that restricted full national membership to whites.¹ Both sets of principles contributed to discourses across the political spectrum, including the dominant liberal and republican approaches, and played a central role in defining the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state. In addition, the fluctuating definition of fitness for self-government, a key concept used to justify the full inclusion of certain citizens in the U.S. nation and certain lands in the U.S. state, and to rationalize the exclusion of others, incorporated both universalistic and ascriptive aspects.

¹ Ascriptive principles also restricted full national membership on the basis of other criteria such as gender, age, religion and national origin. Race was arguably the dominant ascriptive criterion employed in distinguishing those eligible for full national membership from those excluded from this status. It will constitute the focus of my analysis of challenges posed by racially mixed individuals and territories to conventional definitions of the nation and state.

All citizens of self-declared democratic states enjoy what I call state citizenship. That is, all citizens of these states receive a guarantee of formal equality based on a written set of legal rights and responsibilities. The differential implementation of these rights and responsibilities in everyday practice, however, distinguishes between those groups of citizens that are deemed fit to be self-governing members of the nation and those that are not. In other words, not all citizens are eligible for full membership in the nation. Likewise, not all lands governed by the United States at the turn of the 20th century were considered fit to become self-governing states in the Union.

The nation refers to an idealized (some would say imagined) collectivity whose members share a commitment to political sovereignty linked to a particular territory and are eligible to participate actively and fully in its governing processes (Anderson 1991). Members of modern (and post-modern) nations define themselves in terms of shared political principles and commitment to a particular homeland. They also define themselves, explicitly or implicitly, in terms of specific ascriptive criteria.

The state refers to the set of administrative institutions that govern a specific territory and that maintain dominant control over military, political and other forms of power. The goal of leaders of modern nations and states has been to create nation-states in which the sociopolitical boundaries of the nation matched the territorial boundaries of the state. In other words, they sought to make state territories the exclusive homes of specific, homogenous nations. This project provided the dominant vision for the political organization of the modern world but never achieved practical realization. Part of the

slippage was realized in the form of the nearly universal distinction between the more inclusive category of state citizens and the more exclusive category of members of the nation.

One way to investigate the reasons for the discrepancies between the boundaries of nation and state would be to examine the policies toward and experiences of people who enjoyed state citizenship but not national membership, such as women, African Americans, and American Indians in the United States at the turn of the 20th century. In order to fully understand the definitions of nation and state and the distinctions between them, however, it is important to examine the construction of the ascriptive categories that form the underlying building blocks for these concepts. In the case of the United States, these categories have been based predominantly on race. This study, therefore, focuses on the relationship between the construction of racial categories and definitions of nation and state. Definitions and applications of racial categories did not take place in a void, however. Rather, the construction of racial categories drew on and contributed to the definition of a myriad of other sociopolitical attributes including, just to name a few, gender, marital status, linguistic status, religion, designations of ability and disability and of health and illness, and political party and ideological affiliations.

I examine the relationships among race, nation and state by considering the challenges posed by racially mixed people and territories whose status in the nation and state was highly ambiguous due to their lack of conformity to standard, mono-racial categories. The policies and practices adopted toward racially mixed people and

territories reveal both the processes involved in constructing and reconstructing racial boundaries and their relationship to defining and redefining the nation and the state.

By exposing the constructed character of mono-racial categories and demonstrating the salience of these categories in definitions of citizenship, nationhood, and statehood, mixed people and territories challenged the apparent naturalness of the close, mutually constitutive relationship between universalistic and ascriptive political principles and raised questions about the purpose of this relationship. In particular, the challenges posed by mixed people and territories suggested that rather than representing the development of a democratic form of government in which all citizens enjoyed equal opportunities for full political participation, the combination of universalistic and ascriptive principles in U.S. political discourse functioned to sustain European American dominance, i.e. white supremacy, and to legitimate divisions between those citizens deemed fit for full inclusion in the nation and those considered unfit for such a role on the basis of their race, gender and other ascriptive criteria. In arenas that ranged from the U.S. Congress to the national press and local courts, debates about specific cases involving racial mixture revealed and continually reconstructed the complex and often undemocratic logics of inclusion and exclusion that determined which human bodies were fit for full inclusion in the nation and which bodies of land were fit for full inclusion in the state. Such debates and processes of reconstruction were especially likely to occur when new empirical circumstances challenged long-held political beliefs and assumptions.

The logics of inclusion and exclusion that defined state citizenship, national membership, and statehood were not fixed, consistent or static. Rather, they manifested themselves in flexible, inconsistent policies and practices that changed in response to external, empirical events and trends such as territorial expansion, land tenure changes, war, industrialization and immigration. The period between 1885 and 1905 was a time of tremendous activity in all of these areas and, therefore, provides a particularly suitable focal point for investigation of changing definitions of nation and state.

Individuals of mixed descent and mixed populations in newly conquered U.S. territories and growing, industrial American cities challenged the boundaries that were designed to define and protect a pure, homogenous nation and state in at least two different ways. On one level, people of mixed descent defied standard mono-racial categories through their physical presence. Their mixed bodies belied the notion of naturally separate races and exposed the constructed character of mono-racial categories on which the boundaries of state and nation were based. They offered physical evidence of the unnatural, unscientific characteristics of racial logics that sought to ignore or exclude them in the name of natural law and science. The presence of mixed bodies prompted many European Americans to rethink and redefine the mono-racial categories that structured so much of U.S. political and social life, leading to frequent efforts to strengthen racial boundaries by diverting attention from their empirical ambiguity and making them more scientifically, legally and politically visible.² As at least one scholar has noted, the less boundaries correspond to underlying ways of life, the more tightly

² See Rose 1994, 267-304, on the importance of visible boundaries in the maintenance of property regimes.

they need to be enforced and the more firmly people need to be educated and persuaded to cooperate in their maintenance (Todorov 1993).

On a second level, people of mixed descent contested the dominant definitions of nation and state through their actions, some of which were more overtly political than others. As a result of being conceptualized as physically, genealogically, and, often, socially mixed, people who did not conform to mono-racial categories had to negotiate a precarious path through life in a sociopolitical context in which they occupied a profoundly ambiguous and uncertain status. Their responses to the ambiguous status imposed upon them varied tremendously. While many people of mixed descent sought to hide or downplay their mixed status by identifying with one of the standard mono-racial categories and often internalizing the racism that marred their lives, a few publicly asserted their mixed heritage and made it the focal point of political resistance.³ Others pursued political paths that did not directly address their mixed racial status but that demonstrated an experiential awareness of the construction and implementation of ascriptive divisions that barred many U.S. citizens from full political participation and often prevented the acknowledgement and articulation of alternatives to the dominant sociopolitical institutions and practices. In other words, the ambiguous structural position of people of mixed descent contributed to their pursuit of a wide variety of political actions that challenged conventional understandings of the state and nation from the margins

³ See Rice 1998, on internalized racism among mixed bloods.

People of mixed descent thus posed both material and discursive challenges to the dominant definitions of nation and state. They also posed both structural and individually initiated challenges. In other words, people of mixed descent challenged prevailing definitions of nation and state through both their physical bodies and through the attitudes and political perspectives that they developed and articulated in response to the ways in which their bodies were interpreted and treated by government authorities and other members of the U.S. nation. The challenges and changes provoked by people of mixed descent emerged through their interactions with neighbors, colleagues, family members, friends, legal officials, local authorities, U.S. policymakers and members of the press. These interactions strengthened and weakened, expanded and restricted, and sometimes simply recreated the boundaries that defined the U.S. nation and state.

Theoretical Approach

Before turning to the specific political and legal cases that constitute the core of this study, I will devote the remainder of this chapter to a discussion of the implications of this research for contemporary theoretical discussions concerning citizenship, nationhood, statehood, and race. I will begin by explaining how this study responds and contributes to contemporary literature on citizenship and nationhood. These topics have received attention from a wide array of scholars representing diverse disciplines and approaches. My point of entry to these conversations is through literature on nationalism and legal approaches to state citizenship (see e.g. Greenfeld 1992, Brubaker 1992, and Smith 1997). I premise my study on two important observations made by recent scholars.

First, citizenship and nationhood are best understood as historically constructed and contested social practices and sets of relationships rather than as fixed institutions (see e.g. Anderson 1991, Jenson & Phillips 1996, Jenson 1997; Lister 1997, McClintock 1997, Schuck 1998, Somers 1998, and Turner 1993). Second, citizenship has both inclusive and exclusive dimensions and operates simultaneously on multiple levels, some more universalistic and others particularistic, in many self-declared democracies, including the United States (see e.g. Karst 1989, Kimmerling 2000, Lister 1997, Smith 1997, and Stychin 1998).

Although the focus of this dissertation is the United States, I have approached the issues of citizenship and nationhood with a comparative context very much in mind. In this regard, I have found the works of scholars focusing on other states and regions such as Israel, Canada and a variety of European countries very helpful. These include both comparative investigations of approaches to nationalism and citizenship, and single country studies (see e.g. Brubaker 1992, El-Tayeb 1999, Jenson 1997, Jenson & Phillips 1996, Kemp 2000, Kook 1995 & 1998, Linke 1999, Peled & Shafir 1996, Safran 1997, Schnapper 1996, Silverman 1992, Shafir & Peled 1998, and Todorov 1993).

In addition to the literature on citizenship and nationhood, my conception of the relationship between nation and state has been informed in important ways by the literature on state-society relations. In particular, I have found investigations of the mutually constitutive relationships between state and society and efforts to disaggregate the state by scholars such as Joel Migdal and Baruch Kimmerling important and

insightful starting points for my own analysis of the definitions of and relationships between state and nation (see e.g. Kimmerling & Migdal 1994 and Migdal et al. 1994).

In this study, I will suggest that while the multiple traditions approach to citizenship and nationhood advocated by scholars such as Rogers Smith is an important step toward developing a more sophisticated theoretical framework, it does not go far enough (Smith 1997). In order to gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between universalistic and particularistic aspects of state citizenship and national membership, I will argue that it is important to examine both internal contradictions within particular traditions and similarities among them.

One way to begin this process is by considering the role that definitions of race have played in these ideological discourses. Many scholars have begun to consider the intricate relationships among racism, citizenship and nationhood (e.g. Balibar & Wallerstein 1991, El-Tayeb 1999, Linke 1999, McClintock 1997, Perea, Silverman 1992, Todorov 1993, and Wiewiorka 1992). The emerging fields of critical race studies, critical legal studies, and law and society have also provided immensely valuable insights that can be applied to this undertaking. In particular, a growing body of interdisciplinary scholarship has begun to address the construction and meaning of whiteness in U.S. society and its connections to legal, political and social policies and practices (see e.g. Dominguez 1986, Haney Lopez 1996, Jacobson 2000, Jacobson 1998, Lipsitz 1995, Roediger 1991, Sheridan 1999, Twine 1996, and Warren & Twine 1997). This scholarship helps make visible how assumptions about race have influenced political

traditions in ways that earlier scholars missed or ignored due to the invisibility of whiteness in dominant U.S. discourses.

Racial mixture has also been rendered invisible by dominant voices throughout much of U.S. history in order to hide the constructed character of the racial boundaries. Scholars in various disciplines have begun to recognize that policies and practices focused on racial mixture are crucial sites at which to investigate the construction of race, citizenship and nation in colonial and post-colonial societies (see e.g. Alcoff 1995, Dominguez 1986, El-Tayeb 1999, Gutierrez 1995, Wald 1995, and White 1999).

In different historical and regional contexts, the concept of mixture has been defined according to a variety of ascriptive criteria, including class, religion, language and nationality. In the United States, however, the concept of mixture has been defined almost exclusively in terms of race. Throughout U.S. history, race has been the main category used to divide U.S. residents politically and socially. As Audrey Smedley has noted, "Race is the major mode of social differentiation in American society; it cuts across and takes priority over social class, education, occupation, gender, age, religion, culture (ethnicity), and other differences" (Smedley 1993, 20). The ideological salience of race, legitimated by science, reached its greatest intensity during the latter part of the 19th and the early 20th centuries. Indeed, the power held by the ideology of race in the U.S. was so great that empirical contradictions which might have served to unsettle or

displace a less dominant ideological framework did not significantly lessen its influence although they sometimes prompted new definitions of racial categories.⁴

The rigidity of the categorical boundaries that defined separate races played as important an ideological role as the categorical scheme itself. According to Smedley, the most critical ideological ingredient in the concept of race was “the belief that each exclusive group (race), so differentiated, was created unique and distinct by nature or by God, so that the imputed differences, believed fixed and unalterable, could never be bridged or transcended” (Smedley 1993, 28). Mixture posed a particular threat to the definitions of the U.S. nation and state not only because it threatened the dominant notion of separate races but also because it undermined the concept of strict, natural boundaries that kept those races distinct and pure.

Racial mixture also posed a third kind of challenge to prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation and state through its implication of multiplicity. As the case studies examined in this dissertation reveal, the dominant conceptions of the U.S. nation and state (and, to a less extreme but still significant extent, most other post-19th century nations and states) depended on and privileged singularity. In the minds of many political officials and observers, multiplicity in any form constituted a threat to the nation and state.⁵ This perceived threat stemmed from strict opposition to the notion that one

⁴ “Among the general public, the fundamental belief that races exist is unaffected by contradictions or inconsistencies. We do not discard the basic patterns of thought or question the need for racial classifications when we are faced with great variation and complexity in physical traits and ambiguous realities and uncertainties about the racial identity of an individual or a group” (Smedley 1993, 20).

⁵ Yasemin Soysal has suggested that singularity vs. multiplicity is one of the defining differences between what she calls “national” and “postnational” citizenship (Soysal 2000, 22).

might possess multiple rather than exclusive loyalties or affiliations. In this regard, multiplicity was regarded as a moral as well as political and legal danger. Political officials and observers defined the United States in terms of monotheism, monogamy in the context of marriage and the nuclear family, mono-lingualism, mono-racialism, and so forth. Quite often in the cases that I examine, the threats posed by racial mixture were associated with threats of other forms of multiplicity including paganism and heathenism, plural marriage and bigamy, multilingualism, and bi-nationalism. Thus, the threat of racial mixture also came to represent the larger and more amorphous threat of multiplicity that many European Americans regarded as a danger to the nation and state.

The role that understandings of race have played in contributing to the boundaries of nation and state is both subtle and complex. In order to tease out this important aspect of conventional definitions of citizenship, nationhood and statehood, the second part of my theoretical discussion will focus on multiple interpretations and ascriptive aspects of key concepts such as property and possession that have contributed to the categorization and definition of both people and land. Debates about mixed people and territories exposed and challenged the underlying assumptions that produced particular definitions of the U.S. nation and state, based on these concepts. The critical roles that understandings of possession and property played in U.S. political and legal discourse have been analyzed by a diverse group of scholars whose ideas, some expressed a generation ago and some more recently, have provided very important contributions to my analysis of the similarities among dominant political discourses and the internal contradictions within them (see e.g. Alexander 1997, Collier et al. 1997, Macpherson 1962, Rose 1994, Scott

1977, and Wikse 1977). The analysis of gendered relationships and institutions such as marriage has also provided key insights into the connections among definitions of property, possession, citizenship and nation (see e.g. Brennan and Pateman 1976 and Cott 1995).⁶ A recent and very significant sub-strand of the literature on property and political discourses has sought to untangle the relationships among possession, property and race (see e.g. Dominguez 1986, Harris 1995, Pascoe 1996, Pascoe 1999, Roediger 1999, Saks, and Wald 1995). These relationships, I will argue, have been at the heart of definitions of the U.S. nation and state.

One context in which possession, property and race were inextricably linked was in definitions of fitness for self-government. This variably defined notion, so frequently relied on by U.S. authorities to make determinations of national and state membership, perhaps best expressed the intimacy and interdependence between ascriptive and universalistic approaches to nation and state. The concept of political fitness was also linked in crucial ways to ideas about other forms of fitness, including the physical fitness of human and territorial bodies.

⁶ Marriage played a key role in defining the boundaries of state and nation in other ways as well. For example, at the same time that anti-miscegenation legislation was becoming increasingly widespread in the United States, international marriages between women from the European American elite and members of the European nobility were gaining popularity and were often the subject of front-page headlines in national newspapers. These marriages were designed to combine the wealth contributed by U.S. brides with the refined status provided by noble European grooms who were often less financially prosperous (Montgomery 1989). While the European American elite celebrated these transatlantic unions, U.S. legislators made increasing efforts to clarify and thereby restrict the citizenship status of U.S. women who married foreigners. These efforts culminated in the passage of a 1907 law that stripped American women of their U.S. citizenship if they married aliens (Sapiro 1984, 10).

In the final part of my discussion, I will consider how prevailing ideological perspectives were expressed through their imposition on human, territorial and political bodies. The discourses surrounding bodies and their fitness in the late 19th and early 20th centuries provide compelling evidence of how people were defining the broader concepts of nation and state. A growing group of interdisciplinary scholars recognize the human body as an important site for the investigation of intersections among political and legal discourses concerning nation, race, and gender (see e.g. Chaplin 1997, Comaroff 1995, Faery 1999, Hyde 1997, McNally 2001, Mohanroam 1999 and Turner 1984).

Discussions of how particular political, social and cultural perspectives have influenced interpretations and treatment of human bodies have become a popular, post-modern endeavor in many disciplines. References to human bodies and biological processes as metaphors designed to naturalize and legitimate particular visions of the nation and state in light of pursuits such as territorial expansion have received less attention. I will consider how U.S. policymakers have characterized the nation and state in terms of biological processes and particular types of human bodies in order to legitimate their understandings of those institutions. I will also demonstrate, in the case studies that follow this chapter, how people of mixed descent have challenged these ideological constructions by asserting their rights to an equal status in the nation through reference to the apparently natural features of their own bodies.

Citizenship and Nationhood

The challenges posed by cases involving racial mixture to the conventional boundaries of nation and state suggest new theoretical possibilities for understanding the dynamics of citizenship and nationhood and how these concepts interact with the territorial definition of statehood. In recent decades, scholars have sought to better understand the definitions of citizenship and nationhood in self-declared democratic states. Many studies adopted one of two approaches. Some scholars developed typologies of nationalism or models of citizenship and associated individual states with what they considered to be their dominant types (e.g. Greenfeld 1992 and Smith 1986). One common formulation was to distinguish between civic Western nations, such as the United States or Canada, that were purportedly based on universalistic, contractual principles, and ethnic Eastern nations, such as Germany or Israel, that were described as based on particularistic, ethno-religious principles (e.g. Smith 1986).

Rogers Brubaker, for instance, identified France with *jus soli* nationalism, based on birth within the state and corresponding to a universalistic approach to nationhood. In contrast, he defined German nationalism as *jus sanguinis* nationalism with membership based on blood ties, a model that corresponded to a particularistic approach to nationhood. Although Brubaker acknowledged slight deviations in these versions of nationalism from their ideal types, he paid very little attention to the possibility of multiple or competing types of nationalism within a single state (Brubaker 1992).

Other scholars noted that such broad generalizations do not adequately capture the complex and seemingly contradictory policies and discourses concerning citizenship and nationhood that exist in most democracies. They allowed theoretical space for the coexistence of both universalistic and particularistic approaches to nationhood within a single state. For the most part, these scholars were especially concerned with demonstrating that countries conventionally described in terms of a universalistic approach to nationhood also exhibited a particularistic definition of the nation. Maxim Silverman, for example, pointed out that there is a strong, particularistic strand of French nationalism that coexists with the more celebrated universalistic definition of the nation. He suggested that the issue of North African immigration highlighted what he described as a set of dichotomous impulses within the French political system.

Immigration is not simply the point of intersection of two cultural communities but rather the point of intersection of fundamental aspects of the national/social complex of France today... Immigration can represent both the liberal republic and the threat of the liberal republic, it is the embodiment of France's capacity for assimilation and proof of a break-down in assimilation, it is the embodiment of pluralism and proof of the impossibility of pluralism (Silverman 1992, 14-15).

Rogers Smith also recognized the possibility of coexistence of different approaches to nationhood in a single state and argued that the United States has been guided by multiple, competing definitions of citizenship, with different definitions achieving dominance at various points during the course of the country's history (Smith 1997). Smith based his argument on an analysis of citizenship laws in the United States and concluded that liberal, republican, and ascriptive approaches to citizenship have competed for primacy throughout U.S. history.

Liberal approaches to citizenship emphasize individual rights (property rights are among the most dominant), republican approaches stress the responsibilities involved in membership in a republic such as contributing to the public good, and ascriptive approaches focus on the assignment of political identities based on ascribed characteristics such as race and gender (Smith 1997, 6). In classic works on U.S. politics, the liberal approach has often been associated with the thinking of John Locke, and the republican approach with the perspective of Thomas Jefferson.

Smith made an enormous contribution to the literature on U.S. citizenship through his detailed expose of what he referred to as ascriptive influences on the development of citizenship laws. He critiqued Tocquevillean accounts of U.S. political life that ignored women and people of non-European descent and clearly documented that “the relative egalitarianism that prevailed among white men (at first, moderately propertied white men) was surrounded by an array of fixed, ascriptive hierarchies” (Smith 1997, 17).

After describing this ascriptive realm of U.S. politics, however, Smith immediately contrasted it to the liberal and republican traditions and asserted that these three approaches to defining the U.S. nation were discrete and contradictory.

These [ascriptive] statuses have been generated by ideological and institutional traditions of political identity that steadfastly resist the efforts of Tocquevillean analysts to reduce them to varieties of liberalism or democratic republicanism. In contradiction to liberal democratic dictates, they do not define civic status by consent or by universal rights. Instead, they provide elaborate, principled arguments for giving legal expression to people’s ascribed place in various hereditary, inegalitarian cultural and biological orders, valorized as natural, divinely approved, and just. That is why a multiple traditions approach to American political culture is necessary (Smith 1997, 18).

Smith carefully preserved an autonomous role for his preferred voluntaristic, liberal conception of the nation (even more so than for the republican approach to nationhood) that was untainted by its ascriptive counterpart. In critiques of the work of a diverse range of political theorists including Gunnar Myrdal, Louis Hartz and Carol Pateman, Smith insisted on the autonomy and purity of the liberal tradition despite ample evidence that its distinction from the ascriptive tradition that he described was murky at best (Smith 1997, 23 & 29). He vehemently denied the conclusion reluctantly reached by Myrdal and Hartz that ascriptive influences in U.S. political ideology derived from within the liberal framework. The difficulty that Smith encountered in his effort to preserve a pure, autonomous sphere for liberalism is exemplified in his contorted dismissal of Pateman's arguments regarding Locke.

Pateman provides undeniable evidence that liberal writers endorsed conventional beliefs in natural sexual inequality; but, far from showing that liberalism logically required those beliefs, her evidence suggests that theorists like Locke did not really reconcile their inherited patriarchal beliefs with implications of their more novel, distinctively liberal arguments which they were not prepared to accept. Hence it makes sense to view liberalism and the patriarchal institutions Americans derived from feudalism, and later recast as forms of the "republican motherhood" or "domestic citizenship" that Tocqueville described, as two intertwined but relatively autonomous systems of ideas and practices that contract theorists and many Americans have often inconsistently endorsed (Smith 1997, 29).

It is noteworthy that Smith felt compelled to qualify the autonomy of liberalism in this passage by referring to "two intertwined but *relatively* autonomous systems of ideas and practices" (Smith 1997, 29). After reading this passage, one might also question what beliefs liberalism "logically requires" and what it means that Locke did not "really reconcile" his patriarchal beliefs with contemporary beliefs about gender equality that

have referred to liberalism as one basis for justification. Did Locke's "novel, distinctively liberal arguments" really contradict his "inherited patriarchal beliefs" and other particularistic tendencies when placed in historical context? My contention is that they did not.

Smith's unwillingness to consider the possibility that liberal, republican and ascriptive approaches to citizenship might be far more intertwined and mutually constitutive than he cared to acknowledge is also apparent in his historical analysis, despite his frequent assertions that the three approaches were often "blended" (Smith 1997, 6). In his discussion of debates about territorial expansion at the turn of the 20th century, for example, Smith acknowledged that liberalism, republicanism and racism were combined in the discourses of imperialists and anti-imperialists alike. According to Smith, "All three ideological strands were invoked and blended even by sharply opposed actors" (Smith 1997, 429). Smith contended that "collisions and coalitions" among these strands produced a complex, four-layered hierarchy of citizenship laws but he did not address the possibility of deeper collusions among the strands that might explain why they seemed to appear predominantly in combination, rather than separately, during this particularly tumultuous period in U.S. history (Smith 1997, 429).

Were U.S. approaches to citizenship incoherent "compromises" that derived from "mixes" of conflicting "civic conceptions" as Smith claimed, or did these various civic conceptions enjoy more compatible and fluid relationships that manifested themselves in diverse and effective, though not necessarily consistent or predictable, patterns of control

(Smith 1997, 6)? I will argue that the latter possibility comes closer to describing the ways in which definitions of citizenship and nationhood have developed and functioned throughout U.S. history. Smith's insistence on the autonomy of liberalism appears to have derived less from historical evidence and more from the fact that it served as the basis of his ethical vision of a remedy for the inegalitarian character of U.S. definitions of citizenship. In Smith's view, a purified liberalism formed the promise of the future.

In contrast to Smith's approach, I argue that it is not enough to acknowledge the enormous inequalities that have resulted from a particularistic definition of the nation although that is clearly an important first step. In addition, however, I believe it is necessary to recognize that what Smith describes as an "ascriptive tradition" within U.S. political culture is far more intimately bound up with his cherished liberal tradition, as well as with the republican approach, than he cared to acknowledge.

As one reviewer noted, Smith's analysis demonstrates "little recognition either that constituent elements of ideological traditions often are internally contradictory or that specific elements of different ideologies often converge, overlap, interact, or complement one another" (McCann 1998). Other scholars have observed, "Universalism and particularism, rather than being opposing concepts, are in fact both implicated in the constitution of national identity" (Stychin 1998, 4).

Thus, while Smith made an extremely significant contribution to our understanding of U.S. citizenship and nationhood by critiquing the tendency among many prominent political theorists to privilege and to emphasize universalistic definitions of the nation

while downplaying or ignoring their particularistic counterparts, there is another step that must be taken. This step involves a careful examination of the mutually constitutive relationship between particularistic and universalistic components of multiple definitions of the nation and state.

The debates provoked by the ambiguous status of mixed people and territories provide an appropriate site for launching this project and challenge Smith's approach to explaining the dynamics of citizenship and national membership in several interrelated ways. First, these debates focused not only on laws "crafted by political elites" (although they often involved these laws in important ways) but also on challenges posed by ordinary citizens to policies and practices that did not take their existence into account (Smith 1993, 6). They exposed how citizenship, nationhood and statehood were defined and practiced on the ground, at the local level, in ways that directly affected people's everyday lives. These debates did not focus solely on abstract ideas that circulated in the rarefied halls of federal institutions but addressed practical problems that concerned constituents had raised to the level of national, political discourse.

Second, liberal, republican, and ascriptive strands became inextricably intertwined and impossible to recognize as conceptually distinct approaches in the seemingly inconsistent and muddled attempts of U.S. authorities to resolve the national status of mixed people and territories at the turn of the 20th century. Smith's notion of competing, ideological approaches to citizenship and nationhood suffered from the assumption that each of these approaches was internally consistent and unchanging over time whereas

debates over racial mixture suggested that all ideological approaches contain internal contradictions and change frequently in response to changes in the empirical situations they seek to address. Finally, Smith's focus on defining approaches to citizenship as distinct sets of abstract political principles precluded a more nuanced examination of how the everyday practices and perspectives of various constituencies served to continually reshape the meanings of and relationships between citizenship and national membership.

Debates about racial mixture thus suggest that the definitions of citizenship, national membership and statehood did not derive from compromises among internally consistent and clearly distinguishable, abstract civic conceptions. Rather, diverse groups of actors at both local and national levels contributed to defining and redefining the nation and state through their presence, their everyday practices, and their participation in political discussions that revealed, revised and reinforced logics of inclusion and exclusion that combined universalistic and ascriptive aspects.

The concepts of property and possession played central roles in these logics. Property ownership in the form of land, for example, served as both a prerequisite for national membership, according to the liberal view, and as a marker of one's governing responsibility in the nation, according to the republican perspective. According to both perspectives, the transformation of land into property and its distribution among individual citizens formed key aspects of the process of defining the U.S. nation and state.

Property, Possession and Definitions of Nation and State

Multiple sets of political principles have shaped the definitions of nation and state throughout U.S. history. Interpretations of these approaches have generally focused on the differences among them, emphasizing the breadth and diversity of the U.S. political spectrum. While this type of interpretation is important in demonstrating the range of political positions, it masks two important factors. First, it detracts attention from the internal contradictions inherent in any political discourse and second, it fails to consider the similarities and often silently shared assumptions among discourses.

These omissions are important. The quietly shared assumptions among political discourses mark the tacitly accepted boundaries of political debate and of definitions of nation and state generated by this debate. The internal contradictions within particular political approaches often result from the dissonance between these shared assumptions and other principles. It is in the interest of adherents to any given political approach to distinguish it from oppositional approaches and downplay its internal contradictions. As a result, the shared assumptions among discourses often receive little overt attention, particularly if they jar in disconcerting ways with other aspects of a political platform. When the implicitly shared assumptions do become the focal point of debate, it is most often as the result of an external, empirical challenge and suggests that a shift is taking place in the parameters of political dialogue.

Throughout U.S. history, these shared assumptions have included the significance attached to ascriptive, particularly racial, distinctions that often deviate from the

prevailing egalitarian, democratic rhetoric. In this study, I will focus on the important role that racialized distinctions have played in two dominant U.S. political approaches, liberal individualism and civic republicanism. These approaches by no means exhaust the repertoire of political approaches that have contributed to definitions of the nation and state over the course of the country's history but they are two that have received wide recognition and have often set the main terms of political debate. In order to demonstrate the important role that racial distinctions have played across the full spectrum of political approaches adopted in the U.S., I will also discuss the complex relationship between racism and late 19th century anarchism in the fourth case study that I address in this dissertation

Property has served as one of the most basic, underlying concepts in both liberal individualistic and civic republican approaches to U.S. nationhood and has featured prominently in many other approaches as well. Indeed, the centrality of the idea of property in definitions of the U.S. nation and state is so acute that virtually any political approach must contend with it in order to be viable. Both liberal individualist and civic republican approaches long shared the assumption that the institution of privately owned property was a necessary prerequisite for the establishment of a democratic state and society. They also shared the assumption that the most valuable form of property was land. Finally, implicit in both approaches, though not explicitly stated, was the notion that race itself constituted a type of property and that whiteness was the most valuable version of that form of property (Harris 1995).

In addition to these shared assumptions concerning property, the two approaches had important differences. Within the liberal individualist approach, property functioned as a commodity, a privately owned possession whose value lay in its marketability. Property was an individualistic concept that formed the basic unit of a rational system of exchange in which self-interested, industrious men worked hard to increase its worth. Property increased in value as a function of the labor that its individual owner contributed to it (see e.g. Alexander 1997 and Rose 1994).

Within the civic republican approach, property played a very different role. According to this interpretation, the value of property depended on its ability to serve the public good. It fulfilled this function by serving as a marker of the appropriate status of its owners within the community. Property owners, in this proprietary vision, had a governing role to play within their political communities. It was their responsibility to use their ownership of property in order to serve the public good (see Alexander 1997 and Rose 1994).

The implications of these two different interpretations of property become clearer when considered in the context of land ownership. Several scholars have argued that, in contrast to European nations whose identities were anchored in historical processes and opposition to competing sets of political principles, European Americans envisioned the roots of the U.S. nation in the land that it occupied (see e.g. Jehlin 1986 and Rogin 1975). They conceptualized this land as a vacant continent, which it was their destiny to transform according to particular political visions of what their nation would become.

“Americans alone tied the identity of their entire nation to nature,” asserted Michael Rogin, and “only Americans could locate nature in actual, physically available, virgin land” (Rogin 1975, 76). Myra Jehlen echoed this theme, asserting, “When Americans said ‘America,’ they meant something they took to be fact: that their country, whose foundation defined and identified a previously vacant continent, represented a new and culminating development in world history and thus the fulfillment of progress” (Jehlen 1986, 20).

This vision of the vacant continent rendered the indigenous inhabitants of the land invisible (much like choosing to display a certain type of document on the computer screen renders all other documents invisible) and its adherents often treated them as passive, nonhuman creatures who formed part of the natural landscape rather than as active, present human beings whose existence, claims, history and culture merited any attention or consideration. By failing to conform to European American norms, indigenous American peoples did not receive recognition as human beings. Rather, European Americans treated them as simply part of the wilderness that needed to be tamed. By failing to recognize the very peoplehood of indigenous inhabitants, European Americans were able to claim the vacancy of the North American continent.

European Americans set out to fulfill the destiny of America by conquering, surveying, dividing and cultivating the land, thus turning the continent from a vacant, wasteland into a modern state organized according to the principle of private property. They viewed this process as improving the land by rendering it more productive and,

thus, saw themselves as furthering civilization through their actions. Their understanding of what it meant to be American was inextricably bound up with this on-going effort to divide and privatize the land according to capitalist precepts. These included both liberal individualist and civic republican understandings of the role that land ownership played in defining the nation and state.

The liberal individualist approach to defining citizenship and nationhood derives much of its inspiration from the political theories of John Locke. Many early European settlers in North America adopted Lockean attitudes toward ownership of private property, land cultivation and their relationship to human worth and accomplishment and incorporated them into their understanding of what it meant to be American. In *Letters from an American Farmer*, first published in 1782, J. Hector St. Jean de Crevecoeur linked ownership of property in the form of land and farming of that land to the very definition of what it meant to be an American citizen.

The instant I enter on my own land, the bright idea of property, of exclusive right, of independence, exalt my mind. Precious soil, I say to myself, by what singular custom of law is it that thou wast made to constitute the riches of the freeholder? What should we American farmers be without the distinct possession of that soil? It feeds, it clothes us: from it we draw even a great exuberancy, our best meat, our richest drink; the very honey of our bees comes from this privileged spot. No wonder we should thus cherish its possession: no wonder that so many Europeans, who have never been able to say that such portion of land was theirs, cross the Atlantic to realize that happiness! This formerly rude soil has been converted by my father into a pleasant farm, and, in return, it has established all our rights. On it is founded our rank, our freedom, our power, as citizens: our importance, as inhabitants of such a district (Crevecoeur 1997, 27).

The association between freedom and property ownership was an important component of the liberal individualist approach. In order to function properly within a

democratic, capitalist system, individual citizens had to be free and self-possessed. Although it had its origins in the European understanding that the ability to own land demonstrated freedom from feudal ties, this association developed other connotations within the U.S. context. Within a society based on slavery, the association between property ownership and freedom developed deeply racialized implications that will be considered in greater detail later on.

The concept of possessive individualism was a key feature of the liberal individualist approach. According to C.B. Macpherson who coined this term, two essential ingredients in the development of liberal democracy were “a new belief in the value and rights of the individual” and a focus on possession (Macpherson 1962, 3).

Its possessive quality is found in its conception of the individual as essentially the proprietor of his own person or capacities, owing nothing to society for them. The individual was seen neither as a moral whole nor as part of a larger social whole, but as an owner of himself. The relation of ownership... was read back into the nature of the individual. The individual... is free inasmuch as he is proprietor of his person and capacities (Macpherson 1962, 3).

Macpherson contended that Locke viewed land “as merely a form of capital” (Macpherson 1962, 206). Land did not have intrinsic value apart from its potential conversion into material wealth. Macpherson asserted, “The whole theory of property is a justification of the natural right not only to unequal property but to unlimited individual appropriation” (Macpherson 1962, 221). Locke accomplished this task by making two additional assumptions: “First, that while the labouring class is a necessary part of the nation its members are not in fact full members of the body politic and have no claim to be so; and secondly, that the members of the labouring class do not and cannot live a

fully rational life” (Macpherson 1962, 221-222). According to Macpherson, Locke defined rational conduct as “private appropriation of the land and the materials it yields, and investment of one’s energies in improving them for the greatest conveniences of life one may thereby get for oneself” (Macpherson 1962, 233). For Locke, “The industrious and rational is he who labours and appropriates” (Macpherson 1962, 233).

The Lockean approach to democracy thus valued people who labored to transform land into private property and spurned those who did not. Richard Handler noted, “Individuals who do not lust after accumulation, who do not seek to ‘improve’ or conquer nature, were thought in Locke’s day to be savages or degenerate specimens of the race” (Handler 1991, 65). Indeed, Locke himself referred to the Indians of North America as an example of people who “wasted” land and contrasted them with “industrious” Europeans who “improved” land through “labor” (Locke 1947). Locke’s ideas firmly linked a liberal individualist form of private property ownership to one prominent understanding of what it meant to be an American citizen and member of the nation and suggested a racialized division between the politically fit and the politically unfit on the basis of their attitudes toward land and property.

One practical illustration of this phenomenon was passage of the Dawes Act in 1887 that made both acceptance of the concept of private property as well as a limited form of land ownership and engagement in agriculture prerequisites for citizenship for Native American Indians. It also required prospective citizens to disengage from other forms of attachment to the land. These included indigenous relationships to land that stressed

communal, timeless, and expansive connections such as those described in the following passage:

Ownership of land is communal, resting in the nation as a whole, not in the hands of an individual. All members of the nation have a vested interest in the land. More important... this ownership extends to both past and future generations, who are as much a part of the nation as are members of the present generation. Furthermore, the land belongs not only to people but to all other living things, including plants, animals, and possibly rocks (Cummins and Whiteduck 1998, 6).

One observer contended that from an indigenous perspective, "Land ownership and possession are actually impossible, yet we treat land as if it were just another object, like this desk, something that I can hold and actually possess" (Little Bear 1998, 17). This attitude contrasts markedly with the possessive individualist perspective, which not only takes for granted the possibility and normative value of land possession but also prizes the concept of individual ownership so highly that it becomes a defining component of humanity.

As noted earlier, the possessive individualist conception of property did not monopolize U.S. political discourse. Recent legal scholars have argued that a civic republican, proprietary approach to property, sometimes associated with Thomas Jefferson, has coexisted with the possessive individualist, or "property as commodity" approach throughout U.S. history (Alexander 1997 and Rose 1994). According to this proprietary notion, property exists not for the exclusive benefit of the individual landowner but for the public good. Gregory Alexander noted that the proprietary approach to property assumed that "the core purpose of property is not to satisfy

individual preferences or to increase wealth but to fulfill some prior normative vision of how society and the polity that governs it should be structured” (Alexander 1997, 2).

The role played by this civic republican conception of property in U.S. history can be seen in Michael Rogin’s contention that the real commodity value of U.S. land emerged through speculation practices rather than through labor, as Lockean theory would lead one to expect. According to Rogin, “Land derived its value from the hope of future settlement; this dream, this speculation that land would rise in value, gave land its commodity importance” (Rogin 1975, 80). This “hope of future settlement” undoubtedly included a republican vision of the particular type of settlement that would be most valuable, both in moral and monetary terms. Speculators envisioned racially exclusive, white settlements based on European American principles of sociopolitical order and private property ownership. In this sense, the possessive individualist and proprietary notions of property worked together to produce a system in which indigenous relationships to the land were destroyed and replaced with concepts that divided the land, dissolved tribal affiliations, and strengthened the definition of a racially exclusive, European American public whose good the land was intended to serve.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the proprietary understanding of property was supported by the influence of principles of refinement and civilization that also focused on normative visions of a sociopolitical order that differed from liberal, individualist principles. The strong social emphasis on refinement and civilization reflected definitions of an ideal social order that had been imported from Europe and adapted to a

capitalist and expansionist U.S. context in which they served to justify European American dominance and encourage middle-class consumption. As the conventional social and racial hierarchy was disrupted by the many changes taking place at the turn of the 20th century, many middle and upper class European Americans seemed to turn toward aristocratic ideals for support and justification of their continued supremacy in U.S. society. In addition, they associated these ideals with moral progress and linked them to the advance of capitalist civilization (see Bushman 1991 and Bederman 1995, 11). The discourse of civilization was profoundly gendered as well as racialized (Bederman 1995 and Nelson 1998). According to one scholar, "By invoking the discourse of civilization in a variety of contradictory ways, many Americans found a powerfully effective way to link male dominance to white supremacy" (Bederman 1995, 23).

During this period, many European American citizens and policymakers continued to view individual ownership and cultivation of land as a hallmark of citizenship and national membership, despite the fact that in the context of industrialization, most European American men no longer had to fulfill property requirements in order to vote. Nevertheless, those who did not own property in the form of land, including members of the working class and particularly the unemployed, were often treated as less than full members of the nation.

The concepts of possession and property ownership were thus key aspects of liberal, republican and other political approaches that contributed to defining the nation and state.

Individual possession of land was often viewed as a prerequisite for membership in the nation. The imposition of a land tenure system that involved individual property ownership was a prerequisite for territories to be incorporated into the state. Indigenous people of mixed descent exposed and sometimes challenged these facets of the prevailing definitions of nation and state by contesting policies and practices that linked eligibility for land ownership to racial status and linked property ownership to other political rights and responsibilities.

The importance of possession and property ownership in definitions of the nation and state did not pertain exclusively to land ownership, however. Other forms of property required for membership in the nation were less visible but no less important. The possession of whiteness was an underlying prerequisite for national membership, according to virtually all political perspectives. Racially mixed people and territories revealed and resisted this component of prevailing definitions of nation and state as well but their efforts led to reinforcement of the prerequisite of whiteness rather than to its abandonment.

Property and Race

At the turn of the 20th century, ideas about property were intimately and institutionally connected to race in ways that ensured the perpetuation of white supremacy. Critical race scholars have observed that whiteness itself represented a form of property, a possession that had significant value in the European American nation and state (e.g. Harris 1995). Whiteness functioned as a type of property in both the

possessive individualist and proprietary senses. It served both as a valuable, individual possession that conferred specific benefits and privileges on its owner and as an asset that acted as a sign of its owner's proper role in the sociopolitical order. Those people who possessed whiteness along with their land were generally also those designated as fit to govern.

The distinction that Macpherson identified in Lockean thought between a governing class and a non-governing nor fully rational, yet necessary class of laborers had important implications for the development of definitions of national membership in the United States. There, similar distinctions emerged but they tended to be defined primarily according to race, rather than socioeconomic class. As the boundaries of state citizenship expanded in the U.S. at the turn of the 20th century, the boundaries of national membership became more strictly limited according to racial and gender distinctions that restricted full national membership and political participation to European American men. Citizens who did not fit into this racialized and gendered category theoretically received equal treatment by the U.S. government but they did not have equal opportunities to participate actively in the governing process. In other words, they were considered U.S. citizens but not full members of the U.S. nation.

This proprietary notion of property was not necessarily any more inclusive than the possessive individualist approach. On the contrary, it often served to reinforce the racially exclusive and gendered definition of the nation promoted by liberal individualism. Gregory Alexander has acknowledged, for example, that while the

republican vision of property in the U.S. distinguished itself from its European precedents in some ways, it still contained many hierarchical aspects.

Republican property had its own hierarchy. Married women were legally incapacitated as autonomous property owners. Enslaved African-Americans were nonowners in most respects. White males stood at the top of the property-owning hierarchy, and it was they to whom republican ideology looked to create and perpetuate the proper social order and the proper polity (Alexander 1997, 5).

The value of whiteness as a form of property in both the possessive individualist and proprietary senses depended on its exclusivity. Firm boundaries were necessary to define whiteness and protect its purity and, thereby, its value as a form of property. Cheryl Harris has noted, "'White' was defined and constructed in ways that increased its value by reinforcing its exclusivity" (Harris 1995, 283).

The boundaries of race were shifting at the turn of the 20th century. Earlier, the institution of slavery and the continental frontier had provided more visible racial boundaries. The division between the enslaved and the enslavers corresponded roughly to the division between black and white. The territorial distinction between the states and Indian country divided white citizens from foreign Indians. As the 19th century drew to an end, however, these divisions ceased to exist and the definitions of racial boundaries became more abstract, scientific, and rationalized.

Carol Rose has noted the important persuasive function performed by the visibility of boundaries that define property (Rose 1994). As the more empirically visible institutional and territorial boundaries and practices that once divided racial groups disappeared, policymakers, scholars and others sought new ways to clarify the

distinctions among the races and, thus, to protect the value of whiteness. Racial mixture posed a serious threat to these ongoing attempts to fortify racial boundaries. As Zygmunt Bauman has noted, "The horror of mixing reflects the obsession with separating" (Bauman 1991, 14).

At the same time, whiteness did not have a single, fixed meaning. Rather, whiteness gained its meaning through precisely the sorts of contestations analyzed in this study. This flexibility in its definition enabled policymakers, legal professionals and other European Americans to continually adjust the meaning of whiteness to best serve their interests and to make contextually based decisions about the best means to preserve whiteness and white supremacy (see e.g. Haney Lopez 1996 and Sheridan 1999). According to Ian Haney Lopez, whiteness "refers to an unstable category which gains its meaning only through social relations and that encompasses a profoundly diverse set of persons" (Haney Lopez 1996, xiv).

Various legal and institutional policies and practices continued to reinforce the mutually constitutive relationships among property, land ownership and white supremacy. Most of these included a gendered aspect as well. Peggy Pascoe has observed, for example, "The crucial power of miscegenation law was the role it played in connecting white supremacy to the transmission of property" (Pascoe 1999, 219). One way these laws (which were becoming more widespread during the period in question) exercised their power was by allowing relatives to bring cases to court after the death of one partner in a mixed marriage with the intention of taking "property or inheritances

away from the surviving partner, almost always an African American or American Indian woman” (Pascoe 1999, 217). Thus, according to Pascoe, “Miscegenation law kept property within racial boundaries by invalidating marriages between white men and women of color” (Pascoe 1999, 219).

While miscegenation law outlawed interracial unions and, thus, protected both whiteness and white dominance of other forms of property, suffrage restrictions proposed for Hawaii would have used property ownership as a means of preserving white dominance in government. By restricting suffrage to property owners, the vast majority of whom were white, legislators sought to circumvent constitutional provisions that prohibited racial discrimination in voting. This process, too, was gendered. Women in the new U.S. territory of Hawaii, for instance, were prohibited from voting (as they were in the continental U.S.) because of fears among U.S. legislators that allowing women to vote would only increase the indigenous Hawaiian majority whose political power they sought to restrict (Grimshaw 2000, 571). Indigenous Hawaiian women who had previously enjoyed considerable political influence lost their voting rights when Hawaii became a U.S. Territory and did not regain them until 1920 (Grimshaw 2000, 571).

These examples suggest at least two ways in which the relationship between property rights and white supremacy was mutually constitutive. The intimate bond between these pillars of the European American sociopolitical order also represented the intimate connection between liberal individualist and republican, proprietary principles connected to property rights, on one hand, and ascriptive, racist principles that underlay white

supremacy, on the other. Racial mixture threatened these connections and destabilized not only the doctrine of white supremacy but also the conventional property rights upon which the U.S. nation and state were based.

One way in which U.S. policymakers sought to shore up these property rights and the doctrine of white supremacy to which they were connected was through frequent reference to the vague but critical concept of fitness for self-government. The concept of fitness for self-government encompassed a wide range of meanings but functioned primarily as a convenient means of endorsing a variety of ascriptive criteria for membership in the nation and state under the umbrella of terminology that conveyed the illusion of a voluntaristic, universalistic approach to political membership. Declaring someone or some territory fit or unfit for self-government was a convenient means of stating whether or not they deserved national or state membership without necessarily articulating the ascriptive criteria used to make this judgment. Determinations of fitness for self-government were based on whether an individual or territory possessed certain ascriptive criteria and were used to determine eligibility for property ownership.

Fitness for Self-Government

Fluctuating definitions of the crucial concept of fitness for self-government revealed that egalitarian and ascriptive principles formed interdependent and mutually constitutive aspects of liberal individualist and civic republican approaches to citizenship, national membership, and statehood. The concept of fitness for self-government stood at the heart of conventional definitions of the boundaries of nation and state. Decisions about what

people and territories were fit for full inclusion in the nation and state played an important role in delineating sociopolitical and territorial boundaries. The concept of fitness for self-government took on a variety of interrelated but different meanings, depending on who was employing it and in what context. On a superficial but practical level, fitness for self-government could simply mean the ability to participate in a democratic government in which each citizen eligible for suffrage had the right to participate in the election of his political leaders (not hers, because women did not yet have voting rights).

The deeper meanings of fitness for self-government, however, went far beyond suffrage. In a liberal individualist sense, for instance, self-government meant not only that one had an individual say in the government of one's country but also that one governed oneself. In other words, the concept of self-government was closely related to the concept of possessive individualism (Macpherson 1962). One prerequisite for self-government, according to this view, was acceptance of the idea that the basic unit of identity was the individual as opposed to the community or larger society. Self-government entailed viewing the individual self as a possession over which one exercised direct control. Self-government, thus, referred not only to a set of political rights granted to citizens of a democracy but to a very particular vision of the individual citizen's relationship to himself and to his political and social environment (the male identity of the citizen once again being taken for granted). It referred to acceptance of and adherence to the ideology of liberal individualism.

A civic republican interpretation, on the other hand, might place more emphasis on the notion of fitness. According to this perspective, fitness for self-government depended on whether one fit into European American social and political norms. It stressed one's moral, behavioral, and political conformity to both the formal laws and informal rules and expectations that governed the nation. Decisions about one's fitness for self-government, in this sense, were closely related to judgments about whether one was civilized enough to be considered an appropriate candidate for full national membership.

In theory, policymakers and other observers often treated movement toward fitness for self-government as an evolutionary process in which most individuals or territories could progress if they followed the correct path. In many cases, however, analysts predicted that this evolution would take hundreds or thousands of years, rendering it a moot point in terms of consideration of contemporary political arrangements. They also declared some individuals and territories permanently unassimilable and totally unfit for self-government regardless of their efforts in that direction. These distinctions were made almost entirely upon the basis of an individual's racial identity or the racial composition of the population that inhabited a particular territory. Indeed, Matthew Frye Jacobson has described the concept of fitness for self-government as "a racial attribute whose outer property was whiteness" (Jacobson 1998, 42).

This tension between voluntaristic and ascriptive definitions of fitness for self-government illustrates the internally contradictory nature of liberal individualist and civic republican approaches to defining nationhood and statehood. Both approaches contained

universalistic and ascriptive principles that coexisted unproblematically so long as adherents to both liberal individualism and civic republicanism recognized and shared the ascriptive assumptions that underlay them. These points of intersection marked the outer boundaries of conventional definitions of nation and state. As long as they remained uncontested, these ascriptive assumptions provided the basis for the perpetuation of a flexible and effective system of political domination that adhered firmly to certain, often unspoken, parameters while allowing for significant political diversity within those parameters. These nearly unanimously recognized, ascriptive parameters made possible the tolerance of significant ambiguity within them. As soon as these parameters were challenged, however, that ambiguity became far less tolerable. The challenges posed by cases involving racial mixture provide evidence of this process.

In addition to being closely linked to racial categories, the definitions of fitness for self-government shared important associations with understandings of other forms of fitness, including physical fitness. Ideas about ideal human bodies as well as metaphors of human bodies used to legitimate particular political visions reveal these connections. Definitions of nation and state reflected and contributed to popular views of the human body.

Bodies, Health and Movement

Metaphors concerning the human body and biological processes represented one of the most vivid ways in which people expressed their political visions at the turn of the 20th century. These metaphors were widely deployed in political debates, the press, and

scientific texts to naturalize and legitimate particular visions of the ideal sociopolitical order. These rhetorical portrayals of bodies and biology functioned on several different levels. The image of the human body could alternatively represent an individual human being, the body of the nation, or a body of land. The effectiveness of these metaphors suggests the residue of earlier worldviews in which the relationships among human beings, their sociopolitical relationships and the land on which they lived was much more intimate and literal.

References to human bodies also included frequent references to institutionalized and legitimate family relationships. During debates about the future government of Hawaii, for example, one representative expressed his support for Hawaii's annexation to the United States by asserting, "This fair daughter of the Republic came into the family circle, the legitimate offspring and growth of Christian, American influences, containing an educated citizenship, most of whom had some experience in the exercise of the elective franchise" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3722).

One of the most common ways in which metaphors of the body and biological processes operated to promote particular political perspectives was through discourses of illness and health. In an anti-anarchist editorial, for example, the *Washington Post* described the political ideology as a disease, claiming, "There is no chance of anarchical infection among the native masses of the people" (*Washington Post*, May 9, 1886, 3). According to the paper, "The germs of anarchy develop only in the veins of ignorance" (*Washington Post*, May 9, 1886, 3).

In Congressional debates about the future government of Hawaii, one Senator worried that incorporation of Hawaii into the United States would be accompanied by unrestricted immigration and insisted, "The citizenship of this country shall not be contaminated and debased by the unrestricted importation of this class of people" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2389 (Allen)). A House Representative asked rhetorically what the United States had gained through Hawaiian annexation and then replied, "Let me enumerate some of the most tangible things: 45,000 Japanese contract laborers; 25,000 Chinese; 15,000 Portuguese; 1,000 South Sea Islanders; 1200 lepers; the bubonic plague (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3748)." Another Senator, however, spoke of a much healthier and more American Hawaii, asserting, "For 60 years, the spirit of the American Constitution, the foundation of our traditions and our history, has existed in Hawaii, permeating the body politic, enlightening the legislation of the islands" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3704).

References that linked images of the body, illness and health to the promotion of specific visions of citizenship and nationhood were not limited to overtly political discourse. Advertisers, for example, promoted medicinal remedies designed to restore "blood purity" by linking physical health to good citizenship. An ad for Hood's Sarsaparilla claimed:

Patriotism is always commendable, but in every breast there should be not only the desire to be a good citizen, but to be strong, able bodied and well fitted for the battle of life. To do this, pure blood is absolutely necessary, and Hood's Sarsaparilla is the one specific which cleanses the blood thoroughly (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, March 14, 1900).

Brian Turner has observed the etymological parallels between the words regimen and regime, noting that in the age of rising professionalism, medical regimens or diets designed to prevent illness and promote the health of the human body became analogous to political practices intended to promote the health of the nation. These regimented practices consisted of standardized, rationalized procedures designed to create and maintain both bodily and political control (Turner 1984, 178; see also Bledstein 1976).

For example, as we have observed in the context of the U.S. nation and state, a set of abstract, rationalized, individualistic principles aimed to divide bodies of people and land into well-defined, self-contained categories or plots that could be easily labeled and managed from a distance, according to a larger organizational scheme (see Scott 1998 for a broader discussion of this phenomenon). In his description of the attitude that European missionaries adopted toward the bodies of indigenous people in Southern Africa, John Comaroff details an approach that was similar in many ways to that implemented by U.S. authorities and other European Americans toward indigenous Americans.

Both men (and even more so) women were thought to lack physical closure, a vital characteristic of 'civilized' individuals. Their clothing was 'scanty,' their skins 'greasy,' their habits 'dirty,' and their sexuality uncontrolled. What is more, these Africans appeared to share magical ideas about the interconnections among persons, spirits, and things. As a result, the Nonconformists expended great effort on clothing them in European garb, all the better to close off their bodies from one another; on disseminating 'modern' notions of hygiene, all the better to control their bodily extrusions; on seducing them away from local healers, all the better to have them put aside their charms and superstitions; on speaking to them of the Godly virtues of monogamy, all the better to contain their sexuality; on having them live in nuclear families, all the better to confine females to hearth and home and put men to honest work in the field (Comaroff 1995, 205-206).

The European American approach to individualizing, rationalizing, and settling both human and territorial bodies in order to create a similarly ordered national body followed the model outlined by Comaroff closely. This approach to conceptualizing the world rejected fluidity in favor of rigidity and created threatening ambiguity by marginalizing anyone or anyplace that did not fit neatly within the organizational scheme (see e.g. Bauman 1991 and Scott 1998).

On one hand, scholars have pointed out that the colonialist European American approach was a racialized scheme that associated whiteness with mobility and blackness with immobility. According to Radhika Mohanram, for example,

First, whiteness had the ability to move; second, the ability to move results in the unmarking of the body. In contrast, blackness is signified through a marking and is always static and immobilizing (Mohanram 1999, 4).

On the other hand, the European American approach favored settlement over movement and literal, scientifically proven purity over mixture. The preference given to rational, linear, progressive forms of movement was evident in contemporary discourses that celebrated energy and industry when directed toward productive, capitalist activities, including land cultivation and labor, but expressed fears of uncontrolled, unproductive, turbulent movements that might lead to chaos, disorder, and possibly even revolution.

These fears of turbulence were directly related to fears of threats to the principle of private property that organized and underlay the European American way of life. Historically, English property owners in the 16th and 17th centuries became fearful when enclosure policies led to large migrations of unemployed peasants displaced from their

land. They saw these movements of landless peasants as a threat to the social and political order.

English propertied classes saw these people, often called 'vagabonds,' as a threat to their sense of proper social order. Their communities had long been structured in hierarchies of what some saw as clear and seemingly unambiguous statuses. Men of substance and civility were men who owned property and thus were also men who had power, or at least could wield some influence in the governance of the society. But a man without property was essentially a social nonentity, unable to undertake civil responsibilities and with no basis for exercising civil rights (Smedley 1993, 51).

Turbulence could refer to any form of movement that transgressed the boundaries of the standard, property-based sociopolitical order. Thus, nomadic, indigenous peoples who did not adopt European American patterns of settlement, immigrants whose racial identities and political ideas did not conform to European American norms, and tramps, unemployed laborers who moved from place to place in search of work, all constituted turbulent, and, therefore, threatening populations that might upset the order of the body politic.

Alcohol consumption became vilified because it had the ability to cause turbulent behavior and loss of self-control (or self-possession). The temperance and prohibition movements exercised strong political power. Groups considered unfit for self-government on the basis of their racial or socio-economic status also became stigmatized on the basis of their alcohol consumption, though whether their consumption of alcohol was in fact any greater than that of other groups is difficult to ascertain (see e.g. Decarie).

Within this context, racial mixture represented a threat to both the boundaries and the boundary construction and maintenance practices that constituted and preserved

particular definitions of the U.S. nation and state. These definitions did not consist simply of stable, standard attributes. Rather, the definitions of nation and state were themselves a process. In one sense, the participants in this process accepted the instability of definitions of their nation and state and the human role in creating them, in that they perceived both nation and state as expanding and evolving toward a higher level of civilization. On the other hand, they tried to legitimate the boundaries of their nation and state by depicting them as natural and eternal. In this sense, they viewed the definition of their nation and state as fixed and timeless. Racial mixture threatened the categorical definitions of nation and state based on rigid, racial divisions and undermined the processes of boundary construction and maintenance, leading to ever more frantic and fervent efforts to sustain and strengthen those boundaries.

Methodology

My investigation of the multi-faceted definitions of nation and state at the turn of the 20th century could not have been conducted using conventional political science methods, which tend to assume definitions of key concepts or variables rather than to question them. Quantitative methods that rely on the statistical analysis of large data sets or quasi-experimental designs may be suitable for addressing a specific and limited range of questions concerning contemporary political processes but they are incapable of addressing many of the most critical issues of our times. The complex and changing meanings of state citizenship, national membership, statehood and race are among those issues.

In order to conduct this study, I have, therefore, turned to alternative, qualitative methodologies. Although still employed only rarely within political science, these methods are rapidly gaining popularity and legitimacy in other social science and theoretically oriented humanities disciplines. Specifically, my investigation of the challenges posed by debates about racial mixture to prevailing definitions of nation and state relies on a sociological microanalysis of four political and legal cases involving racially mixed people and territories at the turn of the 20th century. My premise is that a detailed analysis of the various perspectives expressed in particular debates about racial mixture will reveal patterns of assumptions, beliefs, arguments and political strategies that reflect much broader social and political trends. The particular perspectives represented in these debates both reflect and contribute to wider sociopolitical discourses. In other words, my assumption in adopting this approach is that political and legal processes and the larger social contexts in which they take place are mutually constitutive (see McCann 1994, 6-8).

I argue that definitions of nation and state emerge and change through a multiplicity of dialogues, debates and decisions that take place among diverse constituents at a variety of local as well as national levels. By analyzing these four particular cases and the debates and discourses surrounding them, I have uncovered micro-processes through which the relationships among race, nation and state are defined on a much broader institutional level.

In order to conduct this investigation, I examined the patterns and particularities that emerged from a wide array of data. These included Congressional and other government documents; legal briefs and transcripts; newspaper, magazine and journal articles; letters, reports, transcripts of speeches and personal as well as public writings by participants in these cases. These documents represented the perspectives of racially mixed people launching specific challenges to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state and the responses of U.S. legal officials, policymakers, press members, local witnesses and other observers. In reading these documents, I focused on how contributors to debates about racial mixture constructed particular definitions of racial categories within specific contexts and linked these, explicitly or implicitly, to understandings of nation and state.

I concentrated both on discrepancies and inconsistencies that existed in individual accounts and similar themes that emerged across voices and cases. To the extent possible, I tried to take note of which potentially salient issues were *not* discussed as well as which ones were discussed based on my assumption that silences and gaps are often as important and revealing in unearthing the construction of key concepts as that which is spoken. The purpose of this analysis was to gain a better understanding of how interactions among the diverse perspectives of the participants involved in these cases served to continually redefine the relationship among racial, state and national boundaries.

Chapter 2

Mixed Blood Americans:

The Jane Waldron and Barney Traversee Allotment Disputes

Introduction

In 1890, Jane Waldron, a woman of American Indian and European descent, asserted that as an Indian head of family, she was eligible for a full allotment of land that had previously formed part of the Great Sioux Reservation. Her claim initiated a local, legal dispute that quickly escalated into a national debate about land allotment policies conducted at the highest levels of the U.S. government. Black Tomahawk, a full blood Indian, contested Waldron's claim. His lawyer argued that Waldron was not an Indian but a white woman, on the basis of the common law of paternal descent. In the initial decision in the case, the Secretary of the Interior accepted the latter position and ruled that Waldron was not an Indian and, therefore, ineligible for an allotment. This decision met with immediate opposition because it implied that thousands of indigenous people of American Indian and European descent, commonly referred to as mixed bloods, who had signed Indian treaties with the U.S. government were not Indians either and, therefore, may not have been eligible signatories. The Secretary's decision thus had the potential to threaten the validity of many treaties concluded with Indian tribes, and it never achieved the status of legal precedent (see U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 53rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1894).

In 1905, fifteen years after the dispute began, a district court judge in South Dakota reversed the initial decision and asserted that Waldron, the descendant of one of the oldest mixed blood Sioux families, was an Indian and, therefore, was eligible for the contested allotment (Anderson 1991, 73). According to this judge, the decision about whether someone is Indian should be based not on common law but on "the laws or usages of the tribe" (*Waldron v. United States et al.* 1905, 413).

The lengthy, complex dispute concerning Waldron's allotment claim and other contested mixed blood allotment cases at the turn of the 20th century shed important light on the ways in which people of so-called mixed descent challenged the boundaries of both the state and nation. As responses to the first decision in the Waldron case made clear, U.S. government authorities had a clear stake in defining mixed bloods as Indians in order to protect the expanded territorial boundaries of the U.S. state that resulted from treaties with Indian tribes. In this sense, the very definition of the U.S. state depended on a system of racial classification that clearly distinguished Indians from whites and applied different policies to members of these groups on the basis of their racial status. In order to maintain this system, U.S. officials adopted new approaches to defining race in order to respond to challenges such as those posed by the mixed bloods. The concern with distinguishing people on the basis of race in order to preserve the territorial integrity of an expanded state occurred at the same time that many American Indians were becoming U.S. citizens and, therefore, ostensibly enjoyed the same rights and responsibilities as their white counterparts.

In addition to challenging the territorial boundaries of the state, the mixed bloods posed a unique and thorny challenge to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation. State citizenship is an overtly inclusive concept, based on the premise that all citizens will be governed equally. The nation is a more exclusive concept, defined by formal and informal, legal and extralegal practices that delineate a select group of people who are eligible and practically able to govern as well as to be governed. Members of the nation have opportunities to become full and active participants in creating and carrying out the laws and policies that affect their lives that other citizens do not share. At the turn of the 20th century, ascriptive distinctions such as those based on race played a central role in defining the boundaries of the U.S. nation despite their apparent contradiction of the democratic principles to which members of the nation purported to adhere.

As a result of their failure to conform to the standard racial categories of Indian or white, mixed bloods exposed and highlighted racial distinctions and their role in policy decisions that affected and reflected one's eligibility for membership in the nation. Debates about policy toward mixed bloods revealed that despite official proclamations of equality for all citizens, U.S. authorities routinely distinguished between and discriminated against U.S. citizens on the basis of race. In addition to exposing the racialized underpinnings of U.S. definitions of the nation, the mixed bloods also challenged the very logic and purported naturalness of those underpinnings. Their presence explicitly demonstrated the constructed character of the racial categories that formed the basis of many U.S. policies and practices.

What role did understandings of race play in defining the boundaries of both the U.S. nation and state at the turn of the 19th century? How did mixed bloods challenge those boundaries, and thus, the very definitions of the nation and state? How did state authorities respond to these challenges? And finally, why did the construction and maintenance of racial divisions form such a crucial foundation for the policies developed and implemented by officials of a state that claimed to be a democracy in which all citizens were treated equally?

My contention is that through their contestation of laws and policies that ignored their existence, indigenous people of mixed descent demonstrated that constructed racial categories played a central role in defining the territorial boundaries of the state and the sociopolitical boundaries of the nation. They also challenged and destabilized these boundaries by exposing the inconsistencies and contingencies that characterized definitions of standard racial categories. These challenges forced state authorities to respond by reinterpreting conventional racial categories and the national and state boundaries that they helped define.

Mixed bloods thus provoked changes in the relationships among race, state and nation at the turn of the 20th century. Unfortunately, however, these changes did not necessarily benefit them. In responding to the challenges posed by mixed bloods and other new non-white citizens, state authorities did not deconstruct the racial categories that limited access to full membership in the nation to whites. Rather, they sought ways to make the definitions of race more internally consistent and systematic despite obvious empirical problems associated with this project. Whereas definitions of race had previously been

multiple, fluid, and flexible, they became increasingly focused around a single, rigid standard known as blood quantum. The little room for mixed identities that had once existed vanished quickly as a single drop of non-white blood became sufficient to render one a member of the relevant non-white racial category. The legacy of this new, pseudo-scientific construction of race and its inability to acknowledge people of mixed descent continues to haunt the U.S. political landscape in the 21st century.

Through an analysis of debates about two contested mixed blood allotments, I will trace the changing relationship among definitions of race, nation, and state in the United States at the turn of the 20th century. These definitions hinged on dynamics of inclusion and exclusion that were sophisticated and multidimensional but also frequently inconsistent and unintentional. The dynamics did not operate on a simple, dichotomous continuum anchored by full inclusion at one end and full exclusion at the other. Rather, inclusive and exclusive policies and practices took place simultaneously and interacted to produce complex but often unpredicted methods of dominance as well as infrequent, unexpected challenges to that dominance (see e.g. Kemp 2000). Disputes concerning mixed blood allotment claims in the late 19th century provided one of those challenges.

Full Blood vs. Mixed Blood Challenges to the Nation

In the late 19th century, as the territorial boundaries of the United States expanded to the Pacific Ocean and the frontier era drew to a close, the national status of American Indians became increasingly difficult for U.S. policymakers to define. They could no longer designate the Indians as a foreign population that resided beyond and outside of U.S. borders. Nevertheless, U.S. policymakers continued to treat the Indians as separate

from and inferior to European Americans. They sought ways to control and manage the Indian population within the boundaries of the U.S. state and the context of U.S. society without compromising the interests or dominance of European Americans.

These efforts led to two simultaneous trends. On one level, U.S. policymakers adopted a more inclusive approach toward American Indians. Beginning with the Dawes Act of 1887, they gradually began to grant formal U.S. citizenship to American Indians provided that the Indians abided by a strict set of prerequisites geared toward assimilation. On another level, however, U.S. policymakers excluded these new American Indian citizens from membership in the U.S. nation by demarcating and solidifying the racial boundary that separated Indians from whites. This newly reinforced racial boundary marked a semi-formal division between those citizens whom policymakers deemed unfit to govern themselves (e.g. non-whites) and those whom they deemed eligible to govern as well as to be governed (e.g. whites).¹ Thus, rather than indicating an inclusive, universalistic approach to membership in the U.S. nation, granting citizenship to American Indians actually formed part of a larger project to control the Indian population through partial assimilation while simultaneously limiting their membership in the nation through the institution of a strict racial hierarchy.

While full blood American Indians at the turn of the 20th century held an ambiguous national status, people of both Indian and European descent lived in even greater limbo. Mixed blood Indians challenged conventional definitions of the U.S. nation on several

¹ See e.g. Macpherson 1962 for analysis of similar class-based distinctions. While race was not the only criterion used to distinguish between the fit and the unfit, it was one of the most important criteria used. Other ascriptive criteria, such as gender, were also employed to make this distinction.

levels. First, mixed bloods did not conform to Indian, white, or any other standard mono-racial category. This racial liminality provoked consternation among U.S. officials who based many of their policies on a set of strict mono-racial categories that did not include mixed bloods, and it led to heated debates and legal battles over whether mixed bloods were Indians or whites. More importantly, the racial liminality of the mixed bloods within the United States highlighted the centrality of race as a basic criterion for determining who was eligible for membership in the U.S. nation, a nation whose representatives presented it as a democracy in which all citizens were treated equally. The centrality of debates about whether mixed bloods were Indians or whites in land allotment and other key policy decisions indicated the importance of racial status in determining whether someone ought to be granted the full rights and responsibilities associated with membership in the U.S. nation.

Second, the mixed bloods posed a different kind of challenge to the nation from that posed by members of populations that corresponded to standard non-white mono-racial categories, such as Indians or blacks. Indians, for example, gradually received U.S. citizenship, but state authorities continued to assigned them to a recognized non-white mono-racial category and, thus, to deem them ineligible for national membership. These full blood Indians challenged the definition of the nation and its false promise of inclusion on the basis of their obvious exclusion from it. Indeed, representatives of the U.S. nation had historically defined its members in contrast to characteristics they associated with American Indians: citizens vs. foreigners, allies vs. enemies, civilized vs. primitive, whites vs. Indians, etc. This dichotomous representation of peoplehood

suggests that the definition of the U.S. nation and the U.S. conception of American Indians were inextricably intertwined and dependent on each other. At the same time that policymakers excluded full blood Indians from membership in the nation, they required their continued, marginalized presence in the polity as the foil against which they defined members of the nation.

In the Jane Waldron case, for example, H.E. Dewey, the lawyer representing Black Tomahawk, stated that Waldron's "status, far from being an Indian, is the reverse" (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59 1894, 3-4). The implication of this assertion was that Indian and white not only represented separate and different racial categories but opposing racial concepts. To be an Indian meant the opposite of what it meant to be a white, U.S. citizen. Policymakers, lawyers, and other European Americans relied on this opposition of racial and national concepts to define the qualities and characteristics that they used to justify both the inclusion and privilege of white European-American citizens and the exclusion and subordination of Indians and other non-whites regardless of their citizenship status.

The mixed bloods, on the other hand, challenged the logic and the conceptual foundation on which this racist, dualistic understanding of the nation was based. By their very presence, they exposed the constructed character of the racial assumptions that underlay the definition of the nation and its social boundaries. They revealed the unnatural, artificial quality of the racial categories that were presented by U.S. policymakers and their associates as both natural and scientific. For this reason among others, the mixed bloods posed both a greater challenge and a greater danger to

conventional definitions of the nation than their full blood counterparts.² And, in this sense, they were also subject to greater exclusion than full blood American Indians.

Full blood American Indians did not have access to membership in the nation. Mixed bloods, according to the prevailing logic of the times, did not have the right to exist. Not only did they not belong to the U.S. nation. They did not belong to any recognized racial or national category whatsoever. Thus, they were ineligible for even the limited resources and benefits that their full blood counterparts received from the U.S. government on the basis of their Indian status. There was less and less room within the increasingly racialized worldview that permeated the late 19th century U.S. to accommodate the mixed bloods as mixed bloods, even in a subordinate status. According to the logic that defined the nation, people of mixed descent were not only anathema but incomprehensible. Scientists supported this logic by declaring that such hybrids were often sterile (Bieder 1980, 20 & 23). Crossing racial boundaries was prohibited both by law and biology, according to the politicians and scientists who erected and maintained those boundaries. Such crossings and their products were simply unnatural.

Historical Background

The mixed blood allotment cases that I examine in this chapter took place in the context of dramatic changes in the relationship between the U.S. government and the Sioux Indians. In 1868, representatives of the U.S. government enacted the Fort Laramie Treaty with the Sioux Indians, creating the Great Sioux Reservation. The treaty

² Another threat mixed bloods posed to conventional, racialized definitions of the nation was their frequent ability to pass as whites.

prohibited unauthorized entry to the reservation by whites and required three fourths of the adult Indian population to sign any subsequent treaties that might lead to further dispossession (Johnston 1948, 3).³

Within a few years, however, railroads were constructed through the reservation and a gold rush took place in the Black Hills, drawing crowds of eager whites to the region. U.S. government authorities tried to persuade the Sioux to cede more of their land in the Black Hills area but the Indians refused (Greene 1970, 41). Military battles ensued and after the death of General Custer, another agreement was signed in 1877, involving further cessions of Sioux land. This agreement went forward despite the fact that it did not obtain the requisite three-fourths of adult male signatures. Government officials viewed the Sioux reservation as an impediment to U.S. progress and civilization (Johnston 1948, 5). In the early 1880s, various Commissions tried to obtain further land cessions from the Sioux but the tactics they employed were so onerous even to U.S. government officials that Congress refused to validate them (Greene 1970, 42).

The Dawes Act of 1887 marked the beginning of a new policy toward the American Indians in which individual Indians could receive private allotments of land intended for agricultural purposes and U.S. citizenship in exchange for their commitment to adopt a white, European American way of life. The land was to be held in trust by the U.S. government for 25 years before the Indian owners would receive the rights to sell or lease it. The Burke Act of 1906 stipulated that those Indians who received allotments under the Dawes Act would not receive official U.S. citizenship until the end of the trust period.

³ At the same time, the Fort Laramie treaty recognized white men who lived with Teton Sioux wives and

In justifying the Dawes Act several years after its passage, Senator Dawes spoke of the potential dangers that “homeless” Indians posed to the U.S. nation.

It came to be apparent that very soon we should not only have the savage Indian upon our hands, but he would be houseless and homeless also, two hundred and fifty thousand, at least, savage Indians, with no resting or abiding place in the land. A white man, idle and with no home, is a tramp. Two hundred and fifty thousand savage Indian tramps roaming over this land was an appalling consideration with the government, threatening the peace of the nation, the sanctity of the home, the sacredness of human life, with the utter impossibility to control them. This was the exigency out of which sprung the present policy of the nation in the management of the Indian (Quoted in Johnston 1948, 10).

In the wake of the Dawes Act, Congress passed a Sioux bill in 1888 that provided for its implementation on the Sioux Reservation. The bill proposed to divide the great reservation into six smaller reservations and to cede the remaining land, over nine million acres, to the U.S. government, which would then open it for individual allotment and homesteading (Johnston 1948, 26). A Commission traveled to the reservation to obtain the signatures required for passage of the bill but met with stiff resistance from the Sioux and failed to achieve its goal. A second Commission obtained the signatures through the use of intense pressure, persuasion and unfulfilled promises (Greene 1970). As a result, the U.S. president proclaimed a revised Sioux Act in 1890. Among those who ultimately signed this agreement were 107 white and mixed blood Sioux males (Anderson 1991, 74). As a result of these various treaties and negotiations, the Sioux lost over 80% of their original land within three decades (Hoover 1989, 59). The dispossession of the Sioux and dissolution of the Great Sioux Reservation was closely linked to the admission of North and South Dakota as states in the Union in 1889 (see e.g. Miller 1990).

families as full tribal members (Anderson 1991, 73).

In the course of this process, however, many Sioux became utterly disillusioned by the long sequence of broken promises by the U.S. government. Rumors spread of an Indian messiah who would resurrect Sioux ancestors and cause the whites to flee in chaos. In preparation for the coming of this messiah, many Indians began performing the Ghost Dance and ignored warnings by U.S. officials to stop the ritual. The President ordered the Secretary of War to put down any threat of rebellion and the military actions that followed involved the massacre of hundreds of Indians, including men, women and children, at Wounded Knee. The War Department listed the battle at Wounded Knee as the last of the Indian wars (Johnston 1948, 85).

The dispute between Jane Waldron and Black Tomahawk concerned an allotment on land that was ceded by the Great Sioux Reservation according to the Sioux Act of 1890. Jane Waldron's strategy in trying to secure the allotment rested in part on reminding government officials of the important role that the white men in her family who had married Indian women and other mixed bloods had played in garnering Indian approval for the Act (Anderson 1991, 71).

Head of Family Debate

Official responses to Jane Waldron's claim to be an Indian head of family provide one example of the ways in which U.S. policies and practices construed mixed bloods and the mixed marriages that produced them as unnatural. Sioux Indians received allotments of land based on their personal status. A head of family received an allotment of 320 acres. Single people, orphans, and children under the age of 18 received smaller plots. Jane Waldron claimed her allotment as the head of her family and garnered

support for her claim from many U.S. government officials, including Indian Inspector James H. Cisney who stated that he could not “see how the head of a family question can enter into this case” (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 38).

Of course, a white man cannot acquire any benefits of an Indian in any way from the Government on his own account. And I can't see how or why an Indian woman, because she is married to a white man, can be deprived of any benefits she may be entitled to as an Indian. She must certainly be considered the head of the family so far as her Indian rights are concerned (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 38).

In contrast, H.E. Dewey, attorney for Black Tomahawk, and others argued that as a married woman, Waldron could not possibly claim to be a head of family. Dewey asserted that women were never heads of family according to the Civil Code of Dakota or according to Indian custom (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 36). Despite other reports of tribal practices that favored maternal descent, U.S. officials granted allotment privileges based on the assumption that men represented the heads of family.

The only exceptions to this practice occurred in the case of widows and, rarely, in cases of intermarriage such as the Waldron case. Since the law did not officially recognize interracial marriages, an Indian woman married to a white man had to present herself as though she were a widow in order to be recognized as a female head of family. In other words, she had to treat her husband as legally dead. Waldron's attorney did just that, arguing, “We may safely conclude, that the claimant having borne children as the fruit of such marriage, and residing with them, is as much the head of a family under the law and in contemplation of the act of March 2, 1889, as if her husband had deceased

before she made her selection of the allotment in controversy” (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 31).

Thus, in order to claim her rights as an Indian, an Indian woman married to a white man had to assume a conventionally male gender role. This unusual requirement for claiming Indian property rights demonstrates one way in which the U.S. legal system treated Waldron, a woman of mixed descent married to a white man, as both unnatural and foreign. Not only did representatives of that system struggle over whether they could define Waldron as fully Indian or fully white based on her American Indian and European heritage, but they exacerbated her liminal status by treating her as neither fully a woman nor fully a man due to her marriage to a white, European American man.

The legal refusal to recognize intermarriages extended to their descendants. In some cases, for example, orphans were defined as those without a living Indian parent for the purposes of Indian property rights (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 125). In this sense, the law treated white parents as if they were dead. These examples indicate the extreme lengths to which the law went in order to preserve the racial divisions that underlay U.S. society.

Jane Waldron offered a very different interpretation of her claim to be the head of her family. Rather than referring to the legal complexities that forced her to assume such a status, she challenged conventional norms by basing her claim on the principle and practice of gender equality. At the same time, however, she supported and invited acceptance of her assertion that her husband treated her as an equal partner by acquiescing to prevailing, racist attitudes toward Indians. Waldron attempted to prove

her husband's progressive attitudes toward women by highlighting them through reference to the racist narratives that framed late 19th century U.S. society.

I claim to be the head of my family as much as my husband. I am as much the head as he, as we manage our business together. We are equal partners in all things. He is one man that does not put women down lower than him, even if she be but an Indian (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 87).⁴

The debate about whether Waldron was eligible to assume the status of a head of family in order to claim her property rights as an Indian demonstrates the lack of recognition and legitimacy accorded to intermarriages between Indian women and white men and to the children of mixed descent these marriages produced. It demonstrates how high the symbolic and political stakes were for those who dared to cross racial boundaries through marriage or descent. Not only was one's racial identity questioned, but also living relatives became legally dead and women turned into legal men. The implications of interracial crossings extended far beyond constructions of race. The debate about Waldron's status as a head of family thus highlights the crucial role that construction and maintenance of racial boundaries played in U.S. policies that helped define the state and the nation at the turn of the 20th century.

⁴ Waldron also expressed conformity to the dominant racial social system in a note that she sent to the Secretary of the Interior with a series of affidavits that she had collected to protest her treatment by Indian Inspector James H. Cisney at a local hearing he held to review the case. Waldron wrote, "In order that the Secretary may know as fully as possible how this inspector conducted this hearing, I have caused the affidavits of every white person who was present during the hearing to be taken except Dewey and the farmer, who was present only a short time the second day" (U.S. Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894). By explicitly mentioning that she requested affidavits only from whites, Waldron revealed her assumption that the Secretary of the Interior would feel these were the most reliable and perhaps the only trustworthy witnesses to the hearing. Waldron presented the case in this manner despite the fact that she herself identified as an Indian.

Political Competence

Two distinct, but frequently interwoven, approaches to conceptualizing the relationship between race and eligibility for national membership developed in the United States during the 19th century. The concept of political competence, closely related to the idea of fitness for self-government, emerged as one approach to reconciling the uneasy disjunction between the liberal democratic promise of equality for all citizens and the empirical reality of significant inequalities between groups of citizens. The definition of political competence derived from a constellation of norms, practices and traits that characterized an ideal member of the nation, someone who was deemed capable of governing as well as of being governed. By emphasizing competence or fitness, the concept suggested that the criteria used to determine eligibility for full and active participation in the nation were based on acquired skills and abilities rather than on ascriptive characteristics. In practice, however, policymakers routinely judged an individual's fitness for political participation or competence to assume the responsibilities associated with national membership based on his or her racial status and other ascriptive qualities.

For example, a series of proposed Congressional bills inspired by the Waldron case attempted to legislate what proportion of white blood was necessary to render one competent enough to sell one's land without supervision by the government. Successive versions of the bill decreased the amount of Indian blood that legislators proposed to allow in order for one to sell one's allotment without governmental approval. An early iteration of the bill suggested, "All mixed-blood Indians who are one-half or less than

one-half of Indian blood who have heretofore taken allotments of land in severalty...shall, upon taking said allotment of land, receive from the United States a patent for the same in fee, and they shall thereupon have the right to sell, convey, or encumber said lands, and the same shall be subject to taxation the same as the lands of any other citizen of the United States" (S. 1628, 1896).

By April 28, 1896, however, the proposal had changed. Now only "mixed-blood Indians who are one-quarter or less than one-quarter of Indian blood" would automatically receive a patent for their allotments and have the right to sell them. The proposed bill then stipulated that "any mixed-blood Indian of more than one-quarter Indian blood may apply to the judge of the district court of the district in which he resides for permission to sell and convey or encumber his allotment of land; and if the judge of said court shall decide that said mixed-blood Indian is capable of managing his own affairs, said judge shall enter a decree adjudging said mixed-blood Indian capable of managing his own affairs, and thereupon and thereafter said mixed-blood Indian shall have the right to sell and encumber the whole or any part of his allotment and give a fee simple title therefore" (S. 2966, 1896).

In their recommendation for passage of one of the later versions of this bill, the Committee on Indian Affairs reported, "It is believed by our committee that a mixed-blood Indian having one-quarter or less Indian blood in his veins is quite as competent to perform the duties of citizenship intelligently as many white men, and that the percentage of incompetency among the Indian tribes of one-quarter or less is not greater than that to be found among a like number of white persons" (Senate Report No. 969, 1896).

The Committee on Indian Affairs thus implied that one's racial status was a reliable indicator of one's political competence. Whiteness implied competency, whereas Indianness implied incompetency. References to competency, such as these, served as a thin disguise for excluding people from membership in the nation on the basis of their racial status.

John Stuart Mill, one of the premier Anglo political theorists of the late 19th century, paid considerable attention to defining who was fit for full political participation. Although he presented his definitions in the context of a developmental model, they were nevertheless highly racialized. Indeed, Mill overtly suggested that North American Indians, among other racially defined groups, were "unfit for liberty," due to their "indolence," "carelessness," and "cowardice" (Mill 1958, 149). According to Mill, "Nothing but foreign force would induce a tribe of North American Indians to submit to the restraints of a regular and civilized government" (Mill 1958, 148).

The notion of race that underlay Mill's discussion of political fitness shared certain core assumptions with the monogenist understanding of race favored by many scientists in the early 19th century. The monogenists viewed all humans as members of one species that originated from a single pair. Inspired by Christian theology as well as by their scientific beliefs, adherents of this school of thought argued that mixed bloods had the potential to assimilate and become civilized by adopting a European American way of life (Bieder 1980, 17-30).

This expansive, semi-fluid understanding of race and its relationship to political fitness or competence underlay many of the discussions about and decisions made in

contested allotment cases involving mixed blood Indians in the late 19th century.

Education, fluency in English, proper etiquette (i.e. the ability to comport oneself as a lady or gentleman), social class, and ownership of private property all figured into judgements about political competence and assumptions about racial status.

Policymakers and many other European Americans associated possession of these qualities with civilization, moral authority, and whiteness whereas they associated their lack with primitiveness, immorality, and Indianness or other forms of non-whiteness (see e.g. Gordon 1999).

Deserving Indians and Political Competence in the Jane Waldron Case

The lawyers for both Jane Waldron and Black Tomahawk made associations among political competence, moral authority, and race that were challenged by the circumstances of the Waldron case. Robert Christy, Waldron's attorney, had the challenging task of proving that Waldron was an Indian and, therefore, eligible for allotment rights in a society in which most rights and privileges were reserved for white European Americans. Dewey, on the other hand, faced the difficulty of proving that Waldron was a white woman and, therefore, ineligible for an allotment, despite her documented Indian ancestry.⁵

The association of allotment rights with Indian status provided an unusual twist to a case that took place in a society where whites enjoyed clear dominance and privilege with

⁵ Although race was the central issue discussed in the legal proceedings, sources indicate that the deeper reason for Black Tomahawk's objection to Waldron's allotment claim was her identity as a member of the Santee Sioux as opposed to the Teton Sioux whose lands were at the center of the dispute. The Teton Two Kettle Band had adopted Waldron's family but many Teton did not recognize this adoption and strongly objected to Santee Sioux receiving allotments on their land (Anderson 1991: 80).

very few exceptions. Referring to this anomaly, Waldron commented, "I presume if we had been aware that we were going to have everything taken away from us the minute we began to be white, we would not have striven so hard to be anybody" (quoted in Anderson 1991, 79).

Undoubtedly aware of this context and of the fact that many European Americans might feel uncomfortable extending Indians even the few rights to which they were legally entitled, Christy attempted to demonstrate that Waldron was not only an Indian but a deserving Indian. He did not seem to feel that simply proving her racial status, as an Indian, was sufficient to demonstrate her eligibility for an allotment. Rather, he apparently felt that he also had to prove that she was morally worthy of obtaining an allotment. The assumption underlying Christy's argument was that Indianness was generally associated with moral inferiority whereas moral worthiness was implicit in whiteness. Christy, therefore, took it upon himself to demonstrate that Waldron was an unusually deserving Indian based on her moral virtues and adoption of European American values.

Many of the attributes and activities Christy mentioned in order to prove that Waldron was morally deserving, such as education, cultivation, and usefulness, were the same as those included in contemporary definitions of political competence. Christy emphasized Waldron's role in civilizing fellow Indians and her own assimilation into a European American-dominated society. According to Christy,

Every consideration of right and justice supports the claim of Mrs. Waldron. She is an educated and cultivated woman, deservedly possessing the esteem and confidence of the best citizens of the State of South Dakota. Her entire life has been spent

usefully amongst the Indians of the Sioux Nation, and she deserves well of the Republic. It is true she is of the "mixed-blood," but this does not, as we have shown, lessen her claims upon the Government, nor render her ineligible to select an allotment under the treaties with her kinsmen and the laws passed to carry them into effect. The "mixed-bloods" have been faithful to the United States in peace and war, and have, by their example, encouraged the hostile Indians to seek a higher civilization and cultivate the arts of peace (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 33).

Christy seemed to contend that Waldron ought to be granted the allotment *not* primarily because of her national and racial status as an Indian. Rather, Christy argued that Waldron was eligible for an allotment because she was culturally assimilated to dominant white norms and behavioral codes and assisted in assimilating other Indians, making her a deserving Indian fit to receive an allotment. A number of prominent European American men from the Fort Pierre community supported this view in a note they submitted on Waldron's behalf, attesting to her good character. According to the President of Citizen's Bank, the President of First National Bank, the Postmaster, the Mayor of Fort Pierre, the State's Attorney, and the County Treasurer, "We feel a satisfaction in being able to say that we have known Mrs. Jennie E. Waldron for a number of years: that she is a graduate of one of the best schools in the West; that she paid the expenses of her education by her own industry, and that she is today the peer of any lady in the State" (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 78.)

The attributes that Christy mentioned in his assertions that Waldron was a deserving Indian were almost identical to those described by Dewey in his assertion of Waldron's whiteness and, therefore, her status as a U.S. citizen.

[Waldron] is a white woman in appearance, condition, education, habits of living, and every other distinguishing characteristic of the white race as compared with the Indians. The wife of a citizen, white, of the United States, married to, living with,

and being supported by him – herself a citizen, the daughter of a citizen, who is regularly married to and living with and supporting her mother, while the plaintiff, Black Tomahawk, is a full-blooded Sioux Indian, whose ancestors have possessed this land for generations (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 25).

Whereas Christy referred to Waldron's education and life style as indicators of her status as a deserving Indian, Dewey offered them as proof of Waldron's racial whiteness. Just as Christy associated whiteness with U.S. citizenship, Dewey also assumed that by proving Waldron's status as a U.S. citizen, he was also proving her whiteness and, therefore, her lack of either national or racial status as an Indian. In contrast, Dewey firmly distinguished Black Tomahawk as a "full-blooded Sioux Indian".

Dewey claimed support for Waldron's status as a white woman on the basis of her residence among and association with whites, her attendance and teaching at white schools, and her high socioeconomic status. He asserted, "Mrs. Waldron, whose maiden name was Jennie Van Metre, lived with the whites, and, like the whites, attended their schools, and afterwards taught them – gave music lessons, which she is competent to do – and that her status, far from being an Indian, is the reverse, and her station far above thousands of white women" (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 3-4).

Dewey explicitly acknowledged the European American assumption that Indians categorically occupied a subordinate status to whites, not only racially and nationally, but also in terms of socioeconomic class. Based on this assumption, Dewey further asserted that the relatively high social and economic status Waldron enjoyed in society was an indicator of her whiteness. As further evidence in support of Waldron's whiteness,

Dewey contrasted Waldron's appearance, education, and marriage to a white man with Black Tomahawk's poverty and disability.

Further, she is a white woman and no trace of Indian blood is discernable in her appearance. She is educated and accomplished, is the wife of a white man, if not of wealth at least in circumstances beyond most of his neighbors, while Black Tomahawk, her competitor for this land, is not only a full-blooded Sioux Indian, but poor and a cripple at that (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 5).

In a telling metaphor for the broader condition of Indians in the United States, Dewey sought to inspire sympathy for Tomahawk by acknowledging that U.S. officials accidentally inflicted his paralysis while Tomahawk was working in the service of the U.S. government. On another level, however, the source of Tomahawk's injury became irrelevant as Dewey simply continued to stress his status as a cripple. Tomahawk's disability and his Indianness became fused in the same way that Waldron's competence became a proof of her whiteness. One's presumed competence or incompetence as a human being and one's racial status were interpreted as mutually constitutive, an assumption that had direct implications for eligibility for full membership in the nation.

Blood Quantum

In addition to the monogenists, a second scientific school of thought gained strength toward the end of the 19th century, claiming that members of different races were, in fact, members of different species. According to the polygenists, assimilation from an uncivilized to a civilized race was impossible. Adherents to this perspective claimed that Indians were innately inferior to whites and argued that mixed bloods and other hybrids were likely to be infertile (Bieder 1980, 17-30). The assumptions underlying this notion that races comprised distinct, inflexible categories to which individuals could be assigned

also underlay a second approach to race that emerged in the debates about contested mixed blood allotments.

While Mill's logic of political fitness suggested that an American Indian might eventually be able to achieve competence through assimilation, the concept of race as a form of individual possession posed a threat to this promise (see e.g. Harris 1995 and Pascoe 1999). As we have seen, whiteness was a particularly valuable form of property in the late 19th century United States (Roediger 1999). As the Waldron case demonstrated, it guaranteed those individuals who possessed it unquestioned access to a variety of social, economic, and legal rights and privileges that were denied to those who did not fit into the white category. The notion of race as an individual possession was a cornerstone of the system that existed for the distribution of rights, responsibilities, and resources in U.S. society.

The racialized concept of Indian identity that developed in the context of both liberal possessive individualism and more republican interpretations of property ownership adhered to an individual regardless of his or her way of life. Indianness was a form of possession that existed independently of the everyday practices one engaged in and the relationships one upheld. This categorical definition of Indianness was critical to European Americans who sought a means to preserve the exclusivity of their whiteness at a time when the demographic landscape of the U.S. was changing rapidly and the boundaries of citizenship were expanding. It allowed policymakers to preserve an essentialized definition of the Indian as exotic, primitive, and traditional even as they encouraged the partial assimilation of American Indians through legislation such as the

Dawes Act. U.S. policymakers developed an understanding of a traditional Indian way of life that they construed as static and stuck in the past. They clung to this vision despite the fact that Indians were experiencing tremendous flux in their patterns of living, while European Americans dedicated themselves to increasing and reinforcing restrictions on movement and change in the name of modern, rational order (see e.g. Alcoff 1995).

Mixed bloods exposed both the national obsession with controlling movement across socially and territorially defined borders as well as the impossibility of this project. As prior adherents to nomadic or semi-nomadic ways of life, some mixed bloods resisted efforts to settle and civilize them within the confines of plots designed more according to geometry than geography. Other mixed bloods, who lived according to more European American norms, resented the political obstacles that they often encountered in trying to settle and cultivate their own plots of land due to their ambiguous racial status. Meanwhile, modern state officials became increasingly obsessed with trying to organize both territories and sociopolitical identities into fixed, stable compartments defined by rigid, inflexible boundaries (see e.g. Bauman 1991, Handler, 1991, Mitchell 1988 and Scott 1998).

In response to the challenges to conventional racial boundaries posed by mixed bloods and other people of mixed descent, policymakers demanded increasingly precise, biological definitions of race to bolster their racialized policies. Scientists responded by developing quantitative definitions of race that relied on measures such as blood quantum. The empirical challenges associated with trying to apply those measures in meaningful ways did not easily discourage their efforts. For example, anthropologists

went to extreme lengths in attempting to racially categorize residents of the White Earth Chippewa Reservation, despite their own admission that the techniques they employed, such as measurements of hair type, were incapable of achieving their desired results (Beaulieu 1984). The challenges posed by mixed bloods to standard racial categories thus led not to an abandonment of these categories but rather to renewed efforts to define race scientifically and to strengthen the rigidity of racial boundaries that determined who was eligible for national membership and who was not. By pointing out the inconsistencies and constructed character of conventional understandings of race, mixed bloods actually sparked intensified efforts to preserve and strengthen standard racial categories by redefining them in terms of blood quantum.

Blood Quantum Arguments in Waldron Case

The influence of the growing consensus that blood quantum was the appropriate measure to use in defining race was evident in H.E. Dewey's sometimes contorted efforts to prove that Jane Waldron was a white woman. The circumstances of the case required Dewey to argue that Waldron was a white woman despite her documented Indian ancestry. This position contradicted the conventional and increasingly popular assumption that even a small amount of Indian blood was sufficient to make one Indian.

While occasionally stressing how little Indian blood Waldron had in proportion to white blood, Dewey did not rely on a blood quantum argument to prove Waldron's whiteness. Instead, Dewey referred to the common law of descent in order to declare that Waldron was a white woman and "not an Indian by race or adoption nor by the customs of the nation" (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 3-4).

Under the well-known rule that the children follow the status of the father and not of their mother, unless they are illegitimate, which is not claimed in this case, not only is Mrs. Waldron a white woman, but so is her mother, and so were her father and her mother. So these people, Mrs. Waldron and her ancestors, for three generations, have been white people and not Indians (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 3-4).

Both the Secretary of the Interior and the Attorney General ultimately accepted the argument that Waldron was white based on the common law of descent and used it as the basis for the original decision in the case. Waldron herself responded to assertions that she was a white woman by claiming that she had simply tried to comply with the U.S. government's policy of assimilation. According to Waldron, "I tried to imitate the customs of the white race as fast as I could learn from them, I think that is the aim of the government" (quoted in Anderson 1991, 78).

Dewey himself did not seem completely convinced by his own argument that Waldron was white. In fact, he came close to acknowledging contradictions in his claims about Waldron's racial identity at certain points in the case. In some instances, for example, Dewey asserted that the U.S. government had always treated half-breeds and mixed-bloods as a separate racial category from Indians. He contended that they were neither Indians nor whites.

[D]uring the whole period of Government dealings with the Indians, whenever any half-breed or mixed-blood has received any advantage, benefit or privilege, under any law or treaty, that he has not received it under the name or word "Indian," but always under the name of half-breed or mixed-blood... mixed-bloods are not Indians and are not whites (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 23).

This definition of mixed bloods as a separate racial category appears to contradict Dewey's claim that Waldron was a white woman. Furthermore, in his March 1890 deposition to U.S. Indian Inspector Frank Armstrong, Dewey qualified his assertion of

Waldron's whiteness by stating that she "is a white woman, although having Indian ancestry on the mother's side" (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 49). In addition, while Dewey considered Waldron's mother to be *legally* white based on the principle of paternal descent, he felt it important to emphasize that this was a legal construction of the racial status of a woman whom he described immediately afterward as "of the half blood".

Jennie Van Meter Waldron, is a white woman, although having Indian ancestry on the mother's side, she is the daughter of a white man, regularly married to, and living with the mother of Mrs. Waldron, who is herself, in law, a white woman, although of the half blood, her father and mother being of the half blood, but both the offspring of white fathers, married to Indian mothers. The father of Mrs. Waldron being a white man regularly married to and living with a white woman (in law, although in fact of the half blood), Mrs. Waldron can claim nothing under any law or treaty (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 49).

Dewey's acknowledgement reveals the popular acceptance of a definition of race based on blood quantum that, in this case, contradicted the legal principles of descent that Dewey relied on in his attempt to refute Waldron's claim to an allotment. It also demonstrates that Dewey was conscious of his definition of Waldron as white based on the common law of descent as a *legal* maneuver that seemed to contradict his personal, common sense understanding of racial categories (see Haney Lopez 1996). Dewey seemed to accept the unstated assumption that based on blood quantum, Waldron would unquestionably be classified as a mixed blood Indian.

Mixed Bloods and the Threat of Ambiguity: The Barney Traversee Case

The various arguments presented in the Waldron case demonstrate the lack of legitimacy state laws and authorities accorded to mixed bloods as people of mixed

descent. They also demonstrate how Jane Waldron challenged conventional racial categories and the boundaries of state and nation that they helped to define by initiating a debate about how these categories were defined, whom they included, and whom they excluded. Throughout the debate, Jane Waldron maintained that she was an Indian, a claim that was ultimately upheld in court. It was also a claim that matched the new definition of race according to blood quantum, although this was not the basis upon which Waldron's particular case was decided.

Barney Traversee, on the other hand, took the debate about racial categories and its implications one step further. Like Waldron, Traversee was of both Indian and European descent. In his initial deposition in a contested allotment case, Traversee, like Waldron, claimed to be an Indian. When this position failed to yield the desired result, however, Traversee tried another approach. In a second deposition, Traversee claimed that he was white. By making this switch and articulating two different perspectives on his identity and its implications through his attorney, Traversee illuminated the threat that mixed bloods posed to a political and legal system that depended not only on racial categories but also on firm distinctions between them.

Not only could many indigenous people of mixed descent pass as whites based on their appearance but many of them could pass based on their cultural and behavioral affinities to whites as well. Their obvious similarities to those designated as white and the frequent invisibility of their Indianness made them seem a particular threat to European Americans committed to preserving the fragile boundaries of whiteness and restricting access to national membership.

Barney Traversee's father was of French descent and his mother was of partial European and partial Indian descent. After approval of the Sioux treaty, Traversee claimed an allotment of 320 acres as the head of his family. R.B. Stearns, a European American man, filed a competing claim to Traversee's allotment with the assistance of attorney H.E. Dewey, alleging that Traversee was ineligible for the allotment because he was a white man (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 147). Stearns and Traversee agreed to settle their competing claims by engaging in a compromise, whose details were worked out by attorney H.E. Dewey. Facing the possibility of bankruptcy, Traversee agreed to relinquish his claim to the original allotment and apply instead for a homestead on half of the land in exchange for \$400 that he needed to pay off his debts (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 139-141).

Stearns paid Traversee the \$400 and, accompanied by Dewey, they went to the local land office to file for the relinquishment. Traversee applied for U.S. citizenship and for a homestead on half of the land at the same time that he filed for relinquishment of his allotment. Mr. Bailey, the land registrar, accepted the citizenship and relinquishment applications but denied the homestead applications filed by both Traversee and Stearns without any explanation (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 139-141).

Traversee and Stearns both filed depositions. In Traversee's initial deposition before U.S. Indian Agent George McKean in September 1892, he stated that he had never been a U.S. citizen. His allotment claim implied that he identified as an Indian, and state authorities clearly assumed that Traversee was an Indian based on the information he provided.

Q: State what proportion of Indian blood is in you.

A: You can judge, my father was a white man, and my mother was a half-breed Sioux.

Q: Have you at any time or before any official ever stated or swore that you were not an Indian, but a citizen?

A: Not that I know of or so understood. I never was a citizen and I have never given up my tribal relations. I have voted and have said so, but not that I was a citizen (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 136).

Later in the deposition, Traversee stated that he “wanted to be a citizen because I did not want to be any longer under an agent and a boss farmer that didn’t know as much about farming as I do” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 137).

U.S. Special Agent George McKean recommended that Traversee be allowed to relinquish his allotment and file for a homestead on half of the land. In a letter dated October 1, 1892, R. V. Belt, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, advised the Secretary of the Interior, “It appears from the testimony of Travirsie (sic) that he has never denied under oath his Indian nativity or character; that he has been carried upon proper ‘issue rolls’ for many years, and that he has voted two or three times at certain elections because he was furnished a ballot and requested to do so, and not because he claimed such rights on account of citizenship” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 143).

Further on, Belt remarked that he felt Stearns and Dewey had deliberately misled Traversee regarding the need to apply for U.S. citizenship. Belt explained that all Indians who received allotments became automatically eligible for U.S. citizenship based on the Dawes Act and, therefore, had no need to apply and pay a fee for citizenship. According to Belt, “fraud and deception have been practiced upon the Indian in this matter” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, p. 144).

On the other hand, Belt felt that despite his status as a U.S. citizen, Traversee, as a racial Indian, should not have the same rights with respect to his allotment that a white U.S. citizen would have with a homestead. Belt strongly objected to allowing Traversee to relinquish his allotment for monetary compensation. His justification for this position, while seemingly inspired by good intentions, nevertheless smacked of paternalism.

Indians should not be allowed to take allotments for the purpose of speculation. If so, the object of the Indian allotment laws, intended to secure permanent homes for Indians and their families, will be defeated. If the Indian was ignorant of his rights and was misled in relation to his allotment, as appears to be the case, he should be protected, and no doubt that Mr. Stearns will be able to secure himself otherwise in the payment of the amount advanced to the Indian (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 144).

In contrast to the Waldron case in which all participants seemed to equate U.S. citizenship with whiteness, Belt acknowledged Traversee's national status as a U.S. citizen but advocated restricting his access to national membership on the basis of his presumed racial status as an Indian. John W. Noble, Secretary of the Interior, concurred with Belt's opinion that Traversee be denied relinquishment. He agreed with Belt's reasoning that Indians with allotments, despite their status as U.S. citizens, should not be allowed to sell their land (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 144).

Upon receiving word of the initial decision in the case, Traversee switched tactics. His lawyer filed an appeal asserting that, in contrast to all of his previous claims, Traversee was actually a white man and should never have received an allotment in the first place. In a second deposition, Traversee provided a new version of his identity and life story. Not only did he now claim to be a white man, but he claimed that both of his parents were white as well. According to Eakin, Traversee stated "that he was not at that

time, is not now, never has been, and has never desired to be, a Sioux Indian; that on the contrary he was at the time he signed said Indian allotment application under the circumstances above stated, a white man, a citizen of the United States, and had been since his birth; that he has always been and is now a citizen of the United States” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 149).

Traversee continued his deposition by retelling his story about voting. In this version, he referred to his participation in elections as proof of his U.S. citizenship rather than as simply a meaningless action that he performed at the request of European Americans. In addition, Traversee frequently referred to both his family’s engagement in farming and their residential integration with white people as support for his own claim of whiteness. Throughout this deposition, Traversee seemed to assume that by proving his status as a white man, he was simultaneously proving his U.S. citizenship and vice versa. In this context, he equated whiteness with U.S. citizenship and implied that they were mutually constitutive (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 149).

Traversee explained that he came to be identified as a Sioux Indian when he began residing on the Sioux Reservation in 1881 “with many other white people” while working in the freighting industry nearby (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 150). His parents moved to the reservation a few months later. Traversee’s mother put his name on the rolls of the Cheyenne Indian Agency so that he could receive rations. Traversee claimed that he did not object to receiving these rations because it was his understanding that he was entitled to them through his wife who was of Sioux Indian descent. In the same deposition, however, Traversee claimed that his wife, like his mother, was a white

woman despite her Indian ancestry. His aim in making this claim was apparently to support his own assertion that he was a white man and a member of a white family (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 149).

Traversee reemphasized the key roles of language and education as components of racial identity later in his deposition. Eakin reported “that affiant has a wife and four children; all speak the English language and use the English in all their conversation; that affiant’s children can not talk the Sioux language or dialect; that affiant desires that his children shall continue to attend the public schools and continue to be educated therein” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 151). Traversee thus submitted the fact that his family spoke English as opposed to the Sioux language and their attendance at public schools as evidence of their status as white, U.S. citizens.

At the conclusion of his deposition, Traversee strongly objected to being treated as a ward by the U.S. government given his newly proclaimed status as a U.S. citizen. According to the deposition, the “affiant denies the right of the Government to insist on him being and remaining its ward when he has been, and is now, one of its citizens, and by his votes has helped to make laws and elect the officers who execute and interpret its laws” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 151). Traversee thus challenged the paternalistic, racist attitude of the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs who insisted on protecting Traversee by denying his request to relinquish his allotment on the basis of his racial status as an Indian. He also exposed the dividing line between members of the nation and those excluded from it. Full members participate in making and implementing the laws. Those nominal citizens denied full national membership are simply governed by the laws.

Finally, Traversee asked that his relinquishment be granted “that he may then be a free man, to do and act as other citizens of the United States; that to be a ward of the Government and to be under the directions of the agents and officers is repugnant to him” (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 151). White citizens had full control over both their territorial and racial properties. Indian citizens, by contrast, had to defer to government officials in decisions regarding both the sale of their land and the definition of their racial status.

Traversee’s lawyer, Owen Rowe, echoed Traversee’s demand for independence in his argument for the appeal. Rowe asserted that it was an infringement of Traversee’s rights to treat a “free white man” as an Indian.

The position or condition of a ward may not suggest to the savage or semi-civilized mind any repugnance, for when in that condition he does not feel or understand that his position is an inferior one, but to the person who may have in his veins some tinge of Indian blood, but to all intents and purposes is a free white man, the word ‘ward’ has an entirely different meaning. Such a man naturally enough feels that to be kept in such a condition is to infringe upon his rights.

It would not be strange that Barney Traversee, who, having all his life enjoyed the sacred boon of citizenship and liberty, should now refuse to assume the attitude of an Indian. He stands before you in the dignity of a citizen of the United States and asks to be relieved of all supposition that he is a ward (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 154-55).

According to Rowe’s logic, freedom was a natural right of white men (he did not mention women), but need not be granted to non-white “savages” who were incapable of even recognizing or understanding their subordinate position, much less challenging it. This assumption dovetails with Mill’s notion that members of some racial groups were “unfit for liberty” (Mill 1958). Rowe also associated U.S. citizenship with whiteness although other parties in the case had distinguished between the two. Citizenship for

Rowe, however, was associated not just with a formal, legal status, but with the liberty and dignity that members of the nation enjoy. By presenting his argument in this manner, Rowe demonstrated that although the Secretary of the Interior distinguished between race and citizenship when he asserted that Traversee was both an Indian and a U.S. citizen; he nevertheless continued to judge Traversee's political competence and his eligibility for national membership on the basis of his presumed racial status as an Indian.⁶

Ultimately, the Secretary of the Interior granted Traversee's request for relinquishment on the condition that he dissolve all of his ties to the Sioux Indian tribe. The decision never directly addressed the question of Traversee's racial identity but the fact that it was premised on Traversee's dissolution of tribal ties suggests that the Secretary of the Interior continued to regard him as an Indian.

The Traversee case shows how one man of mixed descent challenged racist U.S. policies and practices by demonstrating how fragile and empirically unsound were the constructions of race that European Americans used to define and restrict access to the U.S. nation. Furthermore, it demonstrates how differently European American lawyers and state authorities interpreted the same individual's political competence and eligibility for national membership, depending on whether they labeled him Indian or white. Finally, the case provides a stark example of how European Americans began to employ

⁶ Other scholars have noted the continuation of this pattern. For example, in his discussion of *Farrell v. United States*, a 1901 United States Federal Circuit Court of Appeals case involving a Sioux Indian, David Wilkins observed, "the court adopted the position that the extension of federal citizenship to an individual Indian did not prevent the government from continuing to treat the Indian as a 'ward' in need of 'protection' from the evils of alcohol" (Wilkins 1997, 121).

race as a means of denying full membership in the nation to those racially defined as Indians despite their status as U.S. citizens.

Redefining Mixed Bloods

As illustrated by the Traversee case, U.S. officials responded to the challenges posed by mixed bloods by attempting to eliminate them in a variety of ways.⁷ Most often, they recategorized people of American Indian and European descent as either Indians or whites. In the majority of cases, mixed bloods became Indians based on the widespread practice of designating anyone with non-European ancestry a member of the non-white racial category. But U.S. officials did not stop at forcing mixed bloods to one side or the other of the conventional racial boundary. They also sought to push them outside of the territorial boundaries that defined both Indian reservations within the U.S. and the U.S. state itself. Thus, many mixed bloods became homeless wanderers within the U.S. while others were deported to Canada.

The growing focus on racial identity as an individual, biological phenomenon made the notion of mixed descent increasingly incomprehensible within U.S. society. Discussions about political competence that may have originated from a perspective closer to that of Mills, who assumed that competence, while not easily achieved, could be attained through assimilation, became entangled in arguments about blood quantum. Competence, in this view, was no longer simply a function of one's behavioral and

⁷ The words "eliminate" and "liminal" share the same etymology. They are derived from "limen," the Latin word for "threshold."

cultural attributes (understood in racialized terms), but of the proportion of white vs. non-white blood that one possessed.

While the notion of mixed blood identity became increasingly incomprehensible in U.S. society, being mixed was not nearly as much of an issue in collective societies where identity was defined in terms of one's relationship to the larger group rather than as an individual possession. In such contexts, what mattered most was one's recognized affiliation with a collective rather than the details of one's individual ancestry or blood quantum. U.S. officials trying to resolve contested allotment cases implicitly acknowledged the inadequacy of their own conceptual approaches to racial and national identity when, failing to identify a clear rationale for declaring mixed bloods either Indian or white, they delegated the decision to Indian tribes. The decision as to who qualified as an Indian, they said, should be made according to the customs of the tribe. This strategy conveniently absolved the officials of the need to answer a question for which they had no adequate conceptual response.

Attorney General Richard Olney, for example, offered the following opinion of how he thought the Waldron case should be resolved:

The persons entitled to such [allotment] rights are the persons who, at the time of the agreement, constituted the Sioux Nation and were lawful members thereof. The question, therefore, whether any particular person is or is not an Indian, within the meaning of this agreement, is to be determined, in my opinion, not by the common law, but by the laws or usages of the tribe. Presumptively a person apparently of mixed blood residing upon a reservation and claiming to be an Indian is, in fact, an Indian (Senate Ex. Doc. No. 59, 1894, 109).

By asserting that the decision as to who constitutes an Indian should be left to the tribe, Olney avoided the difficult task of making the decision himself. He conveniently

sidestepped the European American controversy about how to define race by assigning responsibility for the decision about who was an Indian to the tribes.

The final decision rendered in an appeal of the Waldron case in 1905 was based on similar arguments. Waldron's team contested the U.S. government's issuance of a trust patent for the disputed allotment to Black Tomahawk and its authorization of Waldron's removal from the allotment before the Circuit Court of South Dakota. District Judge Carland reversed the earlier decision in the case and ruled that Waldron was an Indian, supporting this assertion through reference to Indian laws and customs and his belief that common law was inapplicable to Indian tribes (*Waldron v. United States et al*, 1905, 415-416).

Further on in his opinion, however, the district judge provided a different rationale for why mixed bloods should be considered Indians. The judge asserted that the treaty granting allotment rights should not be regarded as an ordinary law of Congress but as a contract between the United States and the Sioux Indian Nation (*Waldron v. United States et al*, 1905, p. 418). Its terms, therefore, including the definition of Indian, had to be interpreted based on how both parties to the treaty understood them. According to Judge Carland:

The Indians were an ignorant and uncivilized race. They knew little or nothing of the terms of the law which they were to accept except what they were told by the commissioners who negotiated its acceptance. A man who can read cannot be heard to say that he understood a contract to mean something different than its terms imply; but a man who cannot read, and signs a contract on the faith of what the other party to the contract tells him, stands in a very different position. The commissioners of the United States stated to the Indians before obtaining their signatures that the law included mixed bloods as well as full bloods. It must be presumed that Congress knew when the law was submitted for acceptance that there were numerous mixed

bloods living on the reservation about to be divided and drawing rations at the different agencies, and it cannot be presumed that these mixed bloods were intended to be deprived of their rights to tribal property by a law that, without their signature, would not have become effective for any purpose. These observations are made for the purpose of showing that the law must be looked at as a contract and construed with reference to the understanding the Indians had of the law at the time they accepted its provisions (*Waldron v. United States et al*, 1905, p. 418).

Here the Indian definition of who was an Indian had nothing to do with Indian custom or law. Rather, Judge Carland asserted that the Indian understanding referred to that which they had been told by U.S. Indian commissioners seeking to further the strategic interests of the state, although this oral definition of the term Indian did not appear in the written treaty. The judge thus attempted to protect the treaty and the benefits it provided to the United States, including territorial expansion, under the guise of a paternalistic protection of Indian signatories to the treaty.

Indeed, immediately following this passage, the judge returned to a discussion of the Sioux Indian understanding of the meaning of the term Indian based on “the usages and customs” of their tribes. He quoted another case that concluded, “The treaty must therefore be construed, not according to the technical meaning of its words to learned lawyers, but in the sense in which they would naturally be understood by the Indians” (*Waldron v. United States et al*, 1905, 419). Thus, while acknowledging the political and pragmatic context of the treaty and its centrality to the case, the judge continued to try to justify his claim that Waldron was an Indian by casting it as simply a reflection of the *natural* way in which Indians defined themselves. This approach diverted attention from both the strategic interests of the U.S. at stake in the case and from the problematic construction of race within European American society.

Conclusion

Analysis of the Waldron and Traversee allotment cases demonstrates how mixed bloods challenged the conventional racial categories that played such a key role in defining the boundaries of the U.S. state and nation at the turn of the 20th century. Not only did state authorities explicitly associate U.S. citizenship and national membership with whiteness. They also included race in their definitions of nation and state in more subtle ways, such as by linking it to ostensibly universalistic concepts like political competence. Racialized assumptions permeated thinking about the sociopolitical and territorial character of the United States on both conscious and subconscious levels. Indeed, the racialization of U.S. law and society was so complete that no one, not even those most disadvantaged by and critical of the system, could speak outside of a racialized discourse. At the most, they could attempt to direct attention to its internal inconsistencies and lack of correspondence to empirical realities as Traversee did when he switched his identity from Indian to white in an attempt to win a legal victory.

While the difficulty of assigning mixed bloods to standard mono-racial categories provoked confusion and, perhaps, aggravation among U.S. officials, lawyers, and others, it did not suggest to them that the task or the classification system should be abandoned. Indeed, if anything, it seemed to have the opposite effect. Definitions of race became even more precise and efforts to measure race increased. As the citizenry of the United States became less white, efforts to preserve and protect whiteness accelerated.

Mixed bloods thus challenged the boundaries of state and nation, but the changes these challenges provoked were not necessarily the ones they anticipated or intended.

Instead, by exposing internal inconsistencies within definitions of racial categories, mixed bloods inspired efforts to develop stricter measures of race. By demonstrating the salient role that race played in defining the boundaries of state and nation, they encouraged state officials to devise more subtle and sophisticated ways to mask reliance on race as a criterion for national membership. Of course, the state officials, lawyers, and others who responded to these challenges were often themselves unaware of the ways in which their particular responses were contributing to changes at a broader sociopolitical level. In an incremental and inconsistent fashion, however, the challenges posed by mixed bloods and the responses to them changed the boundaries of the state and nation. While the boundaries of the state gradually expanded to encompass both more territories and more citizens, the racialized boundaries of the nation became more rigid. Contestations of these boundaries inevitably occurred and led to changes, but the continual redefinition of state and national boundaries often led to more sophisticated methods of limiting access to national membership based on racial distinctions, rather than to greater inclusion of all citizens.

Chapter 3

Metis Americans:

Louis Riel and the Northwest Territories

Introduction

As the continental frontier era drew to a close at the end of the 19th century, U.S. policymakers and local officials began to consider opportunities for other forms of territorial expansion. The discussions and debates about annexing various contiguous and non-contiguous territories reflected a number of conflicting concerns. In particular, they revealed a growing conflict between the desire to acquire additional land and expand the territorial boundaries of the state and the desire to protect white supremacy by restricting the boundaries of the nation. Both the possession of additional territory and the possession of whiteness conferred clear benefits upon their owners, including political and economic power, but it became increasingly difficult to achieve both goals simultaneously.

At the same time that naturalization laws placed severe racial restrictions on who could immigrate to the United States as part of an effort to preserve a racially homogenous, white-dominated nation and state, the territorial expansion of the state raised new questions about the national status of indigenous inhabitants who did not fit into the white category. Why did U.S. officials choose to annex some territories and not

others? How did U.S. policymakers, press members and other citizens seek to reconcile the conflicting goals of territorial expansion, and the preservation of racial purity and white supremacy? What do these efforts reveal about the changing definitions of nation and state? The following two chapters will address these questions.

I will focus my analysis on how concerns about racial mixture contributed to and revealed the conflicting attitudes toward annexation among U.S. policymakers, press members and other European American citizens. I will specifically examine the role of indigenous leaders of mixed descent in debates concerning annexation of two very different territories – the Northwest Territories, which U.S. officials chose not to annex, and Hawaii, which Congress ultimately did annex. What accounted for these different outcomes?

In this chapter, I will consider the challenges that Louis Riel, leader of the Metis people, and his proposal for U.S. annexation of the Northwest Territories posed to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state. The Metis were a people of European (primarily French) and North American Indian descent who lived in the Northwest Territories and Northern Plains, an area that eventually became divided between Canada and the United States. Riel challenged the boundaries of the U.S. nation through his mixed racial status as an indigenous person of French and North American Indian descent and his bi-national status as a Canadian by birth and a U.S. citizen by choice and naturalization. He challenged the boundaries of the state through his proposals for U.S. annexation of the Northwest Territories. U.S. officials responded to Riel's ambiguous racial and national status by refusing to intervene when he was tried

and executed by the Canadian government for treason after launching a militant protest on behalf of Metis rights. They responded to the challenges he posed to the state by declining to pursue annexation of the Northwest Territories.

Why did government authorities treat Riel as a foreigner despite his U.S. citizenship? Why did U.S. officials decline to pursue annexation of the Northwest Territories despite their convenient, contiguous location, adjacent to the western states, and their strong commercial promise? I will argue that two important factors led to these decisions. First, the United States was unwilling to take any actions that might threaten its positive relationships with Canada and England, two friendly Anglo-dominated powers with which the U.S. shared racial and cultural ties. This attitude was part of a larger pattern in which decisions about whether or not to annex particular territories took into account the current political status of the territory in question and whether annexation would be likely to provoke a conflict with a friendly European ally or to stave off domination of the territory by a non-European power. Second, U.S. officials were uncomfortable recognizing a person of mixed descent as a fellow citizen, much less as a political partner who proposed to take a central role in the government of the territory that he wished the U.S. to annex. The ways in which these factors contributed to the U.S. decisions not to protect Louis Riel as a U.S. citizen nor to pursue annexation of the Northwest Territories can best be understood through a closer analysis of the challenges that Louis Riel posed to the U.S. nation and state and the responses to those challenges by U.S. policymakers and members of the press.

I will begin my analysis with a brief discussion of the historical background concerning Louis Riel and the Metis and their confrontations with the United States and Canada, the two European American powers that dominated the North American continent. Riel is best known as the leader of two militant protests against the Canadian government for its failure to protect Metis land rights. His political activities and subsequent execution by the Canadian government are very well known in Canada because of the direct impact they had on the national history of that country. Indeed, according to at least one scholar, Riel “has been given a historical legacy unmatched in Canadian history” (Owram 1986, 207).¹ By contrast, Riel’s name remains virtually unknown in the United States despite the fact that he was a naturalized U.S. citizen, lived in the United States for much of his life, actively participated in U.S. politics, and challenged conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state to the extent that he became the subject of a Congressional investigation after his death.

This chapter will continue with an investigation of why and how Louis Riel challenged prevailing definitions of both the U.S. nation and state and how U.S. authorities and members of the press responded to these challenges. As a Metis and a naturalized U.S. citizen who never attained full membership in the nation, Riel challenged the definition of the U.S. nation in three crucial ways.

First, Riel’s identity as a member of the Metis challenged mono-racial categories that did not recognize people of mixed descent. Riel posed a particular challenge to these

¹ According to Douglas Owram, “No prime minister, no intellectual, no other warrior or statesman has ever had such major effort of scholarship undertaken on his or her behalf” (Owram 1986, 207). In addition to

categories due to his ability to pass as a white person. The fact that his racially mixed status was not visually apparent made Riel appear an even greater threat to many European Americans because it contradicted the notion that racial boundaries are clearly visible and distinct.

Second, Riel's ambiguous national status as a naturalized U.S. citizen and (former) subject of the Imperial Canadian Government who spent his life moving back and forth between the two countries challenged the boundaries of U.S. citizenship. In conjunction with the historically nomadic character of the Metis, this fluid, mobile lifestyle appeared threatening to a nation and state that defined itself in terms of fixed, stable territorial boundaries and settled lifestyles within those boundaries.

Third, Riel's lifelong commitment to and continual reinterpretation of Catholicism as well as his mixture of religion with politics challenged both the unofficial Protestant character of the U.S. nation and the official U.S. commitment to a separation between church and state. His indigenous and French heritage also challenged the Anglo character of the U.S. nation. U.S. responses to Riel's religious and national background demonstrated how diverse sociocultural criteria became incorporated into the construction of ascriptive boundaries and a sociopolitical order based on race (see e.g. Haney Lopez 1996 and Smedley 1993 for discussions of this broader phenomenon).

Riel also challenged the definition of the U.S. state by intermittently submitting proposals to alter its boundaries by expanding it to include the Northwest Territories and,

scholarly treatments of Riel, his life has been the subject of numerous plays, poems, fictional works and at least one opera (Flanagan 1986, 220-221).

thus, provide a national homeland for the Metis within the United States. The first half of this chapter will conclude with a consideration of these challenges to the existing boundaries of the U.S. state and how they both corresponded to and diverged from dominant U.S. understandings of statehood.

The second half of the chapter will consider the ways in which U.S. press members, policymakers and other concerned citizens responded to the challenges posed by Louis Riel and the Metis. The responses of U.S. authorities and members of the press to the challenges posed by Riel were inconsistent and often ambiguous. Generally, however, U.S. reporters and officials treated Riel with sympathy as long as they were able to construct him as a Canadian citizen and as long as he remained on the Canadian side of the border. When Riel asserted his identity as a U.S. citizen or resided in the United States and became directly involved in local politics, U.S. authorities and reporters became much less understanding and tended to ignore or oppose his political efforts.

Unlike other cases where U.S. officials sought to defuse the challenges posed by people of mixed descent through a policy of partial assimilation, U.S. officials treated Riel as a foreigner despite his U.S. citizenship and actively opposed his assimilation into the U.S. nation. These attitudes persisted and culminated in the refusal of the Cleveland administration to intervene in Riel's trial for treason and ultimate execution in Canada, despite Secretary of State Thomas Bayard's stated commitment to protecting the rights not only of U.S. citizens, but also of former U.S. residents living abroad (see e.g. *Harper's Weekly*, April 25, 1885, vol. 29, no. 1479, and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 6, 1885, 250).

Despite the inconsistencies and contradictions in their policies toward Louis Riel, U.S. policymakers and implementers were able to use their dominant positions to smooth over and minimize the conflicts and confusion in their attitudes toward and treatment of him. Likewise, their discursive as well as political and economic power allowed them to successfully portray Riel's policies and practices as contradictory, confused, and even crazy, when they found Riel's politics too threatening.

Riel, meanwhile, did not have the discursive power to gain authority for his own national narrative or to defend the legitimacy and logic of his personal and political struggle to achieve a national Metis homeland. Nevertheless, he did succeed in disrupting and challenging conventional assumptions about the meaning of U.S. citizenship and membership in the nation and about the boundaries of the U.S. state. His challenges revealed both the cozy collaboration among liberal, republican, and ascriptive elements of conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state and the conflict between the U.S. goals of acquiring new territorial possessions and protecting the possession of white supremacy.

Louis Riel, the Metis, and the Annexationist Movement

The Metis people originated in the Great Lakes area during the colonial period and gradually moved west across the North American continent. Descended from French, English, and Scottish fur traders, and Cree and Chippewa women, the Metis slowly formed distinct communities based on common language, religion and customs. In the colonial context of European expansionism in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Metis began to distinguish themselves as an ethnic and national group that incorporated aspects of

both their European and Indian heritages (Peterson and Brown 1986). The Metis of French descent adopted Catholicism and engaged in hunting, often expressing their religious devotion by bringing priests along on buffalo hunts. Metis of Anglo descent became Protestants and tended to pursue a more agricultural way of life (Martel 1986, 233). Among Metis of French descent who constituted the majority of the population, social customs such as music, dance and dress reflected both North American Indian and French influences. The Metis also blended French and Indian languages to create their own language. Many Metis served as guides to European fur traders and as mediators between the Europeans and Indians, thus in some ways facilitating the colonization process (Peterson and Brown 1986).

In the mid-19th century, as the buffalo population in the eastern part of the continent diminished, increasing numbers of Metis began to move west into the northern parts of what are now North Dakota and Montana in pursuit of better hunting grounds. Most of the Metis continued to live in regions on what became the Canadian side of the border but smaller groups of Metis settled within U.S. territories. Parish registers indicate that Metis families were already living in the Montana region in the 1850s (Dusenberry 1986, 122). Many of these people had migrated west from the Pembina area in North Dakota, located close to the Canadian border. By the late 19th century, most of the Metis lived in the Northern Plains region where they combined nomadic hunting of buffalo and settled agricultural pursuits. The increasingly fixed international border separating Canada from the United States divided the historical homeland of the Metis.

In 1869, the Hudson Bay Company, which had controlled the Northwest Territories for two centuries, agreed to sell them to the Imperial Government of Canada for 300,000 pounds. The transaction took place in London. Immediately after its completion, the Canadian authorities appointed a government for the new territory, which they named Manitoba. They also arranged for surveyors to travel to Manitoba in order to divide the land into square plots, the customary form of land division in the United States and most other provinces within the newly founded Dominion of Canada. One of the reasons that the Canadian government decided to hurriedly complete this purchase of the Northwest Territories and assert its control over Manitoba was to prevent the area from being annexed by the United States.

The Northwest annexationist movement was comprised of a diverse group of businessmen, media representatives, and local and national politicians. Most supported annexation by the United States because of the potential economic benefits they might gain for themselves or their local constituents (Warner 1960, 696-700). A relatively small but very vocal group of U.S. supporters provided strong backing for Riel's first protest in the hope of using Riel's movement as a vehicle for annexation. Indeed, at least one historian has suggested that the U.S. annexationists may have actually convinced Riel to engage in military actions he would not have undertaken otherwise (Warner 1960, 701).

General Oscar Malmros, the American consul for the Red River settlement, and his annexationist associates tried to convince Riel and the Metis of the benefits of annexation to the United States through various means, including the publication of a blatantly

annexationist periodical called the *New Nation* (Gluek 1955, 202-203). In an article published in the first issue of the *New Nation*, Malmros attempted to legitimize his plan to annex the Northwest Territories to the United States by arguing that the Northwest was geographically separated from Canada and formed a distinct country not only territorially but also culturally. According to Malmros, “We form a separate colony and people, with distinct habits, and different interests and necessities; we have nothing in common with that country [Canada] or its government” (quoted in Glueck 1955, 204). Furthermore, Malmros asserted that the Northwest’s “historical life is unconnected with that of Canada and all intercourse, social or commercial between the respective communities has been prevented through natural obstacles” (Glueck 1955, 205). Thus, Malmros sought to construct and naturalize a national division between the Northwest Territories and Canada in order to legitimize his own political project in much the same way that the proponents and opponents of Hawaiian annexation would later seek to emphasize either natural connections or natural divisions between Hawaii and the continental U.S. mainland.²

The annexationists sought and received the support of President Ulysses Grant for their goals but the president was unwilling to risk a military confrontation with Great Britain in order to pursue the possibility of annexation. In addition, Canadian

² In a similar statement, Alexander Ramsey asserted in an 1870 resolution to the U.S. Senate that the Metis required U.S. intervention to prevent them from being “cajoled or dragooned into this unnatural union with Canada” (Gluek 1955, 209). Once again, the emphasis on the unnaturalness of the Northwest’s connection to Canada in order to promote U.S. annexationist aspirations illustrates the efforts of U.S. politicians to justify a profoundly political project by portraying it as natural or biologically inevitable. Furthermore, it reveals an interpretation of territory in biological terms that relies for its salience on the assumption that some unions, whether of territory, governments, or people, are natural and, therefore, legitimate, while others are not.

negotiations with Riel in early 1870 made the option of U.S. annexation seem less desirable to him and by March, Riel actually arrested the American vice-consul and confiscated his keys to the *New Nation* headquarters (Gluek 1955, 206). Riel's main priority was clearly the establishment of a national Metis homeland and U.S. annexation of the Northwest Territories was only of interest to him if it seemed likely to further that goal.

Ultimately, Riel accepted the designation of the Northwest Territories as a Canadian province rather than continuing to pursue the U.S. annexation option for the time being. Although Riel tried to revive U.S. interest in annexation later in his career after the Canadian government failed to fulfill many of its promises to the Metis people, the enthusiasm among U.S. politicians for this option had largely waned, particularly since it seemed likely to provoke conflict with Canada and Great Britain. U.S. policymakers were far too concerned with their relationship with the Canadian and British governments to risk their good relations in an effort to gain more territory in the Northwest although interest in a commercial union between Canada and the United States remained strong for several more years, particularly among minority political groups on the Canadian side of the border (Warner 1960).

The Hudson Bay Company's distant and hurried sale of the Northwest Territories completely transformed the political, socioeconomic, cultural, and geographic status of the region. Despite the profound impacts of these changes, neither the Hudson Bay Company, nor the Canadian government, nor anyone else involved in the process discussed them with the inhabitants of the Northwest Territories. The majority of the

inhabitants were Metis, but the residents also included relatively small numbers of North American Indians and European American settlers.

The Dominion's imposition of a government on Manitoba in which its residents had no voice, and the effort by Canadian authorities to redivide the land according to a system that violated and destroyed the Metis way of life, inspired two militant protests by the Metis from the Northwest Territories against the newly founded Canadian Dominion in the late 19th century. Louis Riel played a leading role in both of these protests.

Riel was born in 1844 in the Red River area, the center of Metis settlement. His mother, Julie Riel, became known as one of the first white women to be born in the Northwest Territories. His father, Louis Riel senior, was the descendant of French fur traders and a farmer, miller and community organizer who strongly defended Metis rights. Louis Riel traced his indigenous ancestry to the mother of his paternal grandmother who was Chippewa. All of his other great grandparents were of French descent.

Both of Riel's parents were very devout Catholics and had attempted to pursue religious careers early in their lives but eventually gave them up. Louis himself moved to Montreal in 1858 to study for the priesthood but ultimately abandoned that plan and left Montreal after a broken marriage engagement. Nevertheless, his religious training had a profound influence on Riel's later personal and political pursuits (Flanagan 1983).

After returning to his birthplace of St. Boniface in 1868, Riel became the Secretary of the Metis movement and led the first rebellion against the Canadian purchase of the

Northwest Territories also known as Rupertsland. Riel described the Canadian invasion of Metis territory in terms of its total disregard for existing borders and land use patterns, and its violation of the basic human rights of its inhabitants. In a petition to U.S.

President Ulysses Grant following the 1869 protest, Riel declared:

[The Metis] found their ancient surveys, land marks, boundaries and muniments (sic) of title, set at naught and disregarded, and a Government established over their heads, in the selection of rulers and administration of which, they had no voice; and by this process they found that their homes, their country and their liberties, were held at the mercy of a foreign power and subject to a foreign jurisdiction. Your memorialists seeing the agents of a foreign power swarming into our country, taking possession of it without any authority from the people cutting up our farms to suit their own views and purposes, seeing our people daily insulted, and hearing threats by these foreign officials of extermination, in order to make room for the 'incoming intelligent man,' the Canadian (Riel 1985, Vol. 1-076, 111).

The arrival of government surveyors in the Red River district in 1869 provided the immediate impetus for the first militant Metis protest Riel led against Canadian authorities. As a prerequisite to the consolidation of Metis territory under Canadian control, these surveyors sought to impose a square block system of land division. This method of organizing the land into square plots was designed to transform it into individual, private plots that would be easy to map, manage and control from the perspective of a national bureaucracy focused on gaining control of the land at the macro-level. It did not take into account either features of the local topography or the way of life and needs of the people living there.³ This European American approach to surveying and distributing land disrupted and violated Metis patterns of living, which depended on a very different form of land allocation. According to one historian:

³ For a discussion of the potential dangers of such approaches to land tenure, see Scott, 1998.

Their [Metis] farms had been established along the river fronts in long, narrow strips somewhat similar to the Quebec patterns which they had remembered but also because such locations were best adapted to the nature of the country and the occupations of the settlers – each family thus had equal access to water supply and to the water-way which was their best means of transportation, and they had built their houses in village-like clusters permitting the greatest sociability. This Dennis plan would destroy their basic social organization, upset their transportation, deprive them of water supply for their farming, and also put roads right across their holdings – it might break up their holdings altogether, by creating new farms with different boundaries (Davidson 1955, 28).⁴

U.S. reporters expressed self-righteous outrage at the Canadian destruction of Metis land use patterns despite the fact that the Canadian surveyors had adopted the concept of the square block system from their U.S. counterparts. One article, for example, asserted, “The Canadian Government sent surveyors to the Red River to lay out the country in square blocks of sections and quarter-sections, thus breaking up the frontage system so dearly cherished, severing family ties and old associations – in fact, disrupting the whole hitherto so peaceful community” (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 18, 1885, 138).

In 1869, Louis Riel turned back the government surveyors, successfully prevented Lieutenant Governor McDougall from entering the Red River area and, with his followers, declared a provisional Metis government. In the course of what became

⁴ Wilbur Bryant, a contemporary U.S. observer who was in many ways very sympathetic to Riel, offered a slightly different interpretation, describing the Metis approach to dividing land plots in terms of almost biological, racialized propensities.

The French half-breeds in laying out their lands, had followed the method so familiar to anyone who has been in the Province of Quebec. Each man's piece had been laid out in a long, tongue-like strip, with a narrow frontage, whether upon street or river. The reason for this was two-fold. It was the social nature of the Celt, combined with the gregarious or tribal proclivities of the aborigines, developing in a desire to be near their neighbors. Furthermore the newness of the country required that the settlers be as near together as possible for mutual protection (Bryant 1887, 46).

known as the Red River rebellion, Riel and his followers sentenced Thomas Scott, a Canadian Orangeman, to death for insubordination in captivity. A Metis firing squad executed Scott in March 1870. This execution drew tremendous outrage from Protestant Anglo-Canadians and their desire for revenge exercised a strong influence on Riel's later trial and execution for treason.

After the first rebellion ended and the province of Manitoba was declared, Riel went into hiding for several years in fear of reprisals that might be carried out against him by angry Anglo-Canadians. Indeed, Protestant militiamen did kill several Metis in the Red River area (Howard 1974, 209-210). During this period of political limbo, Riel's constituents elected him to the national Canadian parliament in both 1873 and 1874 but Riel never had the opportunity to serve his legislative term. Instead, in 1875, the Canadian government removed all of Riel's political rights and officially expelled him from the country for five years. Thus, while Riel succeeded in securing promises of political and land rights for the Metis from the Canadian government (many of which were later broken), he suffered tremendous personal and professional losses in the process.

During the latter half of the 1870s, Riel traveled throughout the eastern United States, seeking support for a U.S. invasion of Western Canada. He met with President Ulysses Grant during this trip but received little support for his ideas. On December 8, 1875 while visiting St. Patrick's Cathedral in Washington, D.C. for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Riel had a vision and became convinced that he was the Prophet of the New World. When he began to proclaim this new religious and political self-

identity, several of those close to him, including Edmond Mallet, a prominent French Canadian in the United States, quickly deemed Riel mentally ill and sought to silence him (Flanagan 1983, 49-56).

An uncle secretly took Riel back to Montreal and committed him to a psychiatric hospital under a false name. Riel later moved to a second hospital where he remained until January 1878. Despite his institutionalization, Riel consistently denied that he was ever mentally ill and viewed his confinement in the asylums as an attempt to imprison him for his religious and political beliefs.

After his release from the second psychiatric hospital, Riel moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1881, he married Marguerite Monet dit Bellehumeur, a U.S. Metis, and the couple had two children. By 1882, Riel had become active in local politics, campaigning for the Republican Party in Montana. He was particularly concerned with defending Metis and Indian rights in the United States and with preventing the sale of alcohol on Indian reservations.

On March 16, 1883, Riel became a U.S. citizen in Helena, Montana. He deliberately waited until his five year term of exile from Canada expired before applying for U.S. citizenship because he wanted to demonstrate the sincerity of his commitment to the U.S. and did not want it to appear that he had chosen U.S. citizenship simply because he had been banished from Canada. After a political scandal in which Riel was indicted by a grand jury for encouraging Metis who were not U.S. citizens to vote in local elections (a charge that he denied), Riel began teaching at a missionary school in 1883 as a means of supporting his family (Howard 1974, 349).

In 1884, Gabriel Dumont and three other Metis representatives traveled to the United States to request that Riel return to Canada with them to lead another protest against the Canadian government on behalf of the Metis and other inhabitants in the Saskatchewan district who had not received the rights granted to those living in Manitoba. The primary focus of the Metis complaints was once again the government's lack of recognition of their land claims. Riel agreed to join the cause and moved with his family back to Canada. William Henry Jackson, a politically active white settler in the region, became Riel's Secretary and together they compiled a list of grievances to send to the Canadian government.⁵

During the intervening years since Riel's first protest, the Northwest Territories had experienced a tremendous influx of immigrants, most of them Anglo Protestants. Agriculture had replaced hunting as the dominant way of life and boats and railroads were replacing customary forms of transportation such as the Red River cart. At both the provincial and federal levels of the new Canadian government, the Metis who had dominated the region previously, came to occupy a minority status (Martel 1986, 234).

In March 1885, after becoming frustrated with the lack of response to their protests launched through constitutional channels, the Metis prepared for an armed uprising. They subsequently lost the backing of most white settlers who were not prepared to

⁵ In 1886, after fleeing from Canada to Chicago following the failure of the second Metis rebellion, Jackson became a leader of the Carpenters Union and campaigned for the eight-hour day. In 1889, Jackson became involved in a public debate with Lucy Parsons in Chicago. Jackson asserted that it was better to live as a freedom fighter than to die as a martyr. Parsons shouted in response, "It has been said that dead martyrs are no good, but their memory is dear to us and a perpetual inspiration because they died before they would ask pardon for deeds they did not do" (Ashbaugh, 1976, 167-168).

engage in militant resistance. Riel declared a provisional, religiously inspired government and prepared once again to fight Canadian forces. Several Indian tribes also participated in the military action but they never fully coordinated their actions with those of the Metis.

The so-called rebellion consisted primarily of several fierce battles between Canadian forces and the Metis that became the subject of front-page headlines in Canadian and U.S. newspapers for several months. One of Riel's primary strategies was to capture and hold prisoners whom he hoped to later use as bargaining chips with the Canadian government (see *The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886). Riel never had the opportunity to implement this plan, however, and after being defeated in a particularly fierce battle, he finally surrendered on May 16, 1885.

The Canadian authorities originally scheduled Riel to stand trial in Winnipeg before a 12-member jury composed of European Canadians and Metis but Canadian officials became concerned that the trial might proceed in his favor and, therefore, decided to change the venue. They ordered Riel to stand trial in Regina instead where Canadian law required only a six-member jury because Regina was located in a territory and not a Canadian province. The Regina jury was composed exclusively of Protestant Anglo-Canadians who spoke only English. The government prosecution accused Riel of both treason and, due to his U.S. citizenship, of levying war against Canada while "living within the Dominion of Canada and under the protection of our Lady the Queen" (*The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886, 3).

After considering several other approaches, Riel's defense team finally decided that their only hope was to argue that Riel should not be held responsible for his role in the rebellion due to his insanity. Riel himself objected strenuously to this line of defense because it undermined the political legitimacy of the Metis cause. He sought unsuccessfully to dismiss his own defense team and when this did not work, he told the jury that it was not he who was insane but the Canadian government (*The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886, 147-153).

The jury ultimately found Riel guilty but recommended mercy. The defense filed several rapid appeals but all were rejected. Nor did the Canadian federal government recommend leniency. Appeals to the U.S. State Department also failed in eliciting support. The lack of support by the U.S. government for a U.S. citizen standing trial in a foreign country later became the basis of considerable controversy in the United States. Louis Riel was executed by hanging on November 16, 1885.

Following the second Riel Rebellion of 1885 and Riel's execution by Canadian authorities, more Metis fled the region now occupied by Canada to join the existing Metis communities in North Dakota and Montana. The French-speaking Metis often intermingled with Cree and Chippewa Indians as well as with English-speaking Metis, blurring the dividing lines among the various groups.

Riel's Challenges to the U.S. Nation

Riel posed at least three challenges to conventional definitions of U.S. citizenship and national membership. First, as a member of the Metis, he challenged the hierarchy of

mono-racial categories that structured the U.S. sociopolitical order. Second, as a bi-national, semi-nomadic U.S. and Canadian citizen, Riel blurred and transcended the conventional boundaries of nation and state. Third, as a Catholic, French-speaking Metis of predominantly French ancestry, Riel challenged the complex combination of ascriptive and cultural criteria, including whiteness, Protestantism, English fluency, and Anglo descent, that shaped the contours of the U.S. nation. These challenges often became combined in Riel's political efforts to secure land and human rights for the Metis in Canada and the United States.

One of the foremost ways in which Louis Riel challenged conventional definitions of the U.S. nation was through his self-definition as a member of the Metis people. The concept of Metis did not exist in mainstream, U.S. discourse, and it challenged conventional mono-racial categories that did not recognize mixed identities. Indeed, the term most commonly used in the United States in the 19th century to describe people of indigenous and European descent was half-breed. This label not only had blatantly derogatory and racist connotations, but also was usually inaccurate if evaluated within its own frame of reference. Very few of the Metis or other indigenous people of mixed descent living in the United States traced half of their heritage to Indian origins and half to European origins. It was much more common, as was the case for Riel, to have predominantly European ancestry and some Indian ancestry.

The distinction between the self-descriptive term Metis, which reflected a positive, fluid, creative combination of ancestries and cultures, and the U.S. term half-breed which reflected an obsession with quantifying and categorizing people according to a mono-

racial hierarchy, revealed very different attitudes toward the concept of mixture. Riel described himself as a Metis when speaking and writing in French, and as a half-breed when communicating in English (see Riel 1985). Although he recognized the inaccuracy of the latter term, he nevertheless used the conventional terminology in order to explain his cause within a U.S. context.

The disjunction between the popular description and conception of Riel as a half-breed and his predominantly European ancestry led some people to express surprise at Riel's very European appearance. In one of his essays, Riel expressed his resentment at questions that European Americans sometimes raised as to why he didn't simply pass as white, and he reaffirmed his pride in his Metis identity.

There are many very nice and very polite people, who often say to a Metis, but you don't seem to have much savage blood; one would say that you are white. Oh! You have practically no savage blood. These people speak under the influence of their prejudices vis-à-vis the Indians, and their compliments seem to come from the idea that a Metis should redden from his Indian ancestors and it is probably to help him bear the weight of his shame that they hasten to say: oh! You have almost no savage blood.

The Metis are Christians. Although their Indian origin is humble, they wish to honor their mothers as well as their fathers. The Metis hold to the name of their race. They don't preoccupy themselves with what proportions of Indian and European blood they have. For as little as there is of one or the other, it means, I am Metis, and that is the end (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-154, 273, *my translation from French*).⁶

⁶ The original French version of these comments is as follows:

Il y a beaucoup de gens tres polis et tres gentils qui souvent diront a un Metis, mais vous n'avez pas l'air d'avoir grand sang sauvage: on dirait que vous etes blanc. Oh! Vous n'avez presque pas de sang sauvage. Ces personnes parlent sous l'influence des prejuges qu'ils ont vis-à-vis des indiens, et leurs compliments semblent partir de l'idee qu'un Metis devrait rougir de ses ancetres indiens et c'est probablement pour lui aider a porter le poids de sa honte qu'on se depeche de lui dire: oh! Vous n'avez pas presque pas de sang sauvage.

Les Metis sont chretiens. Quand meme leur origine indienne est humble, ils tiennent a honorer leurs meres autant que leurs peres. Le Metis s'en tient a son nom de race. Il ne s'occupe a quelle degre, de

Riel's observation that those who wondered why he didn't pass as white probably thought a "Metis should redden from his Indian ancestors" reveals a profound comprehension of the combination of racial and moral associations that operated in maintaining white-dominated, racist hierarchies in both Canada and the United States. The notion of "reddening" from Indian ancestors could refer both to having a skin color commonly associated with the Indian race in the late 19th century and with blushing from shame due to one's Indian ancestry. Riel also challenged the common association between Christianity and whiteness, as well as the sexism that prevailed in European American society, by asserting that his mother was as worthy of honor as his father (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-154, 273).

Riel had no desire to pass as white, a fact that European Americans seemed to find difficult to understand or believe. He was firmly committed to the Metis people, of whom he considered himself a member, and to the goal of building a Metis nation. Riel's definition of what it meant to be Metis was, in a sense, similar to the one-drop rule adopted in the U.S. a few years later but it had very different implications. For Riel, any indigenous ancestry, no matter how small or remote, was enough to make one Metis. Being Metis was an identity that one should assume and practice with pride. According to proponents of the one-drop rule, any amount of black or other non-white blood was sufficient to render one a member of that category and justified discriminatory, racist treatment on that basis. At the same time that Riel resisted suggestions that he could pass

mélange ils possèdent son [sang] indien et son sang européen. Pour peu qu'il ait de l'un ou de l'autre, il dit, je suis Metis, et c'est fini (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-154, 273).

as white, the potential for him to do so on the basis of his appearance made Riel appear a greater threat in the minds of many European Americans.

For the most part, as a member of the Metis, Riel associated himself more closely with the Indians than he did with whites. Undoubtedly, this was due in large part to the prejudices of whites who excluded him. In some cases, however, Riel emphasized his white heritage, usually as part of a political strategy. For example, in describing to the jury how he built support for his second protest in Canada, Riel referred to the connections he had cultivated with white settlers.

Although a half-breed, and having no pretension to help the whites, I also paid attention to them. I saw they were deprived of responsible government, I saw that they were deprived of their public liberties. I remembered that half-breed meant white and Indian, and while I paid attention to the suffering Indians and the half-breeds I remembered that the greatest part of my heart and blood was white and directed my attention to help the Indians, to help the half breeds and to help the whites to the best of my ability (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-012, 524-525).

During his residence in the United States, Riel became a champion of the rights of the U.S. Metis and other indigenous people. In 1880, he drafted and submitted a petition, requesting that land be set aside for a Metis reservation in Montana (Flanagan 1985, 183). Attempting to convince the U.S. government of the benefits of this plan, Riel described the Metis as potential mediators between “civilized and uncivilized” people who would be willing to assist the U.S. government in the execution of its Indian policies.

We ask the government to kindly consider that as half breeds we stand between the civilized and uncivilized man, and are closely related with the several tribes of the northwest, owing to which fact we indirectly exercise some influence and from the Indian blood in our veins, we are inclined to believe that Indians will listen to us more favorably than to the majority of those who are not connected by family ties with them.

If the government would wish to use our influence, such as it is amongst the Indians we freely offer it and will always be ready to do everything that lays in our power to fulfill [any] peaceful mission (Flanagan, 1985, 184).

Riel thus subscribed to the dominant discourse of civilization and placed the Metis within the racialized, moral hierarchy that it described. He even went so far as to offer Metis assistance to the U.S. government on behalf of the civilizing project if this would gain them their own reservation and land rights. As revealed in his petition for a Metis reservation, one of the primary ways in which Riel felt he could make a positive contribution as a U.S. citizen was by serving as a mediator between the U.S. government and American Indian populations. In proposing himself for this role in an essay entitled "The Indian Question is Ripe," Riel expressed full support for the U.S. government's efforts to assimilate the Indians into a European American way of life and suggested that he was racially qualified to assist in implementing this project. After asking rhetorically who would "help the government in the most important solution of the Indian problem," Riel asserted, "It is perhaps the one who, having enough white blood in his veins, honesty, experience, intelligence enough, would deserve and enjoy the confidence of a good majority of the American people; and who, at the same time, having had some Indians amongst his ancestors, would be allowed by public opinion, to say so and to have it known amongst the Indians, as a means of gaining their confidence; and who, using his influence over them, would show them how to earn their living and would put them to work by all means" (Riel 1985, Vol. 2-156, 376).⁷

⁷ Although he frequently expressed support for the U.S. government's assimilationist approach to indigenous peoples, Riel rarely expressed any criticism of the Metis when he was writing in English. In an essay written in French, however, Riel deplored the fact that the Metis of Montana continued to live a

Col. Nelson Miles, the high ranking Indian fighter to whom Riel's petition for a Metis reservation was sent, responded favorably to the idea, although for quite different reasons than those suggested by Riel and the Metis. Miles commented that the Metis' "running about over the country results in no benefit to themselves, and has a very injurious influence upon the different Indian tribes" (Flanagan 1985, 184). Far from viewing the Metis as a potential asset and ally to the U.S. government, Miles viewed the Metis as a disruptive population who might be beneficially contained within the framework of a reservation.

The Riel petition eventually reached the Department of Dakota, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Interior. It was also sent to A.R. Keller, Indian agent on the Crow reservation in Montana, for comment. Keller staunchly opposed the notion of a Metis reservation, noting among other things:

They are descended from the Cree tribe of Indians, located in the dominion of Canada. They are nomadic in their habits having oscillated for many years between the Canadian border and the United States... They dress like Americans and are experts in hunting, fishing and trapping. They have intelligence and some education but in this country have made little progress in agriculture. In what spirit other tribes might receive them I have no means of knowing but the Crows, would resist very determinedly any attempt to plant them on this reservation, nor do I think that they would exert a wholesome influence upon these Indians. They are British subjects, possessing however the habits, customs and manners of the aborigines in the main, but with superior intelligence and cunning which render them dangerous. As is usual

nomadic life and commented on what he viewed as their three principal faults: their lack of "economy," their failure to "worry about tomorrow," and their "laziness" (Riel 1985, Vol. 2-189, 406, *my translation from French*). In other words, Riel faulted his fellow Metis for failing to adopt European American attitudes toward property, labor, and time. He expressed his frustration with the inability of the Metis to adapt quickly to a European American economy and industrious way of life in which they could compete with whites, complaining that "it is just hitting your head against the wall to want them to change suddenly within a few months" (Riel 1985, Vol. 2-189, 407, *my translation from French*).

in such cases they imbibe the evils of civilization without its virtues. They would certainly be an undesirable class of population to encourage to settle in this Territory, and I cannot understand on what theory they can claim bounty from this Government or to be pensioners thereon especially as we have so many of our own more worthy and more deserving unprovided for... I certainly deplore their masquerading over the country to and fro, between the United States and Canada... I cannot comprehend in what respect they have claims superior to our own patriotic citizens. It would be a travest (sic) on justice, and a premium on indolence and vice (Quoted in Flanagan, 1985, 185).

Keller viewed the U.S. Metis as a particularly dangerous threat to both U.S. Indians and "patriotic citizens," by whom he presumably meant U.S. whites. This threat stemmed from Metis challenges to the boundaries of citizenship due to their ambiguous bi-national status, challenges to the boundaries of the state due to their nomadic way of life that traversed the Canadian-U.S. border, and challenges to the concept of civilization through their combination of indigenous and European American ways of life. Keller sought to clearly disassociate the U.S. Metis from any identification with the United States. He claimed they were descended from Canadian Cree Indians and were British subjects despite the fact that many if not most of the Metis in question were, if not formal U.S. citizens, certainly the descendants of generations of U.S. residents. He also made sharp distinctions between the culture and life patterns of those he viewed as "civilized" American citizens, and the Metis, whom he associated with "aborigines." Keller viewed the Metis as an even greater threat than the aborigines, however, precisely because of their adoption of certain European American habits ("they dress like Americans") and their European heritage, which granted them "superior intelligence and cunning which render them dangerous" (Flanagan 1985, 185). Keller deplored the Metis for

“masquerading” between the U.S. and Canada, suggesting that their mixed descent somehow rendered them guilty of assuming false identities.

It is no surprise that the Metis request for a reservation was denied. As historian Thomas Flanagan noted, “Riel’s request was deeply at variance with the traditional orientation of American Indian policy” (Flanagan 1985, 189). The perception of the Metis as a threat to the U.S. nation and state and official attempts to distance them and render them foreign regardless of their citizenship status continued in the wake of Riel’s second rebellion and his execution.

After the rebellion failed, additional Metis and Cree arrived as refugees in Montana from Canada. In response, the U.S. military petitioned the State Department for permission to carry out a large-scale deportation of the alleged Canadian refugees in 1885. No great attempts were made, however, to distinguish between those who had recently arrived from Canada and those who had resided in the U.S. for generations, some of whom held formal U.S. citizenship. Permission for the deportation was initially denied, mainly because Canada refused to file the necessary request for such an action. In addition, one historian noted, “There were questions about the legality of deporting people who in some cases were citizens and had undoubtedly been south of the line” (Burt 1987, 199).

The issue of deportation of Metis alleged to be Canadian rather than U.S. citizens created significant tensions between Canada and the United States. Canadians believed that many of the Indians were American wards not being properly cared for. They viewed the situation as another reflection of a long-standing U.S. record of mistreating

the Indians. But even if the American version was accepted, Canadians saw a double standard. Escapees from Indian uprisings in the U.S., such as the Iroquois after the American Revolution and the Sioux after warfare in Minnesota in the 1860s, had been treated in Canada as permanent refugees and given reservations, while the U.S. turned away people in similar situations (Burt 1987, 200).

Ultimately, however, the deportation did take place although not until ten years later. In 1895, Congress appropriated \$5000 to the State of Montana for deportation of "refugee Canadian Cree" Indians to Canada. Confusion about whom was to be included in this deportation effort immediately ensued (Dusenberry 1954, 6). According to one account, "The government...seemed to be undecided whether deportation should include Cree who had certificates that they were not wards of the Canadian government, but Governor Rickards insisted that all Cree must be sent to Canada as 'they are caught'" (Dusenberry 1954, 6).

John Hoffman, an attorney from Great Falls who was sympathetic to the Metis and Cree, objected in court to the deportation, stating that at least 60 American citizens born in Montana were being deported unconstitutionally (Burt 1987, 201 and Dusenberry 1954, 6). The deportation proceeded despite these objections. According to one historian, both Canada and the United States violated the deportation order from the start.

Canada agreed to accept only Cree Indians, but many others were caught in the dragnet... Gov. Richards had pressured the Department of War to include mixed-bloods, and Canadian officers later told a number of hardship stories of people, usually Metis, who were forced to leave their homes and families behind (Burt 1987, 203).

U.S. officials thus responded to the challenges posed by Metis to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state not by attempting to partially assimilate them, a strategy used in other situations such as in the mixed blood allotment cases examined in the previous chapter, but by trying to make them disappear. One way in which U.S. authorities pursued this strategy was by declaring the U.S. Metis to be Canadian Cree, physically removing them from their homes in the United States and deporting them across the Canadian border.

Louis Riel rejected all attempts to force the Metis into mono-racial or mono-national categories. When he became a U.S. citizen on March 16, 1883, Riel was required to renounce his loyalty to the Queen of England and his allegiance to Britain.⁸ According to British law, however, the status of subject of the Queen was inalienable and the Canadian government tried, sentenced and executed Riel for treason in this capacity despite his U.S. citizenship. Nor did the U.S. government object to these proceedings. Riel thus occupied a legally ambiguous, bi-national status that provoked great consternation among both Canadian and U.S. officials but that conformed quite well to Riel's understanding of himself and of the status of the Metis more generally. Echoing the perspectives of other

⁸ According to Riel's official U.S. naturalization record:

Louis David Riel, a native of Canada has resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States five years at least, last past, and within the Territory of Montana for one year last past; and that during all of said five years' time he has behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same; and it also appearing to the Court, by competent evidence, that the said applicant has heretofore, and more than two years since, and in due form of law, declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and having now here, before this Court, taken an oath that he will support the Constitution of the United States of America, and that he doth absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to every foreign Prince, Potentate, State of Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to Victoria, Queen of Great Britain. It is therefore ordered, adjudged and

observers about Metis identity and the artificiality of the Canadian – U.S. border, one historian claimed that the Metis felt “instinctively” bi-national due to the fact that their historic homeland transcended the international boundary between Canada and the United States, which he described as “that ‘imaginary line’ drawn across an open plain” (Howard 1974, 49-51).

Riel took his formal adoption of U.S. citizenship very seriously and his political strategies and activities reflected what he perceived as a significant change in status. At the same time, he always saw himself first as Metis rather than as either American or Canadian. The concept of Metis, as Riel understood it, constituted a national, racial, ethnic, religious and cultural identity rolled into one. It trumped all other allegiances. Whereas U.S. officials tended to portray the mixed identity of the Metis as confusing, unnatural and disingenuous, Riel considered Metissage perfectly natural. Holding dual U.S. and Canadian citizenship was, from this perspective, a natural manifestation of being a member of the Metis nation that transcended the boundary between the two states. After the guilty verdict in his Canadian trial for execution was read, Riel gave a speech in which he declared his bi-national status as natural as a part of his body.

I have two hands, and I have two sides on my head, and I have two countries. I am an American citizen, and I have two countries, and I am taken here as a British subject (*The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886, 159).

For Riel, being Metis and holding dual citizenship in the U.S. and Canada did not involve strange and suspicious border crossings. Rather, these dual aspects of his identity

decreed. that the said Louis David Riel be and he is hereby admitted and declared to be a citizen of the United States of America (Bryant 1887. Appendix C. 149).

were as acceptable and essential as the physical attributes that made his body functional and symmetrical, and his being whole.

Riel's Challenges to the U.S. State: Proposal for a Metis Homeland

Louis Riel challenged the conventional definition of the U.S. state by proposing that its territorial boundaries should be expanded to include the Northwest Territories and that he should be made governor of this new part of the state. Couching his arguments in the dominant, contemporary racial and national paradigms that structured European American discourse and apparently genuinely accepting many of their precepts, Riel proposed a radical plan for the future of the Northwest that challenged not only Canadian authority but the very definitions of both the Canadian and U.S. states. Riel made this proposal in a variety of contexts, including the courtroom where he was tried and sentenced for treason, and in a petition to the U.S. president.

Riel wrote about his vision of the Northwest's political future in both French and English, often trying out ideas in French first before revising them for an English-speaking or U.S. audience. Sometimes, Riel expressed certain thoughts in French that do not appear in any English version. The distinctions suggest both that Riel strategically tailored his messages to the particular audience he wished to address, and that he felt more comfortable expressing his innermost thoughts concerning the Metis and his role as their political leader in his first language (see Riel 1985).

Riel's plan, as expressed in various writings as well as in his address to the Canadian court, consisted first of U.S. annexation of the Northwest Territories, based on the

assumption that the Canadian government would not fulfill Metis demands for what they viewed as their full political rights. Riel's U.S. citizenship became a key to his vision of the political future of the Northwest Territories during the latter days of his life, despite the fact that the U.S. government ignored Riel's citizenship status and pleas for assistance while he was on trial in Canada. His proposal for U.S. annexation of the Northwest Territories and for his own appointment as First Minister of those Territories, rather than a personal plea for clemency, constituted a major portion of Riel's petition to President Cleveland following his sentencing for treason.⁹ After reviewing the history of the Metis struggles in the Northwest and the role that he played in them, Riel made the following request.

Your humble petitioner respectfully asks, as American citizen, for your kind and powerfull (sic) protection. In the event of your Excellency and most Honorable cabinet granting my request, as American citizen, I, the undersigned, have the honor to ask, that the international line between the United States and the Northwest be blot out from lake Superior to the Pacific ocean, that the Honorable James W. Taylor, U.S. Consul at Winnipeg, be appointed governor General of those vast territories; and with the merciful help of God's Providence, if such would be the disposition of your good will and the favor of your government, I, the undersigned, humbly ask you to appoint me as First Minister and secretary of the Northwest (Riel, 1985, Vol. 3-095, 188).

In other contexts, Riel provided further details of his plan for the transformation of the Northwest Territories into a multinational region to be inhabited not only by the Metis, but also by a variety of distinct national groups of European origin that had immigrated to the United States. Each of these groups would be granted its own portion of land upon which to develop a sub-national community. Riel seemed to accurately

⁹ It should perhaps be noted that President Cleveland opposed both annexation of the Northwest Territories and annexation of Hawaii. During his second term in office, Cleveland withdrew a proposed treaty for Hawaiian annexation from Congress and sought to restore the Queen. Hawaiian annexation only succeeded

perceive republican sentiments that favored racially homogenous communities but did not pay adequate attention to the coexisting, possessive individualistic trends that favored the division of social identities and land, and their possession by individuals rather than groups. In addition, European American officials were deeply suspicious of sub-national communities that sought to exercise autonomous political power. For example, the opposition of U.S. policymakers to politically powerful sub-national communities, particularly those with a strong religious foundation, was at the heart of their efforts to prevent the Mormons from creating a theocratic sub-national entity of their own.¹⁰

Riel apparently believed that his proposal would appeal to U.S. policymakers because it suggested a way in which the United States could create a core republic populated by a homogenous, white, Anglo-Saxon majority while allocating outlying territories to racially and/or nationally distinct minorities. He asked for the support of the Anglo-Saxon race for his plan, noting that by granting Northwest lands to various other national groups, Anglo-Saxons would remain in possession of the main territory of the Republic, "with far greater and more favorable chances of preserving the particular traits of the character of their fathers there" (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-161, 311, *my translation from the French*).¹¹ Riel repeated this appeal to the Anglo-Saxon race in another note in which he wrote, "The

after Republican President McKinley replaced Cleveland (Bell 1984, 30-31). As the following chapter will demonstrate, party politics played a crucial role in debates and decisions about annexation.

¹⁰ The other major reason for U.S. government opposition to Mormon political goals was the Mormon practice of plural marriage, a practice that Riel also advocated at certain points during his career. For example, Riel advocated reviving polygamy within the context of Mosaic Law as a means of opposing secular liberalism (Flanagan 1986, 225). According to Riel, "God wants polygamy" (quoted in Flanagan 1986, 225).

¹¹ In the original French version, Riel wrote, "avec des chances beaucoup plus nombreuses et beaucoup plus favorables d'y conserver les traits particuliers du caractere de leurs peres (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-161, 311)."

Anglo-Saxon race of the United States will stay even more homogenous and will preserve the qualities of their character more intact if the other nationalities have a separate place and establish themselves further outside the actual, fixed limits of the Republic" (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-162, 313, *my translation from the French*).¹²

In other words, Riel proposed a spatial replication of the ascriptive division between state citizenship and national membership that would literally locate those who enjoyed full national membership at the core of the state and relegate those citizens who were not full members of the nation to its geographic margins. In this way, Riel's proposal suggested a means to reconcile the conflict between the desire for territorial expansion and the determination to protect white supremacy.

Riel's assessment of the desires of U.S. policymakers for a homogenous, Anglo-Saxon state was consistent with many of their practical policies, including, most obviously, the confinement of American Indians to reservations far from the centers of political power.¹³ Indeed, one of the proposal's weaknesses may have been its explicit exposure of these underlying goals and the policies in which they resulted. While Riel seemed to accurately interpret many of the most profound desires of U.S. policymakers, his explicit references to Anglo-Saxon supremacy and homogeneity may not have appealed to the more democratic public attitudes and aspirations of some U.S. authorities. In addition, Riel continued to overlook the profoundly liberal individualistic aspects of

¹² In the original French version, Riel wrote, "la race Anglo-Saxonne des Etats-Unis restera d'autant plus homogene et conservera les qualites de son caractere d'autant plus intactes... que les autres nationalites auront une place a part et s'etabliront plus en dehors des limites actuelles et fixes de la Republique" (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-162, 313).

U.S. political culture, which would be contradicted by adopting an overt proposal for racially and nationally distinct regions within the United States.

The idea of dividing the Northwest Territories into sevenths figured prominently in Riel's plan. The groups to whom these sevenths would be allocated varied in different renditions of his proposal but the concept of dividing the land into sevenths remained consistent.¹⁴ In his address to the Canadian court, Riel explained that he had adopted this figure from the Canadian government, which offered to grant the Metis approximately one seventh of the total territory in Manitoba. Riel reasoned that the Canadian government offered this amount because it estimated that through the process of cultivation and capitalist development (or, in other words, civilization), the economic value of the land would increase by seven times (*The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886, 159). Riel was willing to accept this allocation of the land if Canada abided by the terms of the treaty it signed with the Metis, but he accused the Canadian government of violating those terms and, therefore, proposed a different division of the lands.

¹³ Other policy proposals such as the effort some years later to encourage the migration of U.S. blacks to the new U.S. territory of Hawaii conformed to this pattern.

¹⁴ According to Riel:

If we cannot have our seventh of the lands from Canada, we will ask the people of the States to come and help us as emigrants... we will invite the Italians of the States, the Irish of the States, the Bavarians of the States, the Poles of the States, the Belgians of the States, and if they come and help us here to have the seventh, we will give them each a seventh; and to show that we are not fanatics, that we are not partisans, that we do not wish only for the Catholic, but that we have a consideration for those who are not Catholics. I said we will invite the Danes, we will invite the Swedes who are numerous in the States, and the Norwegians, to come around, and as there are Indians and half-breeds in British Columbia, and as British Columbia is a part of the immense North-West, we said not only for ourselves, but speaking of our children, we will make the proposition, that if they help us to have our seventh on the two sides of the Rocky Mountains, they will each have a seventh, and if the Jews will help us, on condition that they acknowledge Jesus Christ as the son of God and the only Saviour of human kind, and if they help us with their money, we will give them a seventh (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-013, 545).

In exchange for the political support of the people of various national origins whom he invited to partake of Northwest lands, Riel proposed the founding of a new Germany, a new Ireland, a new Italy, a new Bavaria, and a new Poland. He declared that he would found a new Belgium on Vancouver Island, a new Norway, a new Sweden, a new Denmark, and a new Judea in British Columbia (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-161, 310). In the draft of a letter to his fellow U.S. citizens written in French, Riel elaborated the plan even further. He pledged to incorporate all of the Metis and Indians from the United States into the portion of Northwest land that he requested from the U.S. government. He would disarm these indigenous peoples, said Riel, and try to turn them into cultivators and pastoralists (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-161, 309). Riel thus expressed his willingness to accept assimilation of the Metis and the Indians into mainstream, capitalist U.S. culture in exchange for land on which he could form an autonomous, sub-national community. In contrast to other cases in which the U.S. government encouraged partial assimilation as a form of control, however, the U.S. government expressed no interest in assimilating Riel or the Metis, whom he claimed to represent.¹⁵

¹⁵ The notion of a Northwest divided into distinct national territories to be occupied by separate, sub-national groups was far different than the vision Riel had outlined a few years earlier of a land in which all residents would intermingle freely, until everyone was a Metis of one sort or another. In a note written from Montana, Riel predicted the Metissage of all the peoples of North America as the Indians and the Metis came into increasing contact with people of various European nationalities (Riel 1985, Vol. 2-191, 409-410).

This notion of Metissage, which Riel introduced in a French memoir, was far more acceptable in a French-Canadian context than in a U.S. context. After all, French colonialists had adopted the strategy of interaction and integration with the local indigenous populations that produced the Metis in the first place. The U.S. colonial and settlement strategy, on the other hand, advocated the strict separation of indigenous and colonial populations and discouraged any form of interaction between the two. It is quite understandable, therefore, that Riel should think that U.S. policymakers might be amenable to a proposal for the division of territory based on this concept.

Riel's U.S. citizenship figured prominently in his plan for U.S. annexation of the Northwest Territories, as did his self-identity as an indigenous person. He asserted that his status as a U.S. citizen as well as leader of the Metis (a status that he equated with that of a tribal chief) gave him the right to decide, in conjunction with the U.S. government, the future status of historical Metis territory. According to Riel, his "American naturalization papers erased the line between the Northwest and the United States" (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-160, 307).

Riel's assumption of the right to determine the future of the Northwest Territories on the basis of his status as a U.S. citizen and leader of the Metis was undoubtedly partially responsible for the failure of his plan. This assumption of power and political equality by an indigenous leader of mixed descent likely appeared threatening to European American political dominance as well as white supremacy. In his capacity as the political leader of the Metis, Riel viewed his U.S. citizenship as granting him the right to cede Metis territory to the U.S. government and thus redraw the territorial boundaries of the United States in order to encompass the historical Metis homeland, a position with which few if any U.S. policymakers would have been likely to agree (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-160, 307). Riel thus challenged the exclusionary practices and attitudes of U.S. officials on two levels – first, by insisting that the U.S. nation include him as a member despite his status as a non-white, non-Anglo, non-Protestant, indigenous person of mixed descent; and second, by demanding that the U.S. state expand its borders to include the historical Metis homeland and, by extension, all of the Metis who resided there.

Responses to Riel: The U.S. Press

Members of the U.S. press responded to the challenges that Riel posed to standard mono-racial categories and conventional definitions of the nation and state by placing him and his political activities within the framework of a series of racialized dichotomies. While locating Riel within these dichotomous categories was a means of defining his place within the conventional sociopolitical order, frequent switches from one frame of reference to another suggested how Riel's ambiguous status threatened to disrupt conventional understandings of the ascriptive boundaries of nation and state. Although reporters assigned Riel to the available mono-racial and mono-national categories, they often moved him from one category to another, revealing the inability of any of these categories to fully characterize Riel and his politics.

The following section will consider why and how U.S. reporters alternately depicted Louis Riel as an indigenous savage, in contrast to civilized white settlers; a French Canadian, in contrast to Anglo Canadians; and a Canadian half-breed in contrast to American half-breeds. In particular, it will analyze the different objectives accomplished by placing Riel within each of these dualistic frames.¹⁶

¹⁶ Recent scholars have documented that the alternate portrayals of Riel as either Indian savage or French-Canadian also dominated early historical treatments of his life and political career (Owram 1986, 208-209). In the post-1950 era, however, interpretations of Riel became much more diverse as activists and scholars attempted to reinterpret his political protests as precedents of leftist, post-colonial liberation movements (Owram 1986, 211).

Support for Riel from members of leftist political movements was not a new phenomenon, however. In the wake of Riel's execution in 1885, U.S. anarchists and other laborers held a memorial service for Riel in Chicago and declared him a "martyred hero to human liberty" (*Alarm*, November 28, 1885, 3).

At least one prominent Riel scholar has objected to attempts to assimilate Riel into leftist political discourses. Thomas Flanagan, a Canadian political scientist who has devoted most of his career to studying Louis Riel, concluded that Riel's unique vision of Catholicism and its relationship to politics was similar to

Throughout this analysis, it is important to keep in mind that the exclusion of certain identities by these dualistic frames is just as telling as the inclusion of others. One of the elements that none of these frames of reference allowed, for example, was the portrayal of Riel as a U.S. citizen, despite the fact that he legally held this status. At the beginning of the rebellion, it is questionable whether Riel's U.S. citizenship was very widely known among U.S. reporters. Even when it did become known, however, the U.S. press treated the fact rather quietly, relegating the news to back pages or burying it within articles and discounting its significance. One editorialist, for example, referred to Riel's acquisition of U.S. citizenship as simply "one of the events of his career" rather than as an integral part of his political identity (*New York Times*, July 8, 1885). For the most part, the U.S. press refrained from mentioning Riel's U.S. citizenship at all.

On the other hand, U.S. reporters consistently and erroneously referred to Riel as a half-breed but seemed to have difficulty deciding exactly what this term meant. One reporter described Riel as "of French ancestry, with some Indian blood in his veins," while another claimed that "while the form of his features suggests the Indian, his complexion is fair and his eyes are light-blue" (*New York Times*, March 26, 1885, 1 and

Islam (Flanagan 1986, 225). Writing in the mid-1980s, Flanagan portrayed Riel as an adamant foe of secular liberalism and compared him to the Ayatollah Khomeini (Flanagan 1986, 227).

Other scholars accused Flanagan of being a reactionary conservative who opposed a 1985 movement in the Canadian parliament to grant Riel a posthumous pardon, and labeled his scholarship racist (see Owram 1986, 217). Based on the available evidence, my own sense is that regardless of his politics, Flanagan's interpretation of Riel's religious and political views is probably more accurate than that of those who have sought to construct Riel as a symbol of leftist political causes. The only aspects that Riel seemed to share with certain leftist political movements were an opposition to the government in power and an attempt to represent and fight on behalf of the interests of a disenfranchised minority. In most other respects, Riel's radical political and religious movement seemed to share more in common with what some have termed "messianic, millenarian" movements such as the Sioux Ghost Dance movement and with contemporary Islamicist movements (see e.g. Martel 1986 and Flanagan 1983).

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, April 18, 1885, 148). Beyond these simplistic descriptions of Riel's ancestry and physical appearance, however, the U.S. press seemed unable to grasp what it meant to be Metis. Instead, U.S. newspaper articles generally framed Riel's 1885 rebellion according to one of two racialized dichotomies. Either they portrayed Riel as a savage barbarian battling the forces of civilization, or they portrayed him as a French Canadian fighting an Anglo-dominated Canadian government. Sometimes, the U.S. press also characterized Riel as a Canadian as opposed to an American half-breed.

Reflecting the first of these interpretive frames, one editorialist observed, "It is a question whether the wisest way to deal with these half barbarous desperadoes is to put them down at any hazard and at any cost or to wait until civilization reaches them and abolishes them by absorption" (*New York Times*, April 3, 1885, 4, col. 5). Another editorial depicted Riel as a barbarian "rising against civilization" who had no justified cause for protest (*New York Times*, March 27, 1885, 4, col. 4).

It is perfectly plain that this rebellion, whatever the pretexts of the rebels may be, is nothing more or less than the rising of barbarism against civilization. Riel and his half breeds and Indians are not so much opposed for cause to the actual Government of the Dominion as they are opposed peremptorily to all government and to all representatives of law and order. Men who propose to acquire lands by conquest are the unlikeliest of men to make a good use of it after it is acquired... The resistance of the frontiersmen to the authority of the Canadian Government is animated by the same spirit which impelled the resistance of our own Indians to the advance of civilization, and it is doomed to the same inevitable defeat (*New York Times*, March 27, 1885, 4, col. 4).

By casting Riel as a barbaric Indian, the *New York Times* depicted Riel as not only outside the boundaries of the nation and state, but also outside the boundaries of the

civilized world. This position permitted the paper to dismiss Riel's political concerns by alleging that he had no valid "cause" for complaint against the Canadian government. According to the author of this editorial, a barbarian like Riel was incapable of having legitimate grievances against the Canadian government. Rather, his actions demonstrated opposition "to all government and all representatives of law and order," and there was, therefore, no need to consider the content of his political protest (*New York Times*, March 27, 1885, 4, col. 4). In this sense, the *New York Times* portrayed Riel's protest much as it portrayed the demonstrations of U.S. anarchists during this period, attempting to delegitimize both movements by suggesting that they constituted threats to civilization and the "law and order" that sustained it.

One reason Riel's conquest of Canadian land was illegitimate, according to this view, was that as an aggressive barbarian, Riel would not make "good use" of the land. In other words, he would not transform it into private property to be settled and divided into square, individual, agricultural plots. The statement that "men who propose to acquire lands by conquest are the unlikeliest of men to make a good use of it after it is acquired" seems very ironic given that Riel's protest was precisely against the Canadian conquest of historically Metis lands (*New York Times*, March 27, 1885, 4, col. 4). What it demonstrates, however, is the unmitigated European American dismissal and condemnation of what was construed as a savage or barbaric way of life, as well as a similarly unquestioned acceptance of the legitimacy of any means used to attain what was considered a civilized way of life.

Another editorial in which the language of savagery and civilization was employed as a frame for interpreting the Metis protest contains direct allusions to labor protests, which were a common feature of the U.S. political landscape at the time.

The first success of Riel's rebellion is much like the success of a mob in destroying property. It brings the rioters no nearer the fulfillment of any public purpose. The half-breeds wage war very much in the manner of the Indians who have joined them. They have committed a few murders and a great many deprivations, and their only purpose seems to be to possess themselves of the enemy's valuables.

Of course, inasmuch as the conflict is evidently one between savagery and civilization, it is to be deplored that the savages have gained a first success which is likely to encourage them (*New York Times*, April 2, 1885, 4, col. 4).

Once again, the major concern reflected in this passage was the loss of valuable "property" to Riel and his followers. By "destroying property", the protesters rendered themselves incapable of fulfilling any "public purpose," because according to the republican, European American vision of civilization, property represented the foundation of the public order. The threat posed by Riel and the Metis protestors, according to this perspective was not simply their potential domination of the land and other "valuables," but also their alleged opposition to the institution of private property. In other words, this editorial portrayed the conflict as not only one over ownership of land, but also a conflict over cultural and institutional interpretations of what land meant and how it should be used.

In both of the editorials quoted above, the *New York Times* justified the savagery vs. civilization frame that it used to interpret the Riel rebellion by stressing the military alliances between the half-breeds and the Indians. Within this context, the Metis became assimilated into the category of savage Indian and their European heritage was ignored.

Unable to accommodate their mixed status, reporters assigned the Metis to the subordinate mono-racial category.

One editorialist did invoke both terms of reference in his interpretation of Riel's militant activities, asserting that Riel's transition from a civilized life of religious learning in the East to a savage existence in the borderlands of the Northwest was morally disastrous. By portraying Riel as following a path that led in the opposite direction from that suggested by the conventional discourse of social evolution and by linking Riel's moral trajectory to his journey from the center of education, discipline and civilization in the East to the uncivilized borderlands in the West, where instinct dominated rationality, the editorialist emphasized Riel's alleged degradation.

His existence has been emphatically a dual one, and the instincts of the savage may justly be said to have supplanted eventually those controlling ideas which education and civilized influences are popularly supposed to engender. Imagine a youth just escaped from the strict discipline of scholastic life, from the dull routine of a Catholic seminary, and plunging at a bound into the rude, untrammelled existence of a frontiersman. This, as I have it from one who knows him well, is what happened to Louis Riel. Such a change was too sudden, and it is little wonder that to his fiery soul this incautious jump into the freedom of border life was morally disastrous (*New York Times*, March 29, 1885, 14).

Morality, according to this view, depended on conformity to conventional boundaries.

Riel's very existence challenged many of those boundaries from the outset.

As the conflict drew on, the U.S. press struggled to find ways to accommodate growing support for Riel's protest from certain quarters. In particular, it sought ways to acknowledge and address the increasingly vocal French Canadian outrage at the treatment of Riel and the Metis by the Anglo-dominated Canadian government. Commentators seemed obviously shaken by the high level of French Canadian support

for Riel and apparently accepted this support as evidence that perhaps some of Riel's grievances were justified after all. The U.S. press could not address the issues raised by the French Canadians, however, within the framework of its early depiction of Riel's protest as a conflict between the forces of savagery and civilization. As we have seen, this frame of reference did not allow for the possibility that Riel's political grievances might have any legitimacy because it cast him as an opponent of the very institutions of law and government.

In order to address the new political perspectives being raised, therefore, the U.S. press actually had to change its racial categorization of Riel. Rather than characterizing him as a savage, editorialists began to imply that Riel was himself a French Canadian. As soon as the U.S. press linked Riel to French Canadians rather than to savage Indians, it could display much more sympathy for the Metis cause. The Metis were now conceptualized within the boundaries of the civilized world rather than outside of it, and the U.S. press began referring to them as subjects of the Canadian government rather than as barbarians.

The complication in the Saskatchewan region is made much more serious by this revelation of the attitude of the French Canadians. There is little doubt that the grievances of the half-breeds are real and their demands substantially just. Every effort to secure redress has been ineffectual, and their complaints have passed practically unheeded. In their remote and isolated situation nothing less than a violent demonstration seemed to be sufficient to awaken the Government to actions (*New York Times*, April 17, 1885, 4, col. 4).

When the U.S. press portrayed the Riel rebellion as a war between savagery and civilization, the unquestioned assumption was that the forces of civilization were in the right and must overcome and defeat savagery by whatever means necessary. There was

no room for negotiation or compromise. When Riel's rebellion became a dispute between French and Anglo-Canadians, however, members of the U.S. press obviously felt that more discretion was necessary. While it viewed these groups as racially distinct, it also recognized them both as having legitimate claims to citizenship and membership in the Canadian nation. While the French Canadians might be racially different, they nevertheless were civilized people of European descent, if somewhat more passionate and excitable than their Anglo counterparts; according to U.S. press reports (see e.g. *New York Times*, March 29, 1885, 14, col. 4).

Whereas in earlier articles, U.S. reporters had lumped the Indians and half-breeds into the same savage category, they now drew careful distinctions between the two. While the Indians remained savages, the half-breeds became at least semi-civilized affiliates with French Canadians. The Indians remained capable of acting only out of "malicious mischief," but the half-breeds now had legitimate grievances (*Chicago Tribune*, May 20, 1885, 4). The *Chicago Tribune* drew a clear distinction between the Indians and the half-breeds on this basis, characterizing Riel as a "Frenchman," and warning that the Canadian government would need to handle his sentencing delicately in order to avoid provoking the French Canadian population. The paper addressed this issue in an editorial entitled "What Shall Be Done with Riel?"

The Indians went into it more from malicious mischief than because they had any grievances, and they will probably be settled with accordingly, without giving rise to any complications in Canada. The other problem, that of the half breeds, is not so easy of solution... If they hang him they will raise trouble with the French Canadians, for Riel is a Frenchman, and their sympathies are with him. They all along condemned the Government for its unjust treatment of the half breeds... Whatever may become of Riel, the duty of the Government is clear. It should settle the

grievances of the half breeds once and for all by giving them homes and a clear title to them (*Chicago Tribune*, May 20, 1885, 4).¹⁷

Suddenly, the half-breeds became transformed from the enemies of private property into the victims of an unjust government. The way to correct this injustice, suggested the *Chicago Tribune*, was to provide the Metis with land in the form of private property. As a savage, Riel deserved nothing, but as a "Frenchman," he and his people were entitled to "homes and a clear title to them" (*Chicago Tribune*, May 20, 1885, 4).

When Riel became a Frenchman rather than a savage, the U.S. press was much more willing to acknowledge the legitimacy of Metis grievances against the Canadian government, and to suggest that Riel and his Metis followers should be treated on a par with other Canadian citizens. The association of Riel with French Canadians still cast Riel as racially other, however, since the U.S. press clearly depicted the French Canadians as racially distinct from Anglo-Canadians.¹⁸ As a Frenchman, Riel might be a member of the civilized world and even a legitimate Canadian citizen in the eyes of U.S. reporters, but he was still ascriptively excluded from membership in the Anglo-dominated Canadian nation.

¹⁷ The New York Times echoed these sentiments and also called on the Canadian Government to settle the Metis grievances.

The chief problem in the internal government of the Dominion is to reconcile, or at any rate to lessen, the political differences arising from differences of race, language, and religion. There is no doubt that the French of Lower Canada believe the settlers of the Northwest, being of French descent, to have been aggrieved and neglected more than they would have been if they had been of English descent. There is no doubt that they believe Riel himself to have been more harshly treated than he would have been if he had been an Englishman. It is surely the business of the Canadian Government to show that these beliefs are unfounded, both by granting a prompt redress to the grievances of the settlers and by showing clemency to a rebel whose rebellion is admitted to have been provoked, if not justified, by the neglect of the Government (*New York Times*, August 4, 1885, 4).

In a demonstration of the racialized dimensions of Anglo-American characterizations of French Canadians, one editorialist claimed, "As swarthy, hot, impetuous, and impulsive as genuine French Canadian nature can make one was Riel" (*New York Times*, March 29, 1885, 14, col. 4). Indeed, one of the major concerns expressed in editorials was that the Canadian officials' hard line approach to ending Riel's protest and particularly the Canadian government's execution of Riel might spark a "race war" between French and Anglo-Canadians.¹⁹ Riots among French Canadians did in fact break out after Riel's execution as students and others vented their frustration at what they viewed as the discriminatory treatment of people of French ancestry by the Anglo-Canadian government. Louis Riel became an enduring symbol of French Canadian bitterness against a Canadian government that they viewed as giving clear preference to Anglo-Canadians.

The third dichotomous frame of reference that the U.S. press employed in its interpretation of the 1885 Metis protest, that of Canadian half-breeds vs. U.S. half-breeds, emphasized the national rather than the racial status of the Metis (although, as seen in the case of the French Canadian designation, these two aspects were often inextricably intertwined). The placement of Riel within this dichotomous national frame of reference

¹⁸ For example, an article in *Frank Lewis' Illustrated Newspaper* entitled "The Race Issue in Canada" asserted in reference to the Anglo and French Canadians, "The two races have always remained entirely distinct" (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, October 31, 1885, 162).

¹⁹ The *Chicago Tribune* reported after Riel's death, "There will be a general feeling of regret in this country for the fate of the half-breed leader, while among the French Canadians his execution will engender a bitter race hatred and may yet result in open acts of violence" (*Chicago Tribune*, November 7, 1885, 4). The *New York Times* chimed in, asserting, "The execution of Riel, followed by the outbreak of smallpox in Lower Canada, has embittered the French population against the English more than any other event of recent years. The establishment of friendly or even of tolerant relations between the two races will now be extremely difficult" (*New York Times*, November 17, 1885, 4).

was significant in two respects. First, despite his U.S. citizenship, the U.S. press invariably portrayed Riel as belonging to the Canadian half of this dichotomy. Second, the dichotomous characterization of Canadian vs. American half-breeds excluded the possibility of bi-national half-breeds. Just as people of mixed race were assigned to mono-racial categories, people of multiple nationalities were identified as mono-national. Reporters were thus responding to two challenges posed by Riel: his status as a U.S. citizen, and his possession of dual citizenship.

As long as it could distinguish Riel and other Canadian half-breeds from U.S. half-breeds, the *New York Times* was willing to concede the legitimacy of the Canadian half-breed grievances after Riel's capture. On the other hand, the paper clearly did not wish to recognize U.S. half-breeds as having any legitimate grievances against the U.S. government. According to the editor,

The Riel rebellion could have been avoided easily and honorably. The half breeds – who are a people far above the half breeds on our side of the line – have been treated with injustice (*New York Times*, May 17, 1885, p. 8, col. 3).

Members of the U.S. press were willing to extend sympathy to Riel so long as they could draw a clear line that separated him as a Canadian half-breed from American half-breeds, or, indeed, Americans of any kind. By portraying Riel as a Canadian, U.S. reporters avoided the thorny problem of how to accommodate him within conventional definitions of U.S. citizenship and national membership. They escaped the need to reconcile his legal status as a U.S. citizen with his ambiguous racial status as a person of mixed descent who could easily pass for white.

Portraying Riel as the leader of a rebellion of Canadian half-breeds also allowed the U.S. press to adopt a condescending tone toward the Canadian government, expressing barely concealed delight that Canadian officials now faced many of the same challenges in their policies toward indigenous populations that U.S. officials had confronted for years. A number of articles were rather smug in their descriptions of how Canada was finally being forced to recognize the difficulties involved in addressing the demands of indigenous peoples in the territory that it presumed to govern. One editorial responded to previous Canadian press attacks on U.S. Indian policies:

One pleasing superstition in which we have been brought up is likely to be rudely dispelled. Whenever we have had an Indian war on our hands, or even when the rascality of an Indian contractor or a post trader has come to light, we have been invited to contemplate the Dominion and its Indians. Canada, it has been pointed out to us, has Indians in quantities and has no trouble with them. Therefore the Canadian Government must be wiser, or its officials must be more honest, or the Canadian settler must be less greedy and unjust than our own Indian Bureau and our own Indian Agents and our own squatters and boomers... The theory that the Canadians have conciliated their Indians receives its final blow from the fact that the Indians of the Northwest are expected to join forces with Riel (*New York Times*, March 27, 1885, 4, col. 4).²⁰

Despite the glee expressed by U.S. reporters at finally being able to thumb their noses at the Canadian authorities in reference to their Indian policies, there was no intent to cause serious damage to the relationship between Canada and the United States. Indeed,

²⁰ *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* echoed this theme.

It has been a favorite boast of the Canadians that justice and moderation have marked their treatment of the Indian question, and that consequently, they have been free from the Indian troubles that have beset the United States. This pleasing superstition has been rudely dispelled by the present rebellion. It is not likely that the Canadian Indian agent is possessed of any higher degree of morality than his American brother: only about a year or two ago it was discovered that the supplies furnished by the Dominion Government for the friendly Indians were completely absorbed by the Indian agents. The Indian question seems to promise as much trouble - in proportion to numbers - to our Canadian brethren as to ourselves (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 4, 1885, 187).

the importance that U.S. officials attributed to maintaining positive relationships with Canada and England was one of the guiding concerns in decisions they made concerning how to respond to the challenges posed by Louis Riel.

Responses by U.S. Officials to the Challenges Posed by Riel

Despite Riel's documented status as a legal U.S. citizen and his repeated pleas for assistance from the U.S. government, representatives of that government refused to intervene in his trial and execution in Canada. This fact is even more surprising considering that the Secretary of State had made assistance of U.S. citizens abroad a clear policy priority. In addition, far from supporting Riel's proposal for annexation of the Northwest Territories as some U.S. politicians and businessmen did during Riel's earlier protest in 1869, U.S. officials in 1885 seemed to want to distance themselves from the Riel case as much as possible. Despite the major headlines and public debates that it provoked, the Riel case did not even receive mention in the U.S. Secretary of State's Annual Report (Bryant 1887, 74).

Why did the U.S. government refuse to intervene on Riel's behalf, and why did it show such reluctance to even comment on the case? What does this refusal reveal about prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation and state? As mentioned previously, one major reason for the reluctance of the U.S. government to intervene in Riel's trial and execution was a strong desire to preserve a positive relationship with both the British and Canadian governments (see Bumsted 1999, 36). What this priority demonstrated was that members of the U.S. government valued their relationship with members of another government with whom they shared strong racial and cultural ties more highly than they did their

commitment to one of their own citizens whom they viewed as non-white. In other words, the bonds of whiteness and civilization that the U.S. shared with other Anglo countries took precedence over its own institution of citizenship.

In addition to reflecting concerns about maintaining a positive relationship with Canada and England, the evidence suggests that U.S. officials were unwilling to intervene on behalf of a U.S. citizen whose racial identity was murky, whose religious commitments differed from those of the U.S. majority, and whose political proposals were embarrassing. Despite his stated commitment to assisting U.S. citizens in trouble abroad, the U.S. Secretary of State, Thomas F. Bayard, implemented this policy in a partial and piecemeal fashion that reflected discriminatory treatment of citizens who did not meet racial and other ascriptive criteria that defined the boundaries of full national membership.²¹

During his trial for treason, Riel repeatedly appealed to U.S. friends and contacts for help. In a letter dated, July 21, 1885, for example, Louis Riel requested help from James W. Taylor, the U.S. consul to Canada, a former U.S. annexationist, and one of Riel's strongest supporters throughout his political career. Not insensitive to the concerns of the U.S. government, Riel addressed the delicate relationship between the U.S. and British

²¹ Thomas F. Bayard came from a family of politicians and he succeeded his father as a Democratic Senator from Delaware. In the context of the Civil War, Bayard fully supported Delaware's decision not to join the seceding states but he also thought that acceptance of the secession of those states that desired it might benefit all parties (*Harper's Weekly*, March 28, 1885). Following the Civil War, Bayard used his position in Congress to fight against the Reconstruction measures proposed and passed by the Republicans every step of the way.

governments in his letter. He also appealed for help on the basis of the contributions he had made as a U.S. citizen.

As American citizen, I humbly appeal to the Government of my adopted land for help through you. I assure you my request is not inspired by any of those feelings which might have a tendency to create difficulty between the United States and England.

I am small, and my humble condition prevents me from being heard by the British dignitaries of the Dominion. I am confident that if you would deign write to the American Government in my behalf, they would not refuse to say a good word in my favor; that good word would secure me a fair trial, and a fair trial would save me.

While in Montana, I have exerted myself to be a good citizen, and I have worked in harmony with the United States authorities in the Territory. I have even had the honor to be appointed several times United States special deputy marshal. If I mistake not there are in the Department of Justice at Washington documents which speak favorably of me (Riel 1985, Vol. 3-075, 134).

In addition to the appeals that Riel made himself, several groups of U.S. citizens submitted petitions to Secretary of State Bayard (Ex. Doc. No. 1, 51st Congress, Special Session, March 1889). These petitions focused on the violations of Riel's rights as a U.S. citizen and on the injustice of his trial. Many of them accepted the premise put forth by Riel's defense team that he was insane and pled for assistance to Riel on this ground. The appeal for clemency for Riel on the basis of his alleged mental illness was significant because it reflected an effort to detract attention from Riel's ambiguous racial status, unorthodox and non-Protestant religious views, and unconventional political ambitions. By labeling Riel insane, a label that Riel himself angrily refused, these petitioners sought to portray him as a victim and as someone incapable of exercising self-control and, therefore, deserving of sympathy. They constructed Riel's racial, religious and political

deviance from U.S. norms as an illness and appealed for assistance to him on this basis (Ex. Doc. No. 1, 51st Congress, Special Session, March 1889).²²

Mr. Ambrose Choquet, an attorney acquainted with Riel, was one of those who adopted this tactic in a letter submitted with a petition from French Canadian U.S. citizens. He stated that he was convinced that Riel was insane and “would therefore humbly suggest that this fact be ascertained by the United States Government to prevent, in case of failure of the appeal now pending before the privy council of England, the hanging of an unfortunate insane citizen of the United States” (Ex. Doc. No. 1, 51st Congress, Special Session, March 1889, 10).

In his response to Choquet, Secretary of State Bayard asserted that friends of Riel had already made personal appeals to the State Department to intervene with the Canadian court on Riel’s behalf.

They received a full verbal reply, which took into consideration Riel’s alleged American citizenship. Such citizenship, however, it must be remarked, even if beyond doubt, would not secure the possessor any immunity from Canadian law, when, as it is definitely certified to this Government in the case in the present

²² Riel’s novel fusion of religious inspiration and political activity threatened and alienated Anglo-American policymakers in Canada and the U.S. while motivating fervent support among many Metis. Riel’s intense commitment to his particular version of Catholicism and his integration of religion into every aspect of his political views and activities challenged a U.S. nation that implicitly defined itself as Protestant and that explicitly followed a policy of separation between church and state. Indeed, one reason some analysts believe Riel ultimately chose Canadian rule over U.S. annexation at the end of his first rebellion was because Canada offered constitutional guarantees that protected a collective, Catholic, French-speaking way of life and were unavailable in the United States (see e.g. Warner 1953, 710-711).

While Riel’s religiously inspired political views challenged the conventional definition of the U.S. nation, they inspired considerable support for Riel among the Northwest Metis who, by all accounts, were a very religious people. For the Metis, Riel’s religious devotion resonated with their deepest beliefs and ways of life and his explanation of his political goals in religious terms made them both more palatable and comprehensible. Furthermore, on a most basic level, Riel’s religious message was one of hope. It offered hope that in the face of enormously powerful imperialistic forces, the Metis might yet have a chance not only to preserve some small part of their homeland and historical way of life, but also to create a new future for themselves (see *The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886).

instance, the offense was committed within the territory of the Dominion (Ex. Doc. No. 1, 51st Congress, Special Session, March 1889, 12).

Bayard's adamant refusal to involve the U.S. government in Riel's case was particularly striking in the context of his policies toward other U.S. citizens living abroad both before and after Riel's trial. When he became Secretary of State in the Cleveland administration, Bayard had taken a strong stand on the need to protect the rights of American citizens abroad. In April 1885, for example, just as the Riel protest was at its height, Bayard responded to requests for help from two U.S. citizens of Irish descent who were charged with participation in bombing public buildings in London. According to *Harper's Weekly* whose motto was "a journal of civilization," Bayard stated in his letter regarding the incident that the U.S. government would "lend promptly all lawful aid possible to secure a just and fair trial to any American citizen charged as a criminal in a foreign country, and triable within its jurisdiction" (*Harper's Weekly*, April 25, 1885, Vol. 29, No. 1479). In addition, Bayard sought a Congressional appropriation for the supervision of trials of American citizens abroad and for the preparation of reports of these cases (*Harper's Weekly*, April 25, 1885, Vol. 29, No. 1479).

Why was Bayard willing to intervene on behalf of U.S. citizens of Irish descent who were accused of bombing public buildings in London but unwilling to intervene on behalf of Riel? My contention is that Riel's ambiguous racial status and the related threats that he seemed to pose to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state were at the root of the discrepancy.

Harper's Weekly sought to reassure its readers that Bayard's guarantee of protection for U.S. citizens abroad would be balanced with attention to maintaining positive relations with allies. According to the journal, "While there is no reason to doubt that the honor of the American name and the rights of every American citizen will be promptly and energetically maintained by this Administration upon every occasion and at every point, there is also no ground for supposing that the Department of State will be conducted upon the principle of 'nagging' England or any other friendly power" (*Harper's Weekly*, April 25, 1885, Vol. 29, No. 1479). Perhaps it could be argued that Bayard's reluctance to intervene in the Riel case stemmed solely from the desire not to nag Canada or England but this does not explain his willingness to come to the aid of U.S. citizens who were bombing public buildings in the British capitol.

This explanation also seems insufficient in light of Bayard's other policies and efforts on behalf of U.S. citizens and residents abroad. In June 1885, for example, shortly after Riel's capture, Bayard allegedly issued unusual instructions to diplomatic representatives abroad, stating that the U.S. would protect not only its own citizens and those intending to become U.S. citizens but even, according to at least one account, "those who have acquired a domicile here by a residence of any length of time" (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 6, 1885, 250).

This dramatic extension of the U.S. government's role abroad drew criticism, but it seems likely that in one of the most challenging foreign policy episodes of his career, Bayard may indeed have put this policy into practice (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated*

Newspaper, June 6, 1885, 250).²³ In 1886, the year following Riel's execution, Mr. Cutting, a newspaper publisher who worked on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border, printed defamatory remarks against a Mexican rival in a Texan newspaper. When Cutting returned to Mexico, his rival took him to court and after a short hearing, the Mexican authorities sent him to jail. Cutting appealed to the U.S. consul for assistance as a U.S. citizen and the matter eventually reached Bayard's attention. The incident provoked extreme tension nationwide, particularly among U.S. citizens in Texas, arousing annexationist sentiments and speculations that it might even lead to war with Mexico. Bayard conducted intense negotiations for Cutting's release with top-level Mexican officials. Apparently, his diplomatic efforts succeeded and Cutting was pardoned after his case wound its way through the Mexican judicial system (Tansill 1940, 579-91).

Throughout the entire incident, Bayard treated Cutting as though he was a U.S. citizen although this assumption was far from being a proven fact. Indeed, during the controversy Bayard received a letter from a Missouri resident who claimed to know Cutting personally and stated that he "was not a citizen of the United States, but a British subject, having been born in Canada, and never having, to the personal knowledge of those knowing him for years, taken out any naturalization papers" (quoted in Tansill 1940, 583).²⁴

²³ One editorialist remarked scathingly: "We are scarcely able to see how we could protect a straggling tramp of the planet, who has no home and seeks none, merely because he has flattered us by tarrying a few weeks under our potential flag" (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, June 6, 1885, 250).

²⁴ The letter continued:

Bayard thus went to extreme lengths to secure the release of an Anglo-Canadian man who was not a proven U.S. citizen when he was imprisoned in Mexico but refused to respond to repeated requests to investigate the trial and scheduled execution of a proven U.S. citizen of mixed descent in Canada. The Cutting incident produced such tensions in the United States that it almost led to a war with the country's southern neighbor. The Riel case, on the other hand, prompted very little public demand for any form of U.S. intervention beyond the petitions submitted by people of French Canadian descent and concerns articulated by specific individuals concerned with the rights of U.S. citizens abroad.

In his 1886 address to Congress, President Cleveland stated, "The watchful care and interest of this government over its citizens are not relinquished because they are gone abroad, and if charged with a crime committed in the foreign land, a fair and open trial, conducted with a decent regard for justice and humanity, will be demanded for them" (quoted in Bryant 1887, 123). William Bryant, a judge from Nebraska, quoted this passage from Cleveland's speech in a book attacking the U.S. government for its failure to defend Louis Riel as a U.S. citizen.²⁵ Bryant decried the U.S. decision to ignore Riel's

Cutting came to this country during the late war, landing first in Chicago: thence to this City, where he enlisted in the army, but deserted without having seen service, and returned to Canada, where he remained until the close of the war, when he returned to the United States, locating west of the Mississippi, but never claiming to be a citizen of this country or exercising the right of suffrage (quoted in Tansill, 1940, 583).

²⁵ According to Bryant, there were five main reasons that the U.S. government should have interfered in Riel's case:

- First. Riel was not guilty of any act which could be considered treason, when laying the question of citizenship entirely aside.
- Second. Riel was tried upon the theory that he was a citizen of Great Britain: and not of the United States.
- Third. The question of the prisoner's sanity or insanity was never fairly submitted to the jury.

pleas for assistance during his trial for treason and asserted that criteria of religion, race, or national origin should not prevent the United States from defending one of its own citizens (Bryant 1887, 73-74).²⁶

It boots little that Louis Riel was Catholic or Protestant; that he was of French or of Germanic, or of Indian, or of Irish, or of Swedish extraction; that he was patriot, fanatic, imposter or madman. One proposition is beyond cavil: He was, at his death, an American citizen. That undisputed fact stamped upon him a dignity which neither race, religion, character or condition could obliterate. *Civis Americanus fuit*. Forget all beside (Bryant 1887, 73-74).

Bryant's statement suggests that the U.S. government's reasons for refusing to intervene in Riel's case extended far beyond a desire to maintain friendly relations with England. His references to Riel's religious, national, racial, and mental health status imply that all of these factors likely played a role in the decision by representatives of the U.S. government not to intervene in Riel's case. Bryant exposed the fact that possession of U.S. citizenship did not necessarily confer *any* guarantees for people who did not meet the racial criteria for full national membership because U.S. officials might decide at any time to remove that citizenship on the basis of an individual's racial status (see Haney Lopez 1996, 35).

Fourth. There was misconduct of the court in instructing the jury.

Fifth. There was a variance between the indictment and the proof (Bryant 1887, 123).

²⁶ According to Bryant:

On the 16th day of November of the year 1885, Louis Riel, an American citizen, was hanged at Regina, in the North-West Territories, within the Realm of Her Britannic Majesty, for high treason against the crown and dignity of the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland. The attention of President Cleveland and Secretary Bayard was called to the facts, but they refused to act in the matter. The Secretary of State did not consider the matter of sufficient importance to be mentioned in his annual report. Was this inaction of the United States government justified by the facts in the case (Bryant 1887, 73-74)?

Yet while he attacked the U.S. government for its failure to protect Riel as a U.S. citizen, Bryant did not denounce the racist views that its representatives expounded. On the contrary, Bryant voiced explicitly racist views himself. Indeed, immediately following his declaration that Riel's U.S. citizenship should have required the U.S. government to intervene on his behalf, Bryant launched into a long discussion about whether people of racially mixed descent took after one parent more than the other, concluding with the observation, "Samson Occom, the Whitfield of the forest, returned to the native savagery of his race, like a dog to his vomit" (Bryant 1887, 75).²⁷ On one hand, Bryant overtly beseeched his readers to focus only on Riel's U.S. citizenship and to "forget all else," including his religious and racial status (Bryant 1887, 74). On the other hand, he immediately contradicted his own request by following it with a graphically racist description of people of mixed descent in which he associated education and civilization with whiteness, and Indians with "native savagery" as well as with dogs and their vomit (Bryant 1887, 74-75).

²⁷ According to Bryant:

Whether it be termed a freak of Nature, or one of her laws of which men talk much and know nothing, it is, in either event, a continuously recurring fact, that offspring do not partake in equal proportion, of father's and mother's characteristics. Though always resembling both, in a certain degree, the child will bear the likeness of one more than the other. Mulattoes show more strongly the peculiarities of either African or Caucasian; Zambos of Negro or Indian; and half-breed of Caucasian or aboriginal. There are few exceptions to this rule. So it may be regarded as a part of the law of Hereditary. Some of the half-breeds of the North-West, from their fair complexions, Celtic features and suave demeanor, might easily be mistaken for Frenchmen; while others have the physical and mental characteristics of their squaw mothers. Even the educated Indian, whatever his opportunities to embrace civilization, has, almost without exception, gravitated to the tipi and the breech-clout. Samson Occom, the Whitfield of the forest, returned to the native savagery of his race, like a dog to his vomit. (Bryant 1887, 74-75)

Bryant argued that the obligation to respect the institution of U.S. citizenship should take *precedence* over concerns about racial status and other ascriptive criteria. He in no way implied, however, that these latter concerns were illegitimate. Rather, U.S. policymakers likely found his arguments persuasive because at the same time that he advocated for Riel's protection as a U.S. citizen, Bryant also endorsed prevailing racist views. Bryant did not critique the conventional construction of U.S. citizenship in racialized terms. He developed his argument within the prevailing racist paradigm.²⁸

²⁸ Bryant alleged that the President and Secretary of State of the United States not only ignored pleas for help on Riel's behalf, but also co-opted Edmond Mallet, a government official who was once a close friend of Riel, offering him a high-level government position in exchange for not pursuing the matter. Mallet was an ethnically French-Canadian U.S. citizen who became very prominent in the U.S. French-Canadian community. He had previously served as an Indian agent in the Puget Sound region and was later promoted to a senior position within the Bureau of Indian Affairs dealing with Indian education.

While he was a strong supporter of Riel during the early years of his career, Mallet was also present when Riel began to have visions in the mid 1870s and strongly urged Riel's confinement in a mental institution. According to Bryant:

Edmond Mallet did not appear or act for Riel, who died in complete ignorance of the fact that any effort, in his behalf, had been made with the President. Major Mallet was a clerk in the Treasury Department. His communications with the President and Secretary were between a government official and his superiors; and were of a confidential nature. Major Mallet has since been discreetly reticent upon the subject. This is certainly, however, the attention of Grover Cleveland and his prime minister were called to the case and their interference asked, and they declined to act (Bryant 1887, 116-117).

Mallet did have a well-publicized meeting with Secretary of State Bayard prior to Louis Riel's execution. He described the proceedings of that meeting in a detailed letter, basically stating that the U.S. government had no intention of taking the initiative to intervene on Riel's behalf. Mallet concluded the letter by stating:

You are aware that I knew Riel intimately both before and after his becoming insane. Knowing the material he is made of, as well as his intimate views and aspirations, I believe that *when he gave himself up* (when he could have escaped with Dumont) *he did so with the determined purpose of having himself put to death as the best means of serving his people and his country* (Quoted in Bryant 1887, 162-164).

The position of the U.S. government that Mallet described seemed very much at odds with Secretary of State Bayard's previous and subsequent policies with respect to guaranteeing the rights of U.S. citizens abroad. In addition, Mallet's assertion that Riel probably surrendered because he thought that he could best

In October 1888, three years after Riel's execution, Senator Blair from New Hampshire submitted a resolution requesting the President of the United States to transmit any information he had about the Riel case to the U.S. Senate. The text of the resolution suggested that Blair suspected an attempt on the part of the government to buy the silence of Edmond Mallet, a former associate of Riel who spoke with both Secretary of State Bayard and President Cleveland on his behalf, in exchange for a lucrative government position (Misc. Senate Doc. No. 208, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 1888, 2).²⁹ In explaining and defending his resolution on the Senate floor, Senator Blair described Riel as a French Canadian U.S. citizen and asserted that he should not be discriminated against on the basis of this ancestry. He acknowledged that many French-Canadian citizens had experienced biased treatment in the United States and defended them as "intelligent, cultivated, eminent gentlemen" (Cong. Globe, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., October 9, 1888, 9319). His defense did not challenge the ascriptive framework that granted French Canadians fewer privileges than other European American citizens but rather argued that they were worthy of better treatment within that framework.

There are about a million French Canadian citizens in the United States; and I submit we are not going to permit those men, after they become naturalized, to be hanged for nothing in Canada, without inquiring of foreign powers, when it is brought to the attention of the Government of the United States that they have been wrongfully accused; that they are in a condition of mind incapable of committing crime, and that even due process of law has been violated in trying their case. I know these people have not had all the advantages of American citizenship, but there are a great many intelligent, cultivated, and eminent gentlemen among them; and as a whole

serve his people and country by being put to death appeared to contradict all of Riel's statements and active appeals for clemency and raises suspicions about Mallet's motives.

²⁹ Among other things, the resolution requested the President to report whether "Mallet, since making such public charges against this Government, has been appointed to a responsible and lucrative position in the public service, requiring a high order of ability and of personal integrity for the proper discharge of the duties thereof" (Misc. Sen. Doc. No. 208, 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 1).

population, I believe there is as much of hope in the French-Canadian population as in any of the immigration which seeks our shores (Cong. Globe, 50th Congress, 1st Session, October 9, 1888, 9319).

Significantly, Senator Blair did *not* describe Riel as a Metis or half-breed, which might have raised questions about his whiteness and, thus, his eligibility for U.S. citizenship (see Haney Lopez 1996). Nevertheless, these questions did surface in subsequent discussions about the proposed resolution. On December 6, 1888, Senator Blair presented a statement of facts by William Bryant in response to questions apparently raised by the Committee on Foreign Relations concerning whether or not Riel could have legitimately and legally become a naturalized U.S. citizen on the basis of his racial status. According to Blair,

[Bryant's] memorial settles that fact and shows that he [Riel] was of Caucasian blood on the mother's side, and on the father's side was descended from a grandfather or a great-grandfather who was an Indian. So there is no question whatever of the fact or alleged fact that he was an American citizen (Cong. Globe, 50th Congress, 2nd Sess., December 6, 1888, 60).

The statement by Bryant that Blair submitted to the Senate began with a detailed description of Riel's racial background, with the apparent intention of demonstrating that Riel was mostly "of pure white blood" (Misc. Sen. Doc. No. 11, 50th Cong., 2nd Sess., December 6, 1888). The combined and repeated emphasis on purity and whiteness suggests that the significance of these traits in determining eligibility for U.S. citizenship was well known and taken for granted.

Louis Riel was born in Rupert's Land, British North America, October 22, 1844. He was seven eighths white and one-eighth Indian. His descent was as follows: His mother (who is now living) is of pure white blood. His father was of mixed Indian and white blood – a quarter blood. Riel's paternal grandmother was a half-breed. Her mother (Riel's great-grandmother) was a squaw. His (Riel's) great-great-

grandfather was the nearest ancestor having tribal relations. Thus Riel was of pure white blood on his mother's side, and his (Riel's) father was of pure white blood on his father's side (Misc. Sen. Doc. No. 11, 50th Cong., 2nd Sess., December 6, 1888, 1).

Further on, Bryant noted that while living in Manitoba, "Riel never availed himself of any of his rights, by virtue of his Indian descent, and was so far treated as a white man as to be thrice elected to the Canadian Parliament" (Misc. Sen. Doc. No. 11, 50th Cong., 2nd Sess., December 6, 1888). Bryant thus defined Riel's whiteness in scientific, hereditary, legal, and common sense terms (see Haney Lopez 1996 on definitions of whiteness).

Responding to the Congressional challenge that Riel was ineligible for U.S. citizenship because he was an Indian rather than a white man, Bryant asserted:

In regard to the question of Riel's race: Of course, if he were an Indian the naturalization laws would not apply to his case. The only question is, What admixture of Indian blood could preclude one from being denominated a white person? In the judicial history of the country the question frequently arose... with regard to Negroes... But there is no agreement among the courts. In some the proportion of African blood was one-eighth; in others, one fourth; and in still others, as South Carolina, any distinct and visible admixture of Negro blood, to be determined by the evidence or features, complexion and parentage. In Ohio, the rule was established, that any person having more white than either Indian or Negro blood was white... It seems to me, that if we adopt the South Carolina rule, a person of one-eighth Indian blood, whose ancestors had no tribal relations for four generations, who had always acted and been treated as a white man, whose features were those of a white man... should be considered a white man. If we adopt the Ohio doctrine, Riel was clearly within the rule (Misc. Sen. Doc. No. 11, 50th Cong., 2nd Sess., December 6, 1888, 2).

Bryant thus defended the legality of Riel's U.S. citizenship to Congress not by arguing that Riel should be accepted as a Metis U.S. citizen but by asserting that he was a legitimate U.S. citizen because he was white.

The President provided no evidence related to the actions or employment of Edmond Mallet in response to Senator Blair's resolution. Thomas Bayard, the Secretary of State

involved in the Mallet incident, responded to the Resolution himself with documents that provided little further information about the case than what was already publicly known (Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, 51st Cong., Special Sess., March 1889).³⁰ The questions surrounding the U.S. government's failure to respond to requests for assistance of one of its citizens on trial for execution abroad were, thus, never officially resolved.

Conclusion

At the time of Louis Riel's first rebellion in 1869, a local movement developed in the United States, calling for annexation of the Northwest Territories. Without federal support, this movement died out relatively quickly, however, and was never revived despite Riel's pleas for annexation prior to his execution in 1885. One reason for the refusal among U.S. authorities to seriously contemplate annexation of the Northwest Territories was their unwillingness to jeopardize their relationship with friendly, Anglo powers. Second, U.S. officials were reluctant to annex a territory with a population that consisted predominantly of indigenous people of mixed French and North American Indian descent. Finally, the well-developed Metis political leadership in the Northwest Territories represented by Louis Riel, and the desire among Metis residents for a semi-autonomous, sub-national status threatened U.S. commitments to white supremacy, possessive liberal individualism and federal control. U.S. officials chose not to annex the Northwest Territories because in their reckoning (or cost-benefit analysis to use

³⁰ It seems likely that the Secretary of State would not have chosen to include any material that indicated possible wrongdoing on his own part or on that of the President whom he served even if such documents existed.

contemporary parlance), the potential threats to white political supremacy and racial purity outweighed the potential benefits of additional land acquisition.

The decision not to annex the Northwest Territories, however, did not erase the physical and political challenges that Louis Riel posed to the U.S. nation and state. Riel challenged prevailing definitions of the nation through his status as a Metis and a bi-national U.S. and Canadian citizen. Riel's French heritage, his strong commitments to Catholicism and his combination of religious and political principles also challenged the exclusive, ascriptive characteristics of the U.S. nation. Finally, Riel's ability to pass as white made him seem a particular threat to U.S. members of the press, policymakers and other European Americans because his ascriptive ineligibility for membership in the U.S. nation was not visually marked.

U.S. press members and policymakers responded to these challenges by treating Riel as a foreigner, thus protecting their exclusive, mono-racial visions of the U.S. nation. They avoided any official acknowledgement of his U.S. citizenship despite his legal status as such. Unable to comprehend Riel as a member of the Metis, U.S. reporters treated him either as a savage half-breed opposed to the forces of civilization or as a French-Canadian fighting for citizenship rights denied to him by an Anglo-dominated Canadian government.

U.S. authorities did not seek to control Riel through partial assimilation as they did other indigenous people of mixed descent because Riel seemed to pose the risk of fully assimilating into the U.S. nation and thus diluting its racial purity. Indeed, U.S. policymakers considered Riel so potentially dangerous that they refused to intervene in

his Canadian trial for treason and his execution despite his status as a U.S. citizen and ample evidence that the trial was conducted unjustly, if not unlawfully. Following Riel's execution, members of Congress debated the U.S. government's decision not to intervene in Riel's execution. Their debate did not challenge the racist parameters of U.S. policy, however. Rather, it focused on whether or not Riel had been sufficiently white to qualify for U.S. citizenship in the first place.

Thus, U.S. press members and policymakers sought to uphold and strengthen prevailing definitions of the nation and state by maintaining the exclusive, ascriptive boundaries designed to protect an imaginary homogenous community (see Anderson 1991). They declared people and territories that threatened to diversify their state and disrupt their fantasy of a homogenous nation foreign. The challenges posed by such foreigners, however, did not disappear with the execution of Riel. In subsequent years, the struggle among the desires for territorial expansion, preservation of racial purity and white supremacy, and maintenance of the illusion of democracy became the basis for heated debates about what peoples and territories were fit for self-government and for inclusion in the U.S. nation and state.

Chapter 4

Annexed Americans:

Robert Wilcox, Home Rule and Self-Government in Hawaii

Introduction

At the end of the 19th century, the United States annexed its first overseas territory. In 1898, Hawaii, far across the ocean from the North American continent, became an official part of the United States of America. Why did the United States annex Hawaii and what implications did this decision have for the changing boundaries of the U.S. nation and state?

The previous chapter discussed a case in which U.S. policymakers chose not to annex a contiguous, continental territory and resisted recognizing or treating its mixed race leader as a U.S. citizen despite his legal status as such. I argued that U.S. authorities did not annex the Northwest Territories because they did not want to risk angering their Anglo allies who also sought control of these territories and because they were uncomfortable with the idea of Louis Riel, an indigenous leader of mixed descent, taking a leading role in their government. Their concerns with: a. protecting white dominance by maintaining positive relations with other white-dominated states; b. restricting

national membership and, to the extent possible, state citizenship to whites; and c. limiting the boundaries of the state to include only white-dominated territories, outweighed their desire to annex additional lands.

In this chapter, I will examine a case in which the opposite conditions applied. In 1898, the United States officially annexed the islands of Hawaii via a joint Congressional resolution. This decision was extremely controversial but after several failed efforts, the movement for annexation did succeed. Two important factors contributed to the U.S. annexation of Hawaii. First, proponents of Hawaiian annexation managed to convince members of the U.S. Congress that Hawaii was in danger of domination by Japan. While the likelihood of this possibility was, in fact, quite remote, U.S. Congressmen responded strongly to the perceived threat of Hawaiian domination by a non-European, non-white power. Second, although white men of U.S. ancestry constituted a tiny minority of the population in Hawaii, they possessed most of the land and wealth in the country, controlled its government and had developed political and economic institutions that shared many similarities with those in the United States. This political and economic dominance by a white elite of U.S. descent reassured some U.S. Congressmen that Hawaii could be relatively easily assimilated into the United States.

How did the controversial annexation of this mixed race territory change the boundaries of the state and nation and prompt redefinitions of what it meant to be American? My overall argument is that the changes in the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state prompted by Hawaiian annexation led to an increasingly abstract, ideological

definition of what it meant to be American. As the material connections that tied the definition of American to the North American continent and to a visually identifiable set of human bodies loosened, Americanism became a form of intangible property. I will explain this argument by considering first, the implications of the changes in the territorial boundaries of the state and second, the implications of the changes in the sociopolitical boundaries of the nation that resulted from Hawaiian annexation.

Myra Jehlen has argued that American national identity expressed itself as a natural emanation of the land. Key to the understanding of American national identity was a vision of the North American continent as a natural, unpopulated wilderness destined to become the source of a new, American civilization. Progress in the United States was, therefore, often defined in terms of spatial expansion rather than in terms of historical evolution (Jehlen 1986, 20).¹ One important facet of the vacant continent-based identity held by European Americans was the individual's sense of immediate connection with the territorial universe and the principles that universe was assumed to embody, without the mediation or intervention of society. According to Jehlen,

The crux of the matter is the identification of certain abstract ideals with the physical American landscape. For when that identification is made, the setting of self-realization and of action becomes a permanent and all-encompassing nature, in which

¹ The metaphors of the human body often employed in Congressional debates about Hawaii's government may have been favored because they were capable of simultaneously expressing both of these aspects of progress.

the limits of each person are not others (as in society) but, at one end of the natural continuum, the universe itself, and at the other, the individual self (Jehlen 1986, 13).²

What happened when the spatial expansion that Jehlen described as central to American national identity extended the territorial boundaries of the United States beyond the American continent itself? How did the definition of the nation that Jehlen described as inextricably linked to the “physical American landscape” change when it encompassed new populations in territories that did not form part of the American continent at all?

My argument is that the incorporation of Hawaii into the United States involved a further abstraction of the definitions of the U.S. nation and state into both more ideological and more ascriptive terms. If Americanism could be defined in abstract, ideological terms, it could be exported to and imposed upon distant territories and the link between America and the American continent could justifiably be loosened.

Other factors, such as the industrialization of the U.S. economy and a growing, middle class culture of professionalism, also contributed to this more abstract definition of national identity (see e.g. Bledstein 1976). Previous understandings of what it meant to be a member of the U.S. nation were tied to ownership and cultivation of land on the

² John Wikse expressed a similar view of the isolation of the self and its relationship to the larger universe within the framework of liberal individualism when he noted that:

Dependence on humanity... is dependence upon an abstraction... [T]he sources of poetry in America revolve around the images of abstract unification (humanity, mankind) as a direct extension of the experience of the isolated individual, not around the mediation or connectedness of social interaction. But completeness can be achieved amidst separation only by virtue of becoming beyond the need of others, beyond connectedness and relationship (Witse 1977, 137).

American continent. In the industrialized economy of the late 19th century, however, growing numbers of European Americans lived in cities and did not own land. While many European Americans living in Hawaii did own land and, in fact, supported U.S. annexation in order to protect their land ownership in the islands, the land they owned was not part of the American continent.

In this context, I will argue that the definition of what it meant to be American began to change. Whereas earlier definitions of American were tied to possession of North American land, newer definitions of American replaced continental land ownership with possession of a commitment to the institution of private property.

It was not only the expansion of the territorial boundaries of the U.S. that led to this increasingly abstract definition of Americanism. As a result of U.S. annexation, all indigenous inhabitants of Hawaii became eligible for U.S. citizenship though not all accepted or embraced this new status. The designation of Native Hawaiians as U.S. citizens, however, did not lead to their full inclusion in the nation.

The second half of this chapter will consider the challenges to conventional definitions of Americanism posed by Robert Wilcox, a controversial Hawaiian leader of mixed descent, who devoted his political career to the promotion of Native Hawaiian rights. It will also examine the responses of U.S. officials to those challenges. One of the most common ways in which U.S. policymakers responded to the fact that the majority of U.S. citizens in the newly annexed Territory of Hawaii were Native Hawaiians and to the political initiatives that Robert Wilcox led on their behalf was to

articulate a much more restrictive definition of the nation. Their practical definitions of Americans and Americanism excluded indigenous and mixed race Hawaiians despite their U.S. citizenship.

The annexation of Hawaii thus also contributed to an increasingly abstract definition of what it meant to be American, in the sense of being a member of the U.S. nation. Americanism itself became a possession and form of property just as whiteness was conceptualized as a form of property with its own attendant rights and responsibilities. Indeed, the possession of whiteness became a major component of what it meant to be a member of the American nation. Whiteness became a critical ascriptive boundary marker for the new property in ideological Americanism. Even more important than the possession of whiteness itself, however, was possession of a commitment to the institutions of white supremacy. To be American meant to possess a firm commitment to the institutions of private property and white supremacy in addition to possession of certain ascriptive traits, including whiteness. This property regime of Americanism conferred a variety of rights and responsibilities upon its owners that were denied to those who were technically U.S. citizens but who did not meet the criteria for full national membership.

After a brief historical introduction, the first half of this chapter will be devoted to an analysis of how U.S. Congressmen responded to the challenges posed by Hawaii's mixed race status in 1900 debates concerning Hawaii's fitness for self-government. I will begin by examining the different meanings and implications that Congressmen and other

European American observers attributed to Hawaii as a mixed race territory. These included debates about Hawaii's non-contiguous status, discussions about the relative safety and danger of extending full territorial government to Hawaii, and attempts to naturalize particular visions of Hawaii's political future through references to legitimate and illegitimate forms of movement in relation to the ostensibly natural boundaries of the United States. I will consider how these assessments of the implications of Hawaii's status as a mixed race territory influenced opinions about its fitness for self-government. The first part of this chapter will conclude with a specific examination of debates concerning proposed suffrage restrictions in Hawaii.

The second half of the chapter will consider the challenges posed by Robert Wilcox, Hawaii's first delegate to the U.S. Congress, and the responses to these challenges by U.S. policymakers and members of the press. In particular, it will focus on an analysis of Wilcox's political career during the year 1900. Wilcox spent the beginning of the year in Washington D.C. where he tried to persuade Congressmen to ensure that the new Hawaiian government would protect indigenous rights. Following the passage of the Organic Act, Wilcox returned to Hawaii, formed the Home Rule Party, and ran for election as Hawaii's first representative to the U.S. Congress. After winning that controversial election, he returned to Washington D.C. at the end of the year to begin his term in the U.S. House of Representatives as the official Delegate of Hawaii.

History of Hawaiian Annexation and Robert Wilcox's Early Political Career

U.S. missionaries arrived in Hawaii at the beginning of the 19th century, intent on converting the Native Hawaiians to Protestantism, but it was not long before the missionaries and their descendants also began to pursue more material goals. They purchased large tracts of land, established sugar plantations, and began to accumulate considerable wealth through the combined dispossession of Native Hawaiians and the institution of Chinese and Japanese contract labor, a form of labor often compared to chattel slavery. As the power of this new elite of U.S. descent strengthened, the authority of the Hawaiian monarchy weakened.

While this transformation of Hawaii's political, economic and cultural landscape was taking place, Robert Wilcox was born in 1855 on the island of Maui, the son of William Wilcox, a sea captain turned rancher from Newport, Rhode Island, and Kalua Makoleokalani, a distant relative of one of the previous kings of Maui. Wilcox began his political career during one of the most tumultuous periods in Hawaiian history (Andrade 1996, 15).

By the 1870s, vocal minorities within both Hawaii and the United States had begun to advocate Hawaiian annexation to the United States as a means of sustaining the political and economic dominance achieved by the missionaries and their descendants and other Hawaiian residents of U.S. descent. In 1876, King Kalakaua, agreed to participate in a Reciprocity Treaty that provided duty-free entry of Hawaiian sugar into the United States in exchange for Hawaii's promise not to make territorial concessions to any country other

than the United States. This treaty, renewed in 1884 and 1887 with strong support from Secretary of State James Blaine, strengthened the economic relationship between Hawaii and the United States. In its later version, it also granted the United States exclusive rights to use Pearl Harbor as a naval station (Bell 1984, 22-23).

Robert Wilcox served his first term in the Hawaiian legislature in 1880 and supported King Kalakaua and his British-born spokesman, Walter Murray Gibson. British by birth, Gibson had originally come to Hawaii in order to establish a Mormon settlement but was later ex-communicated from the church and became involved in royalist politics. He achieved prominence as a politician who supported the interests of Native Hawaiians against the white business and landowners (Andrade 1996, 11-14).

In 1887, the Hawaiian League and the Honolulu Rifles, political and military groups made up largely of wealthy, white men of U.S. descent, persuaded King Kalakaua to abdicate much of his political power and forced Walter Gibson and his ministers to resign. Native Hawaiians did not mount large protests against this overthrow of the Hawaiian government because many had never considered Kalakaua a legitimate king and there was widespread agreement that his government had become intolerably corrupt (Andrade 1996, 46-48).

Hawaii's new political and military leaders forced the king to replace the existing Constitution of 1864 with what came to be popularly known as the Bayonet Constitution. The new Constitution significantly decreased the king's authority over the government. For example, within the Hawaiian legislature, the House of Nobles was increased to the

size of the House of Representatives and became an elected body rather than one appointed by the king. A property qualification limited suffrage and guaranteed that wealthy, property-owning white men of U.S. descent could now vote for members of the House of Nobles but that the majority of Native Hawaiians and other residents would be excluded from this process (Andrade 1996, 49-51).

The new leaders of Hawaii also cut off financial support to Wilcox and several other Hawaiians who were in Italy undergoing military training. Upon his return to Hawaiian politics, Wilcox not only expressed fierce opposition to the new Reform government but also resented the king for not having mounted a more effective resistance. Most Native Hawaiians, devastated by their drastic loss of political power, shared Wilcox's staunch opposition to the Reform government. While many had been frustrated by Kalakaua's corruption and weakness, they found the new Reform government an even greater threat to their sovereignty (Andrade 1996, 52-55).

Wilcox considered suggesting that the King abdicate the throne and turn it over to his sister, Liliuokalani, whom many perceived as a potentially stronger leader. The abdication plot was discovered, however, and fearing that he might be arrested, Wilcox moved to San Francisco with his aristocratic Italian wife, Gina Sobrero. Their marriage disintegrated shortly afterward and Sobrero journeyed back to Italy with their infant daughter who died en route (Andrade 1996, 55-57).

Wilcox returned to Hawaii in April 1889 and resumed his political activities. On July 30th, he and his supporters marched to the palace, intending to force the king to sign a

new Constitution similar to that of 1864. When they arrived, however, the king was not there and the revolt ended quickly. The Reform government tried Wilcox for his role in the failed revolt but the required jury of Native Hawaiians quickly acquitted him of charges of conspiracy despite the substantial evidence against him. Indeed, the revolt only served to increase Wilcox's popularity among Native Hawaiians (Andrade 1996, 59-63).

Two years later, King Kalakaua died while on a trip to California and Queen Liliuokalani assumed the throne. To Wilcox's great disappointment, however, the Queen considered his desire to replace the Constitution of 1887 and his outspoken advocacy of "Hawaii for the Hawaiians" too radical a political platform and refused to offer him an appointment in her new government. Angered by this snub, Wilcox reversed his earlier support of the Queen and began to advocate the replacement of the monarchy with a republic (Andrade 1996, 81-90).

In 1892, Wilcox and his new National Liberal Party made a strong showing in the Hawaiian elections, calling not only for the establishment of a republic but also for annexation to the United States. The relatively brief annexationist period in Wilcox's political career that ensued has puzzled political analysts but was most likely simply a desperate attempt on his part to find a new way to regain political power for the Native Hawaiian people. The effort backfired and Wilcox lost considerable support among his indigenous constituency (Andrade 1996, 92-98). He ultimately returned to his earlier

conviction that the best means to promote the interests of the Hawaiian people was through support of the monarchy.

In the meantime, Queen Liliuokalani had already decided to impose a new constitution on the government but was faced with immediate opposition from both her own cabinet and from many members of the white community. At the last moment, the Queen postponed her announcement of the constitutional change but the threat had already convinced the largely white opposition leaders that they needed to take drastic measures in order to preserve their political power.

Lorrin Thurston mobilized these leaders under the guise of the Annexation Club and on January 16, 1893, John Stevens, the U.S. minister to the Hawaiian kingdom, ordered 162 sailors and marines to land on shore in order to provide support to the predominantly white annexationists of U.S. descent who had been gathering forces to move against the Queen. On January 17th, the opposition occupied the government building and read a statement declaring that the monarchy was over. The queen yielded to the United States of America, with the likely belief, based on historical precedent, that she would later be restored to the crown. Minister Stevens declared a U.S. Protectorate over Hawaii but the Cleveland administration did not support this declaration (Andrade 1996, 116-120 & Bell 1986, 26-27).

After the U.S. overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, President Cleveland withdrew a proposed annexation treaty from the U.S. Senate, asserting that Hawaiian opinion on the question of annexation had not been adequately surveyed. In order to better assess

political events in Hawaii, Cleveland appointed James H. Blount as a special commissioner and sent him to investigate the political situation on the islands. The famous Blount report that resulted from this investigation confirmed Cleveland's suspicions that Minister Stevens had worked in conjunction with the Annexation Club to overthrow the Queen against the will of the majority of Hawaiian residents (Bell 1986, 28).

Although Cleveland clearly did not favor annexation, he was also unwilling to intervene militarily in order to restore the Queen. Congress passed resolutions stipulating that other countries should not interfere in Hawaiian affairs and the islands entered a long period of political limbo during which they were governed by an oligarchic republic, led by wealthy, white land-owners of U.S. descent. Sanford B. Dole became president of this new Republic of Hawaii in 1894 (Bell 1986, 29).

In the wake of the 1893 Revolt, Wilcox once again strove to find his political balance. His first inclination was to support the queen but he soon shifted tactics and renewed his advocacy of annexation to the United States in the hope that it would lead to statehood, which in turn would bring full and equal rights to the Hawaiian people. The majority of Native Hawaiians still firmly opposed the idea of annexation, however, and Wilcox once again returned to a position of moderate support for the monarchy (Andrade 1996, 124-127).

In late 1894, a group of political opponents requested Wilcox's assistance in restoring the monarchy. Wilcox reluctantly agreed and attempted to use his military expertise to

organize and lead the rebels but they lacked both the preparation and the numbers they needed in order for the revolt to succeed. After this revolt failed, the Dole government forced the queen to formally abdicate her throne and take an oath of allegiance to the republic. Wilcox was tried for treason and received a commuted death sentence.³

Meanwhile, increasing Japanese influence in Asia and the Pacific region during the late 1890s concerned U.S. policymakers in Washington D. C. and began to persuade them to adopt more favorable attitudes toward Hawaiian annexation. In 1894, Japan won a military victory over China, demonstrating its potential power on the global stage. During the latter years of the decade, the immigration of Japanese contract laborers to Hawaii expanded quickly, with 10,000 Japanese immigrants arriving in Hawaii in 1896-1897. The Hawaiian government responded by refusing entry to several ships carrying Japanese contract laborers, leading to a threat of war by Japan (Bell 1986, 30). The annexationists in Hawaii gained U.S. support for their movement by suggesting that the islands were in danger of being conquered by Japan although many analysts later acknowledged that this assertion was greatly exaggerated (Pratt 1936, 217-218 and 319-320; Bell 1984, 30-32; and see also Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 1925).

At the same time, William McKinley replaced Grover Cleveland in the White House. The new Republican leader was much more open to the idea of U.S. expansion overseas

³ President Dole issued a parole, freeing Wilcox from jail on January 1, 1896. Later that year, Wilcox married Princess Theresa Owana Kaohelani, a direct descendant of the father of Kamehameha I. The couple had two children, a son and a daughter (Andrade 1996, 149-172).

than his predecessor and the State Department prepared another annexation treaty for the U.S. Senate to consider in 1897. Congressional debates over the proposed treaty focused on racist fears, particularly the fear of erosion of white supremacy, and related concerns that annexation would lead to statehood for Hawaii (Bell 1986, 31-32). Congressmen expressed specific fears about “the ‘problems’ which would follow if such an ‘immature’ and racially ‘mixed’ electorate was given virtual self-government under statehood (Bell 1986, 33).” In one of the most frequently quoted comments during the 1898 Congressional debates over annexation, Missouri Congressman Champ Clark expressed his fear that annexation would lead to Asian representatives from Hawaii sharing the floor with white, European American Congressmen. After describing Hawaiian residents as “a lot of non-descript Asiatico-Polynesian ignoramuses,” Clark asked, “How can we endure our shame when a Chinese senator from Hawaii, with his pig-tail hanging down his back, with his pagan joss in his hand, shall rise from his curule chair and in pidgin English proceed to chop logic with George Frisbie Hoar or Henry Cabot Lodge?” (Cong. Rec., June 14, 1898, Vol. 31, pt. 7, 6019. Also quoted in Bell 1986, 33 and elsewhere).

The proposed annexation treaty ultimately did not have enough Congressional support to garner the two-thirds majority needed in both houses to pass. Supporters of annexation conceded that the only way to pursue their goal was via a joint resolution that required only a simple majority in the House and Senate, the method that had been used to annex the Republic of Texas earlier in the century. The resolution, introduced by Representative Francis G. Newlands, also excluded the controversial phrase in the preamble to the original treaty, stating that Hawaii would be incorporated into the United

States “as an integral part thereof” (Bell 1986, 34). Many Congressmen feared that this phrase would guarantee Hawaii ultimate statehood.

Shortly after annexationists decided to proceed with the Congressional resolution, the Spanish-American War broke out and Hawaii became an important station for U.S. ships to refuel and for servicemen to rest on the way to the Philippines (Bell 1986, 33-34). In this context, the annexationists finally achieved their goal of annexing Hawaii to the United States in July 1898. Eighteen months later, Robert Wilcox arrived in Washington D.C. to protect and further the interests of Native Hawaiians under the new government that Congress was creating for Hawaii.

Hawaii challenged the conventional territorial boundaries of the United States and exposed the racialized frameworks that policymakers used to define the state and nation. The next section of this chapter will examine these challenges through an analysis of the Congressional debates that took place in the early months of 1900 concerning what form of government the U.S. Congress should extend to Hawaii. The Organic Act of 1900 that eventually emerged from these debates appears on the surface to be a relatively democratic and liberal document. What the Act itself masks, however, are the tensions between rival anti-democratic factions, each trying to pursue its own interests and expose the hypocrisy of the other, which ultimately led to this result (Moore 1971, 13).

Congressional Debates about Governing a Mixed Race Territory

The annexation of Hawaii remained highly controversial among U.S. policymakers even after its official approval. The controversies concerned whether Hawaii's status as a mixed race territory made it fit for inclusion in the United States and, if so, what form of government it should receive and what status its indigenous population should hold. These questions were at the heart of Congressional debates in 1900 about the appropriate form of government for the new U.S. Territory of Hawaii.

Hawaii's uncertain and ill-defined relationship to the United States at the turn of the 20th century was similar in many respects to the ambiguous relationship of mixed blood Indians to the U.S. nation. Hawaii's mixed population, its U.S.-style and European-American dominated government, and its relatively peaceful annexation to the United States distinguished it in important ways from other territories such as Puerto Rico and the Philippines over which the U.S. asserted control during the same period. Despite Hawaii's official annexation, however, members of Congress disagreed strenuously about whether it should occupy a status equal to that of other official, continental U.S. Territories due to its status as a mixed race territory, politically and economically dominated by a small white minority of U.S. descent, but inhabited by a large, non-white majority that included Asian laborers and indigenous people.

In previous chapters, I have argued that indigenous people of mixed descent challenged the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state and, in some cases, helped to redefine them. Within the dominant vision of the nation, indigenous people of mixed

descent occupied an ambiguous status. Their very existence challenged the constructed racial boundaries that policymakers referred to as natural markers roughly corresponding to the divisions between those who were accepted as members of the nation and those who were not. While indigenous people of mixed descent enjoyed the formal, legal rights of state citizenship, their fitness for full membership in the nation was the subject of considerable controversy and debate among policymakers and implementers. They were governed by the state but generally did not have equal opportunities to participate actively in the governing process. The Congressional debate about Hawaii's fitness for self-government focused on similar issues. After annexation, Hawaii received recognition as an official part of the United States but questions about the extent to which it should be allowed to participate actively in its own self-government were the subject of intense controversy.

The challenges posed by indigenous people of mixed descent derived in part from the ways in which the predominant European-American discourses constructed their individual human bodies as racially mixed. According to these perspectives, indigenous people of mixed descent transgressed natural racial boundaries. The same worldview that led to the definition of people of European and indigenous ancestry as racially mixed contributed to the definition of Hawaii as a racially mixed territory. European-American policymakers imposed the same racialized and gendered interpretations on bodies of land that they did on bodies of individual humans.

Hawaii's Mixed Race and Non-Contiguous Status

Two of the major issues that many European American observers raised in objection to both Hawaii's annexation and, later, to proposals for its equal treatment as an official U.S. Territory were its mixed race and non-contiguous status. These attributes of Hawaii were contrasted to the homogenous and contiguous status of other U.S. Territories and States. The issues of racial mixture and territorial contiguity were linked in important ways in debates over whether Hawaii could be considered an American territory.

Hawaii's designation as a mixed race territory by both proponents and opponents of Hawaiian annexation expressed the challenges it posed to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state as homogenous entities in which white, European Americans were demographically as well as politically and economically dominant. U.S. opponents to Hawaiian annexation described its population as "heterogeneous," "mongrel," and made up of "incongruous elements" (quoted in Osborne 1981, 36-37). One continental newspaper claimed, "We have a sufficient stock of mongrelism to last us the balance of this century, at least, without taking in the nut brown islanders of the South Pacific" (quoted from the *Wilmington Morning Star* (N.C.) in Osborne 1981, 37).⁴

During the 1900 Congressional debates, Senator Cullom, a Republican Senator from Illinois, a strong supporter of Hawaiian annexation and the main author of the proposed Senate bill for Hawaii's new government, described the Hawaiian population as "a

⁴ A 19th century historian observed in a similar vein. "this Union had enough of the problem of amalgamating races into one brotherhood to last at least for the rest of the century" (James Schouler, quoted in Osborne 1981, 35).

different class of people from those in the United States,” a people of “mixed races and from different countries” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong, 1st Sess., v. 33, 4462). Other members of Congress characterized the Hawaiian population as a “curious conglomeration,” “the most heterogeneous mass of humanity to be found on any equal area on the globe,” and a “class of people upon whom seems to rest the curse of God” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong, 1st Sess., v. 33, 2188, 3748, & 2390). Senator Morgan described Hawaii as “a country that has a population...large and mixed and with...few people who are really intelligent, educated people,” while Senator Platt referred to Hawaii’s “mixed and dangerous population” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong, 1st Sess., v. 33, 2028 & 2183).

The naturalization of ideological positions took on new meaning and significance in the context of efforts to justify the inclusion of such a mixed race territory far from the North American continent as part of America. Many of the Congressional debates focused on whether or not, as a racially mixed and non-contiguous territory, Hawaii could be considered a natural part of the United States of America. Hawaii was neither part of the North American continent, nor was it a vacant land upon which U.S. national identity could simply play itself out in the name of progress. Rather, the new Territory had a long, rich political history of its own, and a large and diverse population. How could Hawaii be reconstructed as American and how would this process change the definition of what it meant to be American in other places?

Many European American observers argued that its non-contiguous island status served as evidence of Hawaii’s natural separation from the United States by thousands of

miles of water. In an article entitled, "Manifest Destiny," Carl Schurz, an anti-imperialist writer for *Harper's Weekly*, argued against Hawaiian annexation due to its non-contiguous status.

[Schurz] maintained that throughout American history only contiguous nontropical territory had been incorporated into the Union. The new 'manifest destiny,' by contrast, envisaged the acquisition of territory outside the North American continent lying in the tropical climate zones where 'so-called republics... constantly vibrate between anarchy and despotism.' History had shown that Anglo-Saxon democratic institutions could not survive in tropical colonies. 'If attached to the United States,' said Schurz, 'Hawaii would always retain a colonial character... No candid American could ever think of making a state of this Union out of such a group of islands...' Schurz wanted the United States to remain a compact, self-contained, continental republic (Osborne 1981, 31).

Well-known legal scholar George T. Curtis held a similar perspective. In his view, only contiguous, or at least continental territories were eligible to be incorporated into the United States via treaties (Osborne 1981, 32). Curtis argued that "the framers of the Constitution intended the Republic's territorial expansion to be restricted to contiguous land which would be settled by Americans of Anglo-Saxon lineage" (Osborne 1981, 33). Echoing these sentiments, an editorial in the *Overland Monthly* asserted that despite the benefits that annexation might bring to "our countrymen living there," "their gratification is hardly sufficient reason for surrendering our great advantage of a compact coast line, and taking the miscellaneous Hawaiian population into our family of States" (*Overland Monthly*, 1893, v. 21, 331).

The concern with Hawaii's non-contiguous status represented the flip side of Myra Jehlen's observation that American national identity was strongly tied to the North American continent through the belief that American political values emanated from the

land itself (Jehlen 1986). Those who questioned whether Hawaii could ever be truly American due to its status as a non-contiguous territory implied that the definitions of the U.S. state and nation were inextricably linked to the North American continent.

Joyce Chaplin has pointed out that early European American understandings of both race and nationhood were closely linked to beliefs about climatic zones. For example, early English settlers in North America believed that despite their long residence on the continent, American Indians had never adapted to its climate and were, therefore, unable to physically thrive there (Chaplin 1997, 232). By contrast, these English immigrants interpreted their own ability to adapt to the climate as evidence of their destiny to settle and rule the continent. According to Chaplin:

White Americans seemed to believe themselves more natural than the aborigines, as if English bodies (little changed in America) had always meant to be planted in Virginia, or Plymouth, or Carolina. To colonists, the fact that another population had arrived before them meant little if people in the first group had bodies that had never truly acclimated (Chaplin 1997, 251).

This theory of acclimation stemmed from a European worldview that divided the globe into distinct climatic zones. Europeans associated themselves with what they defined as “moderate or temperate” zones (Chaplin 1997, 236). Within these zones, they resided as homogenous populations. By contrast, according to this perspective, tropical zones were not conducive to settlement by European populations. Furthermore, tropical zones represented the most diverse climatic regions. Indeed, “They were teeming with animal populations, lush plant life, a plethora of mineral wealth, and an assortment of diseases” (Chaplin 1997, 234).

From this vantage point, the underlying connections among European American objections to Hawaii's mixed race and non-contiguous status become more evident. U.S. observers likely associated Hawaii's mixed race character with its tropical status. This tropical status, in turn, made it unsuitable for U.S. settlement or annexation in the minds of many European Americans. Senator Richard Pettigrew, one of the staunchest opponents of Hawaiian annexation, insisted that "the European, the American does not go to the Tropics to raise children, to have a family" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2445).⁵ Representative Thomas emphasized that in contrast to Hawaii, previously acquired U.S. Territories "were adjacent and all upon the American continent, adapted to the development of a homogenous people and a homogenous government" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v.33, 3718).

The acquisition of Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and California was a natural, homogenous expansion, with a view to admission of the new territory eventually to statehood and citizenship... The taking of these domains in the Temperate Zone, adjacent to the original thirteen States, represented genuine American expansion, because American citizens could make homes there and develop the same sturdy civilization based upon the equality of rights that existed in the older States. But our American citizens, our white race, can not make permanent homes as far down in the Tropics as the Philippine Islands, already thickly populated by an acclimated race (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3719).

⁵ Senator Richard Pettigrew was also the author of several of the proposed bills originating from the Waldron case that sought to allow mixed blood Indians to exercise full control over their land allotments without supervision by the U.S. government, dependent on their specific blood quantum. Pettigrew supported the rights of mixed bloods such as Waldron to receive and sell allotments because this position served his interests as a land speculator and the owner of the largest real estate business in South Dakota. He did not, however, support the annexation of Hawaii, which he referred to as a "rotten borough in the Pacific" whose people "have no right to become a part of our system" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v.33, 2445, 2446). While Pettigrew backed the right of mixed blood individuals to sell their land to white speculators, he did not support the extension of the United States government and political system to a territory where the majority of the citizens were non-white and whose commercial prospects would not directly benefit him.

According to this view, contiguous territorial expansion was natural, homogenous and “genuine,” whereas expansion beyond the “Temperate Zone” to the “Tropics” was untenable. In addition, not only was the physical survival of racially defined nations linked to specific climatic zones. The survival and flourishing of political institutions was also linked to place. According to Thomas, as long as U.S. expansion took place in contiguous regions within the Temperate Zone, “American citizens could make homes there and develop the same sturdy civilization based upon the equality of rights that existed in the older States” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3719). By contrast, in the Tropics, “so-called republics... constantly vibrate between anarchy and despotism” (Schurz quoted in Osborne 1981, 31). Thus, according to this 19th century perspective, the very nature of political institutions was tied not only to the racial character of the population they were intended to govern but also to the geographical region, the climatic zone in which they were located. American political institutions were associated with the temperate North American continent while anarchic and despotic political tendencies were associated with the Tropics.

During the Congressional debates about Hawaii’s new government, Senator Spooner reaffirmed these associations, stating that he “realized the difficulty of bringing into entire harmony with our system and our theories that distant people, situated in a climate where necessary conditions existed which differ from those that surround us, and how difficult it would be for us to apply all of our theories to that island” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2190). Hawaiian annexation represented a profound challenge to prior understandings of the state and nation that linked the definition and source of U.S.

political institutions not only to a homogenous, white, European American citizenry but also to the temperate North American continent. By annexing Hawaii, the U.S. Congress broke those links and forced a reconsideration and redefinition of what it meant to be American. This new definition no longer located the source of national identity in continental soil or in a homogenous citizenry but in an abstract, ideological version of Americanism that individual members of the nation claimed as a form of transferable property.

Blood, Bodies, and Hawaii's Mixed Race Status

Hawaii posed racial as well as territorial and climatic challenges to conventional definitions of Americanism. Congressional members, regardless of whether they supported or opposed territorial government for Hawaii, seemed to accept the assumption that Hawaii's fitness for self-government was directly linked to the racial composition of its population. Blood quantum took on new meaning as Congressional members sought to define the Hawaiian Territory in terms of the blood quantum of its population. The land itself became a racialized body, according to this perspective.

Congressmen used national and racial characterizations interchangeably to describe what types of blood Hawaiian residents possessed. Senators spoke of the amounts of American blood and foreign blood in the Islands. The presence of many individuals of mixed descent in the Hawaiian Islands complicated these analyses, as the following exchange between Senators Pettigrew and Gallinger demonstrates.

Mr. PETTIGREW: What have we annexed? We have annexed 3,085 people of American blood, many of them citizens of Hawaii, whose fathers went to that country to carry the blessings of a Christian religion, and whose sons had become the prosperous sugar planters of that country. We have annexed 5,000 or 6,000 Germans, English, Scandinavians, etc. We do not know whether they will become citizens of the United States or not. We have annexed about 16,000 Portuguese, whose ancestors went to those islands as contract laborers from Madeira years ago, and we have annexed 32,000 Kanakas and 8,000 mixed bloods, half Kanaka and half missionary and half Chinese –

Mr. GALLINGER: That makes three halves.

Mr. PETTIGREW: Three halves; and we have annexed Asiatics by the thousand. We have annexed 37,000 contract laborers and 25,000 or 30,000 Asiatics who are not contract laborers, and now we try to flatter ourselves over the delusion that we are going to make a Territory in the center of the Pacific and ultimately admit it as a State into this Union (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2445-2446).

One of the greatest fears that Hawaii raised for Congressional members as a result of its status as a mixed race territory was the threat of miscegenation. The notion of members of separate races living in close proximity suggested a potential threat to the racial boundaries so central to the definition of the U.S. nation and state. This concern led Representative Gilbert to ask whether “half-breeds” were to become U.S. citizens under the proposed bill for Hawaii’s new government (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3708). Gilbert referred specifically to people of Japanese or Chinese and white, U.S. ancestry. Representative Knox initially attempted to avoid answering Gilbert’s question. Ultimately, however, he reluctantly acknowledged that a child “of mixed blood” born in Hawaii would be a U.S. citizen under the proposed bill but blamed this fact on a decision made by the Supreme Court, implying that Congress would not have supported granting citizenship to people of mixed Asian and European-American

ancestry, despite their birth on what was now American soil (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3708).

This exchange illustrates the tension provoked by Hawaiian annexation between the widely held assumption that racially mixed people were un-American and the principle of *jus soli* citizenship that granted automatic U.S. citizenship to anyone born in the United States. One of the most basic, democratic principles to which the U.S. government subscribed, *jus soli* citizenship seems to reflect an expectation that children born on American soil would absorb the qualities of Americanism from their physical environment. In other words, it suggests a definition of nation linked to a specific land base. When the children in question were of mixed descent, however, this principle came into conflict with the widespread assumption that racial mixture was unnatural and represented a threat to the American nation and state.

Safety vs. Danger

The fear of racial mixture among European Americans was directly related to fears that whiteness and white power might be diluted through interactions with members of other races. One of the major, recurring themes that emerged from 1900 Congressional discussions of Hawaii as a mixed race territory was the relative safety or danger of allowing it the same political institutions and laws that existed in other U.S. Territories. These assessments of safety and danger were connected to Congressional concerns about maintaining white supremacy in the islands and preventing Native Hawaiians from politically dominating white, U.S. citizens. (Most, though by no means all, Congressmen

were satisfied that although the Asian population constituted a demographic majority in Hawaii, it did not pose a substantial political threat because Asians were not granted U.S. citizenship.) As one scholar has noted, “The essence of danger, as its etymology suggests, is domination” (Wikse 1977, 20).⁶

In addition to worries about political domination, Congressional concerns about safety and danger focused on the protection of property regimes based on whiteness. The mixed race character of Hawaii posed a danger to both the fantasized homogeneity of U.S. territory and the purity of America’s white citizenry. Both the racial homogeneity of U.S. land and the purity of whiteness constituted important aspects of the economic, political and moral value attributed to these different forms of property. In this sense, some U.S. Congressmen clearly felt that the acquisition of Hawaii threatened the value of U.S. property or, to put it another way, the value of property in America.

This link between danger and domination was evident in statements that many Congressional members made, relating the concept of danger to the potential of a Hawaiian government controlled by Native Hawaiians. Senator Platt from Connecticut noted, for instance, “There is an entirely different condition of population, of citizenship, from that which has ever existed in any Territory which we have ever organized in the United States, and it makes it very much more dangerous to allow absolute control in those islands without any restraint to be exercised from what may be called the home Government of the United States” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2183). By

⁶ The old French word, *danger*, meant “the condition of being dependent upon a lord or master” (Wikse 1977, 20).

contrast, Senator Teller stated that all of the people in Hawaii “may not be fit for participation in the government; but certainly there is a sufficient number to insure an absolutely safe and stable government, as good as there can be in any of the ordinary communities of no greater number than there are in Hawaii” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2180).

One popular way of reinforcing ideas about the need to guarantee Hawaii’s safety through its domination by white, European-American men was through the use of metaphors of Hawaii as a female body. Hawaii often appeared as a young woman dependent for her safety upon the protection of the United States and its male representatives, either the white Congressmen debating her political future or the descendants of U.S. missionaries who exercised local political control over the islands.

While the use of gendered metaphors represented an attempt on the part of Congressional members to naturalize their visions of ideal political relationships between Hawaii and the United States, these references to women themselves were laden with ideological baggage. The metaphors relied on a set of shared assumptions about the proper role of women in civilized society, including conventional understandings about what constituted legitimate family formations, what qualities distinguished noble from corrupt women, and what kinds of relationships between the sexes were accepted and glorified versus what kinds of relationships were to be condemned. In this sense, metaphorical depictions of Hawaii as a woman in the U.S. Congressional debates represented not only efforts to naturalize particular political visions but also the

imposition of yet another layer of ideological assertions concerning the legitimate political relationship between Hawaii and the United States. They also reinforced and gave additional meaning to the notion of Hawaii as a possession of the United States. White, European American men sought either to legitimize their possession of the non-white, female Hawaii or to demonstrate that this female Hawaii was unworthy of possession.

Congressional members likened Hawaii to a woman in order to express both endorsement and opposition to Hawaiian annexation. House Representative Mondell from Wyoming expressed his support of Hawaiian annexation and of Hawaii's admission to the U.S. as a Territory by asserting, "This fair daughter of the Republic came into the family circle, the legitimate offspring and growth of Christian, American influences, containing an educated citizenship, most of whom had some experience in the exercise of the elective franchise" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v 33, 3722). Mondell linked Hawaii's legitimacy as the "daughter" of the United States directly to the Territory's "fairness," the "Christian, American influences" in the islands and its "educated citizenry."

This image of Hawaii was echoed in comments made by Representative Knox who asserted that the "missionary class" would be "the great vital, ennobling force that shall make Hawaii the fairest and best of the islands that have become part of the nation" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3705). (It is interesting to note the dual associations of the word "fair" with racial whiteness, on one hand, and justice, on the

other.) Knox claimed that it was the white, male “missionaries” who gave the feminine Hawaii her nobility and superiority over other island possessions. In other words, it was these men of U.S. descent who imparted value to the female property of Hawaii. Knox noted that the missionaries first went to Hawaii to “plant the seeds of a Christian civilization” and had since become a “controlling class...that has guided the people, shaped legislation, and been faithful to the best interests of Hawaii through all the vicissitudes of its later history” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3704). Knox thus portrayed Hawaii as a vulnerable woman who benefited from U.S. Christian morality and benevolence in the form of white, American male control, guidance and faithfulness. This male protection shielded the Hawaiian Islands from “danger and menace should they fall into the possession of any foreign nation” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3703).

In contrast to Knox’s description of Hawaii as a fair, noble, and enlightened woman, embodying the “spirit of the American Constitution,” Senator Pettigrew described Hawaii as a “brothel” on the basis of its small population of “Americans” and its large, disproportionately male “Asiatic” population (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2446). Dismissing the possibility that Hawaii would ever be eligible for U.S. statehood, Pettigrew asked, “Does this brothel, then, in the Pacific possess the elements, and will it ever possess the elements out of which you can construct an American State” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2446)? He answered his own question, asserting, “It is all nonsense; it can not be done” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2446).

Whereas Knox described the white American missionaries as the protectors of feminine Hawaii's nobility, Pettigrew portrayed the male "Asiatic" laborers as Hawaii's sexual as well as political corrupters, those who turned the islands into a brothel. By characterizing Hawaii as a brothel based on its racially diverse, Asian-dominated, gender-imbalanced population, Pettigrew sought to delegitimize it as a U.S. Territory. Rather than embodying the moral influences of the United States in the image of a fair, young girl, Hawaii, in Pettigrew's view, represented a threat to U.S. morality (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2446).

The depictions of Hawaii as a mixed race territory and the debates about what form of government would be safe to install in such a territory indicate some of the ways in which Hawaii exposed and challenged the conventional assumption that those lands which formed part of the United States as Territories and as potential States would be dominated not only politically and economically, but also demographically, by a homogenous, white population. Congressional members frequently referred to U.S. citizens and members of the white race interchangeably such as when Representative Thomas spoke of "our American citizens, our white race," despite the fact that at the time of these discussions, African Americans were legal citizens of the United States and citizenship had also been extended to many Native Americans and all Native Hawaiians who accepted it (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3719).

For opponents of Hawaiian annexation, the mixed race character of the islands was an obvious reason to exclude it from the United States. For supporters of Hawaiian

annexation, the issue was thornier. They tried to downplay the national and racial diversity of Hawaii's population but, at the same time, they favored policies that would restrict the government of Hawaii to the white male minority of U.S. ancestry. While they were willing to accept Asians as residents of Hawaii who would serve primarily as a cheap labor force, and Native Hawaiians as formal U.S. citizens, they tried vehemently to restrict national membership to whites. Ultimately, their opponents forced them to acknowledge the apparent contradiction between this racist, exclusive stance and their simultaneous espousal of inclusive, universalistic principles.

Legitimate and Illegitimate Movements and the Privilege of Self-Government

One way U.S. Congressmen and other European American observers sought to define the new boundaries of the state and nation was by privileging certain forms of movement that contributed to their vision of the ideal American sociopolitical order while denigrating others that seemed to threaten that order. Some scholars have observed a tendency in Western scholarship to associate indigenous people with immobility and white colonialists of European descent with mobility (see e.g. Alcoff 1995). According to Radhika Mohanram, for instance,

The ecological immobility of the indigenous person as a discursive botanical construct functions to locate the settler as mobile, free, taking his environment with him in ships, boats, planes, and on the soles of his shoes. While the indigene's body comes into being and is shaped by native bioregions, the settler as exotica spreads like a weed but becomes disembodied not only because he is not in his native bioregion, but also because the Europeanization of the Neo-Europes makes the European the Universal Subject. The very term "universal" suggests a subject who is able to take anyone's place, to occupy any place, a process that occurred in the

transformation of the Neo-Europes. The Caucasian is disembodied, mobile, absent of the marks that physically immobilize the native (Mohanram 1999, 15).

Burton Bledstein observed that during the time period in question, the emerging codes of professionalism that came to define the U.S. middle class included efforts to assign groups to specific spaces. According to Bledstein, “Mid-Victorians turned their interest toward identifying every category of person who naturally belonged in a specific ground-space: ... the immigrant in the ghetto, the criminal in the prison, the insane in the asylum, the Indian on the reservation, the Negro in his segregated area, the Irishman in the saloon, the prostitute and the pimp in the red-light district” (Bledstein 1976, 56). At the same time, however, some groups were allowed much greater mobility than others. Doctors, for instance, did not report cases of tuberculosis among their middle class patients, thus sparing them from quarantine, but did report cases among patients from the ghettos, arguing that the disease was more likely to spread in such dirty and densely populated spaces. Thus, Bledstein asserted, “Physicians invoked their authority both to rationalize the containment of the poor in the ghettos and to justify the freedom of movement of the middle class” (Bledstein 1976, 93).

The U.S. annexation of Hawaii exemplified this tendency toward protecting and privileging the mobility of white, wealthy citizens through territorial expansion and white settlement. On another level, however, European Americans tended to privilege and glorify specific forms of both movement *and* stability associated with whiteness. They simultaneously condemned specific types of movement and immobility associated with non-whiteness and un-Americanism. In this sense, the relationships among race, class,

mobility and imperialism are even more complex than those suggested by Mohanram and Bledstein.

U.S. expansion was one form of movement that received strong endorsement from many U.S. Congressmen and other observers. Senator Morgan declared, for example, "The imperialism that I am afraid of is not the natural growth or expansion of our influence in the world, for it was made to expand and it ought to expand, because it is good" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 2126). By enlarging its realm of territorial possessions, the logic of expansion suggested that the United States was not only fulfilling its commercial interests but also its commitment to doing what was morally good.⁷

Echoing the views of many of his contemporaries, Edwin Erle Sparks, the President of State College in Pennsylvania, justified U.S. territorial expansion in both scientific and religious terms in his 1900 volume entitled "The Expansion of the American People: Social and Territorial." According to Sparks, "Expansion is a necessary law of human development and progress" (Sparks 1900, 9). Sparks adhered to the climatic theories used to assert racial superiority and to justify both territorial expansion and political dominance

People of various races have migrated hither, and by assimilation and under unaccustomed climatic influences have built up a new type of man. By conquest or

⁷ As John Wikse has noted, "the etymological parallels between the English good and goods...suggests something of the depth of the relationship in Western culture between what is good and what can be possessed" (Witse 1977, 29).

purchase they have wrested territory after territory from weaker hands. Superior advantages have bred a superior power (Sparks 1900, 12).

Expansion was not only an inevitable facet of evolution, according to Sparks. It was also part of God's plan. After fulfilling the destiny of the "virgin" American continent by developing an "American civilization" there, Sparks contended it was God's will that this civilization be exported to other lands.

For centuries, perchance since creation, God had caused this continent to lie fallow for a new people. Its virgin soil accumulated the richness of ages of vegetable decay and stored up the heat of myriads of sunny days... This wilderness is now become a vast garden wherein new peoples, ideals, arts, inventions and literature are to be propagated and eventually to be carried on to India and the east. The civilization which we are sending by means of missionaries, teachers, physicians, electricians, and in the form of inventions is not the civilization which Columbus would have carried to the east, but infinitely higher and better. God's final purpose is being fulfilled (Sparks 1900, 14).⁸

Both liberal individualist and republican logics favored U.S. territorial expansion but privileged different forms of movement over others. Liberal individualism conceptualized union through individual separation while republicanism privileged

⁸ Whereas the Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ, the embodiment of Christianity, the "virgin soil" of the American continent gave birth to American civilization. The close connection between Christian tenets and American political principles has been observed by Forrest Wood who noted, "The exalted American commitments to individualism, free enterprise, and the diffusion of democratic principles are...nothing more than secular extensions of the Christian precepts of a personal relationship with Christ, man's dominion over the earth, and the bringing of the Good News to all peoples" (Wood 1990, xviii). According to Wood, "White Americans have always believed that their political system is so demonstrably superior to any other, and their economic institutions so irrepressibly expansive, it should be obvious to anyone of intelligence that territorial conquest was as inevitable as the tides" (Wood 1990, 213). Wood also recognized the inextricable ties that both Christianity and Americanism shared with racism, noting, "The fundamental component of the Christian's racism [was] his inherent inability to leave other people alone" (Wood 1990, 22). According to Wood, "Christianity, in the five centuries since its message was first carried to the peoples of the New World...has been fundamentally racist in its ideology, organization, and practice" (Wood 1990, xviii).

movements that preserved the boundaries of the prevailing sociopolitical order and protected the ascriptive hierarchies that supported that order.

Within the framework of liberal individualism, self-government involved the ability to possess and control one's self in isolation from others. The ability to maintain this social separation and self-sufficiency was a key criterion for membership in the nation. Wikse noted the contradiction implicit in this criterion when he observed, "The assumption of social fragmentation, the idea that it is separation that holds society together, is one of the persistent paradoxes of modern political theory" (Witse 1977, 125).⁹

Ironically, movement toward union in terms of individual membership in a nation or territorial membership in a state partially defined by liberal individualism entailed movement toward separation. One's ability to become connected to the larger nation or state depended upon one's ability to demonstrate a capacity for self-sufficiency, i.e. for existing separately and in isolation from others. Indeed, the very concept of the United States of America reflects the idea of a large, expansive state defined in terms of separate, individual, autonomous, self-governed States. Joining the Union, the ultimate goal of a U.S. Territory, meant becoming one of these separate, self-governed States. This peculiar form of simultaneous movement toward greater union and greater separation, expressed

⁹ Wikse continued:

For modernity, equality of condition refers to the experience of being equally powerless, equally separate from others. Cut off from traditional bonds, people come to be thrown back upon themselves and, in the face of the powerful stranger, the absence of a concrete public connection with others...entails the taking of the whole of an abstract 'mankind' into the self (Witse 1977, 127).

both in terms of territorial expansion and the granting of U.S. citizenship to populations that did not previously hold it, received strong validation from some members of Congress in the debates about Hawaii.

Other forms of movement that received endorsement from U.S. Congressmen were more aligned with republican priorities. They included efforts to extend the virtues of American civilization to distant places and to uplift local populations to make them fit for inclusion in the U.S. sociopolitical order. These movements took place both across space and through time. Some Senators applauded the efforts of the white missionaries and their descendants in Hawaii to “bring up” the Native population, agreeing with Senator Cullom’s assessment that “the natives yet remain ‘children of the Tropics’ and have hardly parted with the economic ideas which the race has held for over a thousand years” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 1921). According to Senator Platt, the white people in control of the Hawaiian government “were the people who had redeemed the islands from savagery and barbarism, from its original cannibalism, and who have *brought it up, step by step*, to a position where a republican form of government had been established and where it was desirable that it should be maintained, and maintained by those who are best qualified to administer it” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 2024, *my italics*). Platt thus identified progress with a vertical, linear ascent through time from “savagery and barbarism” to fitness for self-government.

Senator Cullom, on the other hand, saw progress in terms of more spatial and horizontal forms of movement: the reciprocal reaching out of the United States to

“humanize” Hawaii and the voluntary return of Hawaii to the “mother country”.

According to Cullom, “The new Territory of Hawaii, which has come to us willingly and peacefully in the progress of the nation’s evolution, will doubtless stand as a bright monument marking almost the starting point of American expansion over the island provinces of the Pacific” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 4468).

While Congressmen celebrated particular forms of movement revolving around territorial expansion, however, settlement was always their ultimate goal. What members of Congress ultimately desired in Hawaii and in all U.S. Territories was the establishment of a settled population, living in specific types of morally and behaviorally defined communities, engaged in agriculture on individual plots of privately owned land. In this sense, Congressmen greatly favored stasis, in the form of settlement, over all forms of disruptive or disorderly movement.

The privileged forms of movement that might lead toward such stability and political union were movement toward conformity to the European-American sociopolitical order with its republican norms and hierarchies, and movement toward separation in the form of the division of land into separate, individual plots that would be worked by individual owners for a monetary profit. This transformation of land into private property involved a radical change from the way that indigenous peoples had historically conceptualized land.

Forms of movement that did not conform to liberal individualist or republican priorities or to the racialized assumptions that underlay them were considered dangerous

and uncivilized. Indeed, all of these discussions of movement were premised on the assumption that whites were the only race naturally fit to achieve these liberal individualist and republican goals and that members of other races such as “Asiatics” were incapable of such accomplishments.

Charles Darwin himself associated the progress of the United States with the restless spirit of European-American men. According to Darwin, “There is apparently much truth in the belief that the wonderful progress of the United States, as well as the character of the people, are the results of *natural selection*; the more energetic, *restless*, and courageous men from all parts of Europe having emigrated during the last ten or twelve generations to that great country, and having there succeeded best” (Darwin, quoted by Pratt 1936, 3-4, *my italics*). Restless European men were thus naturally selected to immigrate to the United States and contribute to the progress of the country.

In stark contrast to this celebration of restless European movement, Senator Allen condemned the movement of non-Europeans toward Hawaii and the United States when he asserted, “There is not a people upon the known globe morally and physically so inferior, so *turbulent*, and so unfitted for American citizenship that you do not propose to admit through the gates of Hawaii” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v 33, 2391, *my italics*).¹⁰ In one case, European restlessness was associated with the progress of the

¹⁰ While Senator Allen strenuously objected to any policy that might allow Asian immigration, he expressed a much more tolerant and welcoming attitude toward European immigrants.

I am in favor of the most liberal laws for the reception of people of kindred tongues and races who come to our country and become a portion of our people – an assimilable class of people. I believe this

United States. In the other, non-European turbulence was a quality that made people unfit to become U.S. citizens.

Meanwhile, policymakers and scholars predicted that indigenous peoples such as the Native Hawaiians would simply pass away. Representative Knox described the Native Hawaiians as “a slowly dying race, *fading out*, soon to be wiped out from among the peoples of the earth” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3704, *my italics*). He noted, “Like the American Indian, wherever they come in touch with civilization they *fade and die away*” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3704, *my italics*). According to Senator Teller, the Kanakas “belong to a race that was once very numerous in those seas, a race that has disappeared practically, a race that *can not stand* the civilization of and contact with the Anglo-Saxon” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3704, *my italics*).

It is important to note that the same people who suggested that the Native Hawaiians could be lifted up and assimilated to a European American way of life made many of the

country was designed for that class of people, and from them in the past we have received great aid. The German, the Irishman, the Bohemian, the Englishman, the Scotchman, the Frenchman, the Swede, the Scandinavian, and all of those kindred classes of people have added much to the wealth, the intelligence, and the glory of our country (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v.33, 2390).

Senator Allen’s references to different classes of people was very common terminology employed both in the Congressional debates about Hawaii and in discussions in society at large. People used the term class very frequently and loosely to indicate categorical distinctions among groups of people. Depending on the context in which it was used, class could connote race, nationality, socio-economic level, adherence to an unarticulated set of behavioral and cultural norms associated with civilization, or some combination of these qualities. The use of the word class, therefore, served as a convenient way to avoid defining and to gloss over complicated and often contradictory national, racial, economic, and cultural distinctions. Instead of examining and articulating one’s own assumptions about these distinctions in detail, one could simply speak of a “different class of people” and be confident of being understood as referring to a basic and natural division between them and us.

statements suggesting that the Native Hawaiian race was dying out. In other words, there appeared to be two possible forms of acceptable movement for indigenous Hawaiians: they could either fade away or they could be lifted up to the realms of American civilization. What was apparently unacceptable, in the minds of most U.S. policymakers, was for Native Hawaiians to remain where or who they were: members of an indigenous society and culture. In arguing for suffrage restrictions, for instance, Senator Cullom noted that Native Hawaiians have “not acquired the habit of self-government, which is the safety and *staying power* of the Anglo-Saxon” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 1921, *my italics*). This statement implies that without the “habit of self-government,” the Native Hawaiians would not have the power to stay.

The values that U.S. Congressmen placed on settlement and civilization extended to governments and territories as well as individuals. They applauded the Hawaiian “community” for being “stable and established” and the government for being “substantial” and “well-administered” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2180 and 1919). Senator Cullom noted, for instance, that in Hawaii, “We are dealing now with an old government; a well-established government of a people, which has existed for many years, and not dealing with a few scattered settlements over the prairies or in a land which has not been settled” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 1928). Many U.S. Congressmen thus endorsed certain forms of movement such as territorial expansion and forms of stasis such as settlement on privately owned property, particularly when those involved were European Americans. At the same time, they objected to other forms of movement such as nomadism and turbulence, and forms of stasis such as the refusal to be

uplifted and assimilated that they associated with members of non-white races and considered threatening to the U.S. nation and state.

Between Possession and Statehood: The Politics of Fitness for Self-Government

U.S. policymakers generally assigned lands affiliated with the United States to one of three categories. Congress designated them as either U.S. States, U.S. Territories, or as areas under the control of the United States but not an official part of the country (e.g. as U.S. possessions or protectorates). U.S. policymakers distinguished between official Territories and possessions by referring to the former as incorporated territories and the latter as unincorporated territories. The terminology implies that incorporated U.S. Territories were lands that had been literally brought into the body of the state whereas unincorporated territories remained separate adjuncts to the state. Hawaii's ambiguous status was represented in its definition as a Territory "incorporated" into the United States but not an "integral part thereof."

Historically, Congress designated newly conquered continental lands as U.S. Territories with the expectation that they would eventually become States. One of the main criteria used to determine whether a particular Territory would be granted statehood was its racial composition – i.e. Congress was only willing to grant statehood to territories that had a sufficiently large white population and, closely related to the latter criterion, a population it deemed fit for full inclusion in the nation.

The ideological perspective on which these territorial distinctions were based centered on the multi-layered concept of fitness for self-government. In practice, as we have seen in other cases, U.S. policymakers often treated readiness for self-government as an evolutionary process in which most individuals and territories could progress toward fitness for self-government, but some were considered permanently inassimilable and unfit for self-government on the basis of their racial identity or composition. For example, there seemed to be substantial agreement among Congressional members that Puerto Rico and the Philippines were unfit for self-government due to the fact that both territories contained large, majority and politically dominant non-white populations. Hawaii was controversial in this regard not only because of its racial diversity but also because of the fact that a white minority of U.S. ancestry politically and economically dominated the territory. This domination by whites, although they represented a tiny minority of the population, was sufficient cause for many members of Congress to argue that Hawaii, unlike the other possessions, was fit for self-government provided that a means was found to restrict suffrage and thereby protect white domination in the Islands.

The tensions between the concepts of statehood and possession, and Hawaii's precarious position between these two poles, exercised considerable influence in the debates over Hawaii's political future. At one end of the spectrum, statehood represented the foundational territorial and political unit of the state itself. The original thirteen states continued to represent the core of the country from which it had expanded south and west. Statehood represented full inclusion in the United States of America, including full and equal representation in the legislative branch of its federal government and the ability

to develop and run a local state government. States represented lands in which self-government was fully in place.

At the other end of the territorial spectrum stood U.S. possessions, lands that were controlled by the United States but did not necessarily benefit from the provisions of the U.S. Constitution. Many people asserted that the relationship between these possessions and the U.S. government was basically no different from the relationship between European powers and their colonies. Possessions were areas where self-government did not exist and where it was doubtful whether it would ever exist. People who lived in the possessions were basically treated as subjects rather than citizens. They were controlled and governed by the U.S. government but had no voice in that government.

U.S. Territories occupied a status between the poles of statehood and possession. They were granted a limited form of self-government and had historically been treated as potential states, i.e. lands that Congress expected to achieve full self-government in a matter of time. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 established the guidelines for how continental Territories could make the transition to statehood. Once their white population reached 60,000, Territories were eligible to establish their own constitutions and state governments and to apply for statehood. Until that time, the President of the United States appointed many of their officers and these Territories had only a non-voting delegate in the U.S. House of Representatives. Territorial status was intended as "a period of tutelage until such time as the inhabitants were deemed capable of assuming

the responsibilities attendant upon statehood," i.e. it was intended as a means to prepare the population for self-government both behaviorally and racially (Iseminger 1988, 1).

The admission of U.S. Territories to statehood was often a contentious and controversial process in which Congressional members supported or opposed a particular Territory's bid for statehood for a variety of political and economic reasons that often came down to the character of the population in the Territory in question, usually defined in racial terms. The debates about Hawaii took place during an era in which several Territories had recently been admitted or were seeking admission to the Union as States.¹¹

¹¹ On November 2, 1889, for example, slightly more than a decade before the Congressional debates concerning Hawaii took place, Congress admitted North and South Dakota as the first twin states after a long and bitter battle for statehood. Since shortly after its creation in 1861, Dakota Territory residents had circulated petitions calling on Congress to divide the territory into two and admit it as two equal states into the union. Future Senator Richard Pettigrew, the staunch opponent of Hawaiian annexation, was one of the most prominent politicians in Dakota Territory and a strong proponent of South Dakota statehood. The southern portion of the Territory had a more developed infrastructure and larger European American population than the northern portion. This inequality led white residents of the northern part of the territory to fear that the southern half would be admitted as a state while the northern half continued to be governed as a territory (Iseminger 1988, 2). One historian explained the support of residents of South Dakota for the creation of two separate states by noting:

There was a disposition on the part of those whites who had settled in the southeastern part of Dakota to procure a political divorce from the northern portion of the vast territory. The southern Dakotans had but a contemptuous disregard for the country of the half-breeds and, though they themselves had little to be proud of, they were impressed with the idea that they would get along better if separated from that part of the territory lying along the international boundary (Hennessy, quoted by Iseminger 1988, 8).

While South Dakotans felt they had a stronger bid for statehood both in terms of the racial make-up of their population and their regional centrality, it eventually became clear that while the Territory would be separated into two, if either half of Dakota Territory achieved statehood, both would attain it. Indeed, North and South Dakota were ultimately admitted to the Union as the first twin states in 1889.

Another Territory that aggressively sought statehood during the era of the Congressional debates about Hawaii was Utah. Congressional opposition to Utah's admission as a state was heated due to the fact that

In addition to emphasizing its difference from other possessions, Congressional members agreed that Hawaii differed significantly from previous U.S. Territories in that it was more densely populated and already had an existing government dominated by a small white minority of U.S. ancestry. There was a general consensus that even if Hawaii were accepted as a U.S. Territory, it would never be eligible for full statehood due to the character of its population as well as its geographical separation from the American continent.

Congressmen disagreed intensely, however, over whether the distinction between Hawaii and other U.S. Territories meant that Hawaii was more prepared for limited self-government than other Territories or in need of greater protection from the federal government of the United States. Senator Cullom adopted the former position and Senator Teller concurred.

The condition existing in Hawaii is entirely different from what existed when... all the Territories were heretofore organized. The organization of a Territory usually occurs when there are very few people in it, and some Territories have been almost without a population. Here is a stable and established community with a government which has existed for more than 50 years. The people have had the privilege of self-government for several years under a republican administration, and enjoyed a good deal of

Utah's population was overwhelmingly Mormon. Most members of Congress and the broader European-American public considered the practice of polygamy and the Mormon Church's tendency to become directly involved in politics antithetical to the needs of a capitalist democracy based on liberal individualism. Policymakers were reluctant to grant statehood to a Territory whose Mormon political leaders had earlier attempted to establish a theocratic sub-nation and whose population adhered to a family structure that varied significantly from the two-parent, nuclear family that they viewed as one of the essential building blocks of a liberal, capitalist democracy. Eventually, Congress did grant Utah statehood in 1896 but not until its Mormon leaders, under severe political pressure, issued repeated public proclamations that they would discontinue the practice of polygamy and allow their religious followers to exercise political autonomy. As these examples indicate, conformity to both racial and behavioral national norms was a strict prerequisite for Territories seeking statehood.

freedom under a monarchical administration (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2180).

Although a number of Congressmen shared Cullom's and Teller's view that Hawaii was well-prepared for a limited form of self-government, most of those who adopted this position also argued in favor of the implementation of suffrage restrictions to ensure continued political dominance by the white men of U.S. ancestry who controlled the Hawaiian government. Indeed, while Cullom and Teller stressed the settled character of the Hawaiian population and the stability of the existing government, other members of Congress expressed concerns about the non-white population of Hawaii and questioned whether the European American minority would be able to retain control of the government. According to Senator Platt from Connecticut, for example:

In all those Territories, when a Territorial government was organized, although there may have been but few people there, they were all of them American citizens who had participated in the privileges and duties and responsibilities of American citizenship. If we thought it was wise to limit them in the power which was committed to their hands, it seems to me... it is much wiser to retain some power in the hands of the President and Congress when we have such a mixed and, I fear, dangerous population, politically, to deal with, and where it seems to me, the gravest questions are likely to arise (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2183).

Regardless of whether Congressional members believed that Hawaii was more or less fit for self-government, one thing seemed clear from their debates. The preservation of Hawaii's ambiguous status as a U.S. Territory accomplished many of the same purposes as the designation of people of European and Native American descent as mixed bloods, neither fully Indian, nor fully white. Through its formal designation of Hawaii as a U.S. Territory and its informal assertion that it would be ineligible for statehood for the foreseen future, Congress rendered Hawaii partially assimilable into the United States. It

was, therefore, capable of dominating Hawaii and Native Hawaiians in the same way that it dominated mixed blood citizens. On one hand, by designating Hawaii as a U.S. Territory and by admitting Native Hawaiians as U.S. citizens, Congress could attempt to assimilate both the Territory and the indigenous population into an American, liberal individualist and republican way of life. On the other hand, by declaring Hawaii ineligible for statehood and attempting (largely unsuccessfully, as it turned out) to limit the voting rights of Native Hawaiians, Congressmen sought to render Hawaii a Territory that would be equally governed by the United States in the application of its rules and policies, but that would be largely prohibited from actively participating in that government. This method of dominance through partial inclusion assured U.S. control of Hawaii and its native population and also sought to preserve European-American political and economic dominance in the Territory. One of the key ways in which U.S. Congressmen sought to preserve this delicate balance of dominance was through proposals for suffrage restrictions.

Suffrage Qualifications

The debate about suffrage qualifications for Hawaii that took place in the U.S. Congress in 1900 was one of the key arenas in which the annexation of Hawaii explicitly exposed and challenged the cozy coexistence of liberal, republican and ascriptive principles in conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state. U.S. Congressmen found themselves in the embarrassing position of having to reverse their stances on major issues in the midst of public accusations of hypocrisy by political colleagues.

The Congressmen involved in the 1900 debates about Hawaii's political future generally agreed that U.S. citizenship should be extended to all Hawaiian citizens, but should be withheld from Chinese and Japanese residents who made up the majority of the population in the islands. The decision to extend the Chinese Exclusion Act to the Hawaiian Islands and deny U.S. citizenship to the majority of Hawaii's population provoked little if any controversy. On the other hand, the decision to grant U.S. citizenship to Native Hawaiians raised considerable concerns among many members of Congress.

Proponents of the Cullom bill tried to reassure their fellow Congressmen by pointing out that U.S. citizenship in no way guaranteed the right to vote. In fact, those who most ardently supported the proposed government for Hawaii also tended to be the strongest supporters of extensive suffrage restrictions in Hawaii. In addition to the usual age restrictions, members of Congress assumed that suffrage would be restricted to men. Beyond these customary qualifications, supporters of the Cullom bill, including Cullom himself, wanted to impose both educational and property restrictions on prospective voters in order to ensure that political control remained firmly in the hands of the small minority of white, wealthy men of U.S. descent who made up the current government. While many Congressional members consented to having the Native Hawaiian population *governed by* the United States by admitting them as U.S. citizens, they opposed allowing the Native Hawaiians a right to suffrage that would grant them the possibility of *participating in the government* of the islands that had once belonged to them.

Putting this distinction into practice, however, proved to be challenging. One of the less controversial suffrage restrictions proposed in the Cullom Bill was an educational qualification that stated that in order to vote, one must be able to read and write in either the English or Hawaiian language. Many Congressmen hoped that this restriction would be sufficient to exclude the majority of the Native Hawaiian population. In fact, however, as those members of Congress who had studied the matter pointed out, Native Hawaiians had a very high level of education and literacy and this qualification was, therefore, unlikely to disqualify many of them at all. Nevertheless, most Congressmen continued to support the educational qualification.¹²

¹² In explaining his support for the provision, Representative Knox drew a racialized distinction between what he perceived as the dangers of the "ignorant" ballot and the safety of the "intelligent" ballot.

If there is any danger in this country today, it is the ignorant ballot. If there is any safety for the people of Hawaii in the future, it is the intelligent ballot. Thus we propose to create and to give to these people a government of a free, representative, United States Territory, founded on justice and equality, and depending for its preservation and advancement upon the intelligent ballot of the United States citizen (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3705).

According to Knox's logic, freedom, justice and equality in Hawaii could only be preserved and advanced by implementing unequal, restrictive suffrage laws that limited eligibility to vote to those who were literate in either Hawaiian or English. This assumption seemed to be unproblematic for the majority of Congressmen.

Local Hawaiian Republicans echoed these assumptions. An editorial in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, a major Hawaiian daily that represented the Republican perspective, argued that suffrage qualifications were necessary to preserve the "American principle of self-government." In other words, the only way to guarantee the implementation of liberal, universalistic principles of government was through their restriction at the ballot box.

A discriminating ballot would insure, or go far to insure, honest government in great cities – a condition which must be brought to pass, else the very essence of the American principle of self-government will be poisoned. Naturally, the prejudice of the thoughtless voter and his agent, the time-serving legislator, revolts against the idea of classified voting. These gentry prate of "one man, one vote," and regard it as a guarantee of liberty and progress that the ignoramus, the vagabond, and the demagogue should, in proportion to their numbers, have as much to say about the conduct of government as the wise man, the industrious citizen and the publicist (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 6, 1900, p. 4).

In addition, many U.S. Congressmen agreed that the educational qualification was an insufficient restriction and sought to further restrict the vote by supporting the implementation of a property qualification for voting for local Senators in Hawaii. Their rationale was that while they might permit a broad base of voters, including Native Hawaiians, to vote for members of the lower branch of the local legislature, it was important to restrict those eligible to vote for Senators in order to maintain white political dominance in the Islands. This proposal caused great controversy in the U.S. Congress. The positions adopted by members of both political parties regarding the property qualification proposal were paradoxical and problematic.

Republicans generally supported Hawaii's status as a U.S. Territory because of the potential commercial gains they expected to achieve through territorial expansion. Their belief that additional territorial property would be of value to the United States outweighed concerns that an annexationist policy might compromise the property value of whiteness. At the same time, they held fast to white supremacist principles and feared that the political and economic domination of Hawaii by white men of U.S. ancestry would be undermined if Native Hawaiians were allowed to vote in large numbers. They,

"Honesty" here clearly served as a proxy term for white just as "intelligent" did in the previous quote. In other words, the "intelligent ballot" referred to the white ballot, and "honest government" meant white government. The author of these remarks implied that adherence to abstract, universalistic principles was a luxury that only gentry removed from the concerns of everyday life could afford. Those who had to live with the consequences of the policies did not have the luxury of couching their racist principles in the "refined" language of universalism. Rather, they had to bluntly express their support for exclusive suffrage restrictions in order to prevent the possibility that "the ignoramus, the vagabond, and the demagogue" might gain control of their government (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 6, 1900, p. 4). These remarks reinforced a common refrain among Democratic Senators that the only reason certain Republican Senators clung to the universalistic principles of the U.S. Constitution was because they did not have to contend with the practical realities of local situations in which non-white, usually African-American, voters threatened their political power.

therefore, sought ways to restrict the Native vote, while simultaneously proclaiming their commitment to universalistic, democratic principles.

Senator Cullom stated that both the Hawaiian Commission of which he was a member and the Committee on Foreign Relations were convinced that a property qualification for suffrage should be adopted in addition to the educational qualification. He quoted a report by the late Attorney-General of Hawaii, stating, "With an excessively large native vote without property qualifications, the government of the islands would be in the control of the natives, to the great detriment of the interests of the whites and of the Territory" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 1921). Senator Platt asserted bluntly that without a property qualification, "There is great danger that all Anglo-Saxon influence there may be overturned" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 1922).

Opponents of the property qualification denounced the idea that a man should have to demonstrate wealth in land or money in order to vote but they continued to assume that voting would be restricted to white men. Senator Morgan, for instance, referred to one's "natural powers and rights as a white man" as the only legitimate criteria for determining suffrage eligibility (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2193). Morgan said that he believed "in the right of every white man who has got moral status enough to cast an honest vote having the right to vote" (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2193). In other words, according to Senator Morgan, whiteness was the only property that he would require of prospective voters but possession of this property would be an

indisputable prerequisite for suffrage. Whiteness conferred “natural powers and rights,” including the right to vote, on those men who possessed it.

Democrats in Congress tended to be even more supportive of the proposed property qualification than their Republican counterparts. Representative Williams of Missouri remarked, for instance, that he thought the proposed suffrage restrictions were “admirable in their character – almost a transcript of the Missouri constitution and tending strongly toward the preservation of white supremacy and civilization in Hawaii” (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 3708). Such remarks were often greeted with presumably nervous laughter from fellow Congressmen who recognized that Southern Democrats found the proposed property qualification for Hawaiian suffrage very similar to provisions that they supported in their own states to restrict African American voting, but were prohibited from enacting by the Civil Rights Amendments.

Yet it was the Democrats, and one Democratic Senator in particular, who ultimately rendered the proposed property qualification untenable for the vast majority of Congressmen. Senator Ben Tillman from South Carolina was an outspoken and controversial Southern Democrat who achieved great political power by appealing to economically disenfranchised whites and by advocating overtly and violently racist policies against blacks. He often gave public voice to sentiments that many other politicians, especially Democrats, privately shared but were too conscious of the refined norms of public discourse to state out loud.

Senator Tillman offered loud, vulgar and repeated objections to the Republican proposals for suffrage restrictions in Hawaii. He did not, however, object to the proposed suffrage restrictions themselves. In fact, he wholeheartedly supported those. The object of his derision was the hypocrisy inherent in the Republican position. Senator Tillman pointed out that it was Republican Congressmen who had insisted on adopting the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the U.S. Bill of Rights, protecting the voting rights of African-Americans. These amendments and their implementation had greatly angered him and other Southern whites, many of whom openly acknowledged their belief in white supremacy, something Republicans were reluctant to do. Now, the Republicans in Congress were proposing to implement voting restrictions in Hawaii that would limit suffrage along racial lines in much the same way that proposed voting restrictions would have excluded African-Americans from suffrage in the South had they not been prohibited by Republicans. Each time the issue of suffrage qualifications for Hawaii came up in the Senate, Senator Tillman rose to challenge his fellow Republican Senators. He stated his case very bluntly.

What I object to, gentlemen, is the hypocrisy of those in this Chamber who stand up here and contend and contend and contend that the South must be treated differently from those people; that the colored race must be differently treated in the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico from what they are treated in our States of Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, and South Carolina. If it is good to have white supremacy in the Hawaiian Islands, why is it not in my State? I do not object to those white men in Hawaii being protected, but do not protect them with hypocrisy and cant. Be men! Stand up! Come out and say why you do this thing (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 332184).

Senator Tillman provided blunt, racist accounts of the many ways in which he and others had attempted to prevent blacks from voting in South Carolina, including the use

of violence and other illegal methods. His repeated calls for Republican Senators to acknowledge their acceptance of the doctrine of white supremacy and the hypocrisy in their differential treatment of suffrage in the South and in Hawaii met with silent resistance. Senator Platt was the only Congressman to acknowledge even the slightest possibility that his support of suffrage restrictions in Hawaii might be inconsistent with the liberal, universalistic principles to which his party adhered.

I do not complain of this bill because it proposes in its provisions to commit the government of those islands practically to the 4,000 Americans who reside there... They have been the class which redeemed the islands from savagery and barbarism, and made them what they are – Americanized the islands and set up American institutions there, and, at last, an American Government there; and *though it seems arbitrary, and though it seems to contradict to some extent the principles upon which our free Government is established here*, I do not complain of the bill on that account. I do not complain of the provision which requires that persons, in order to vote for senators, shall have a property qualification of a thousand dollars... The purpose of it is to perpetuate the government in the hands of the American citizenship of the islands (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2023. *my italics*).

Platt was the only Senator willing to acknowledge the possibility of a contradiction in his supposedly liberal values and his support of property qualifications for voting but he was still reluctant to openly state his support for the doctrine of white supremacy. Rather, he substituted the word “American” for white, thus suggesting a profoundly racialized definition of the U.S. nation and state.

Meanwhile, Senator Tillman continued his attack on Republican Senators in the debates about Hawaii’s government, accusing them of proposing to treat inhabitants of the new island possessions worse than Southern whites treated blacks.¹³ Tillman and

¹³ Tillman told his fellow Congressmen:

other Democratic Congressmen succeeded in exposing the hypocrisy of Republican Congressmen but rather than forcing them to change their views concerning voting provisions in the Southern United States and to agree that the voting rights of blacks should be restricted, Tillman pushed the Republicans toward a more liberal position and made the notion of a property qualification in Hawaii untenable. He succeeded in exposing and exacerbating the tensions between the liberal, universalistic principles that Republicans publicly espoused and the racist, exclusive principles that privately informed many of their positions and policies. Once these tensions were revealed, Republican Senators felt they had no choice but to renounce positions that might bring allegations of racism or hypocrisy. When a vote on the property qualification for Hawaiian suffrage finally took place in the Senate, only Senator Platt of Connecticut voted in its favor although many more had supported the notion during the debate.¹⁴

After it became apparent that the property qualification would not pass, U.S. Congressmen changed the original laws for the appointment of Supreme Court Justices in Hawaii, granting this responsibility to the President of the United States rather than to the Hawaiian governor and Senate (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 27, 1900, 1).

You deal with the Filipinos just as we deal with the Negroes, only you treat them a heap worse. You deal with the Puerto Ricans just as we deal with the Negroes only you treat them a heap worse... We of the South have never made any pretense of considering the Negroes our equals or as being fit for suffrage. We fought to keep them slaves and protested against their enfranchisement. You of the North contended that they were equal to white men and should have all the rights of citizens, and you framed the three amendments to carry it into effect. There is no inconsistency in our reminding you of these things and calling attention to your change of attitude toward the colored races (Cong. Rec., 56th Cong., 1st Sess., v. 33, 2244).

¹⁴ The educational qualification which required that all voters read and write English or the Hawaiian language was somewhat less controversial, although still a departure from most voting laws in the States, and remained part of the bill.

Some Republican Congressmen also suggested that it would be preferable for Hawaii to have no delegate in Congress rather than one elected by a majority of Native Hawaiians. One Congressman argued, “Without a property qualification, the mob in Hawaii will not send a trustworthy or capable delegate” (Quoted by W.N. Armstrong in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 16, 1900).¹⁵ The suggestion to eliminate the position of delegate, however, was immediately dismissed by other politicians in Washington D.C.

Hawaiian Republican Responses to Property Qualification Proposal

Local Hawaiian Republicans, members of the white, male elite of U.S. descent who exercised political control over the islands, were particularly strong supporters of the proposal for a property qualification for suffrage in Hawaii and were devastated by its defeat. Their frustrations mounted as debate about the proposal took place in the U.S. Congress and it became increasingly evident that the suffrage restriction would not pass. Sereno Bishop, the descendant of one of Hawaii’s leading missionary families and an outspoken commentator, reflected the popular, late-19th century, evolutionary view of civilization when he suggested that “American liberty” was not a right that all citizens should automatically enjoy. Rather, it was a privilege that should be withheld from members of “underdeveloped and weak races” despite their U.S. citizenship until they had been properly educated – a process that he predicted would take generations (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 11, 1900, 9). According to Bishop, “Treating these feeble

¹⁵ The mob was a term frequently used to dehumanize and delegitimize populations by portraying people as part of an irrational and dangerous crowd rather than as individuals. Anarchists, North American Indians, and Native Hawaiians were all characterized as members of mobs.

and childish souls as grown and strong men, by at once giving them unrestricted suffrage... were as great a blunder as to put a child to run the engine of an express train” (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 11, 1900, 9).¹⁶

Bishop’s remarks reflected several widely held sets of beliefs. First, his comments provide a classic example of the frequent infantilization of Native Hawaiians by European Americans (see Merry 2000, 20). Describing Native Hawaiians as children was a common means of emphasizing their relative lack of development within a racist, evolutionary, sociopolitical hierarchy that also treated them as only slightly removed from barbarians and slaves.

Second, Bishop’s assertion that voting rights should be withheld from Native Hawaiians due to their political incapacity and despite their U.S. citizenship echoed the perspective held by those who believed that land allotments for American Indians should

¹⁶ Bishop’s commentary read in part:

For nearly 13 years, by means of a property qualification for Senatorial voters, we have been able to obtain Legislatures that were fairly exempt from gross corruption, although a considerable proportion of the Lower House, elected by general suffrage, was bad. The excellent Commission who came and studied our situation in 1898, Messrs. Cullom, Morgan and Hitt, clearly discerned the extensive political incapacity of the voting population. They perceived the absolute necessity of limiting the suffrage by the property qualification and incorporated it in their bill for organizing a Territorial government for Hawaii. We now learn that while the Senate Committee favor this provision, a majority of the House Committee are throwing it out as being “un-American”.

America is entering upon a new experience in governing and educating underdeveloped and weak races, lifting them to higher things out of past slavery. It seems incredible that she should begin with the idiotic blunder of treating these feeble and childish souls as grown and strong men, by at once giving them unrestricted suffrage, regardless of their unhappy heredity of weakness from ages of barbarism and slavery. It were as great a blunder as to put a child to run the engine of an express train. Education to American liberty must be slow and gradual, the work of generations (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 11, 1900, 9).

be held in trust by the U.S. government because Indians were not sufficiently politically competent to be granted the power to sell or lease them. In both of these cases, the indigenous populations involved technically held U.S. citizenship. This fact did not prevent European American policymakers, however, from making strenuous efforts to deny them the most basic rights generally associated with citizenship – the right to vote and the right to own land.

Bishop linked his perception of the need to restrict voting among Native Hawaiians to the proprietary understanding of property associated with civic republicanism (Alexander 1997). He equated property ownership with political competence and argued that making property ownership a requirement for suffrage guaranteed the public good by ensuring that those who governed the Territory were not susceptible to gross corruption. This was a common argument among those who held that allowing suffrage among populations with few economic resources would encourage the practice of buying and selling votes.

Herbert Williams, an East Coast reporter and senior member of the *Advertiser's* staff, shared Bishop's proprietary understanding of the role of property ownership in guaranteeing the public good. He stated, "It should be distinctly understood that this is not a question of rich vs. poor, but of good government vs. bad, of clean government vs. corrupt, of public spirit vs. selfishness" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 28, 1900, 11). According to Williams, "All things concerned, it is obvious to the careful and impartial observer that a Government controlled in the last resort by the respectable people will be the best for all concerned" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 28,

1900, 11). Williams thus linked the concepts of goodness, cleanliness, public spiritedness and respectability to the restriction of suffrage and political control by white men of U.S. descent.

In addition, Williams implied that being American in Hawaii was synonymous with being a white man. He explicitly contrasted Americans with Hawaiians, evidence of his belief that despite their legal status as U.S. citizens, Native Hawaiians lacked the racial qualifications to be considered American.

In spite of the large number of Hawaiians and Orientals on these islands this is essentially an American community. White men, chiefly Americans, have built it up from nothing and have made it one of the most prosperous and modern and progressive places in the world. Hawaii is an almost ideally ordered community, with a very efficient and exceedingly clean government... The people who have built up these islands from nothing, and who have in them everything they possess, naturally desire that this kind of government should be continued. To that end, they consider that while the House of Representatives should, of course, be elected by the suffrages of all the population able to read and write, the Senate should be composed of men elected by those who have a definite stake in the country, some definite interest in the suitable protection of property... At first blush the suggestion of a property qualification for voting for Senators sounds un-American, and probably whatever opposition it may meet will be based upon this assumption. But the plain truth is that its introduction will foster Americanism, and its absence will tend to help on everything distinctly opposed to the American idea (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 28, 1900, 11).

Williams also emphasized the critical role that the institution of property played in the definition of American. He described Hawaii before it was colonized by U.S. missionaries as "nothing" - a vision similar to that of European Americans who colonized the North American continent. Williams regarded Hawaii as a vacant, empty space that white, American men built into a modern, progressive community through the imposition of European American political and economic institutions, most notably the concept of

private property. Having turned Hawaii from “nothing” into a “prosperous place,” with an “ordered community” and a “clean government,” the white men of U.S. descent who colonized the islands now claimed to be its rightful owners and governors. Williams suggested that they had the right to control Hawaii’s government in order to protect their investment in the islands. This investment rested primarily in their transformation of Hawaiian land into private property and their purchase, control and cultivation of this new property. These white men of U.S. descent, according to Williams, were the only people who had a “definite stake in the country,” i.e. a “definite interest in the suitable protection of property,” and, therefore, the only people who should be allowed to govern (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 28, 1900, 11).

Williams alluded to alternative definitions of Americanism when he acknowledged that a property qualification might sound un-American at “first blush,” but nevertheless asserted that a property qualification was necessary to “foster Americanism”. This reference points to a growing tension between the definition of Americanism as linked to a set of universalistic political principles, and the growing understanding of Americanism as a European American way of life premised on the institutions of white supremacy and private property and threatened by the expansion of the boundaries of citizenship, nationhood, and statehood.

In an editorial entitled, “Ruining the Territorial Bill,” the *Advertiser* scoffed at the former definition of Americanism and suggested that its institutionalization by U.S. Congressmen in the bill for Hawaii’s new government would only benefit “native and

foreign haters of things American” (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 16, 1900, 4). According to the *Advertiser*, the United States could only afford to implement universalistic principles in places where there was a clear, white majority who would inevitably exercise political control in local government. In all other contexts, restrictions along racial lines were necessary in order to protect civilization.

Equal suffrage forsooth! When did America ever grant equal suffrage to its aborigines – even its trained and educated ones who live in the haunts of civilization? There are States where suffrage of any kind does not extend to the illiterate or to the very poor. There is a group of great commonwealths where by the active propaganda of the Democratic Party and the tacit acquiescence of the Republican Party, nearly a million voters, upon whom the Constitution specifically confers the right of suffrage, have been denied the voting privilege by unlawful force. Let us hear no more about equal suffrage being American until the rule “One man, one vote” holds good from Maine to the Apache reservations of Arizona and from Washington state to the cotton fields of Mississippi... There is no place under the American flag and there never will be one, where white civilization will permit itself to pass under a yoke imposed by alien races (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 20, 1900, 4).

The *Advertiser* defined the Hawaiian Republicans as the American Party and distinguished them from the un-American Party consisting of Robert Wilcox and his supporters whose political commitments were to the preservation of Native Hawaiian rights. The definition of the American nation, according to this article, was synonymous with “white civilization,” and equal suffrage could not be allowed to threaten its boundaries, which firmly excluded Robert Wilcox and other members of “alien races” (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 20, 1900, 4).

Robert Wilcox and the Challenges of Home Rule in Hawaii

Robert Wilcox challenged the efforts of European American policymakers to reconcile their annexation of Hawaii with their desire to protect white supremacy in the United States. By posing these challenges, Wilcox forced European American policymakers and political observers to articulate their definitions of the U.S. nation and state more clearly, revealing nuances, inconsistencies and uncertainties about precisely what it meant to be American at the turn of the 20th century.

Like Louis Riel, Wilcox challenged prevailing understandings of what it meant to be American through both his mixed race status and his national status although the specific challenges he posed were somewhat different than those posed by Riel. These challenges and the responses they generated from U.S. officials and other European American observers demonstrate further subtleties and layers of meaning in the unfolding definitions of the U.S. nation and state.

Unlike Louis Riel, Wilcox could not pass as white. His dark skin constituted a clear visual marker that prevented his membership in the U.S. nation despite his U.S. citizenship. Indeed, when Robert Wilcox lived in Washington D.C., he was often mistaken for a “Negro” (see e.g. *New York Times*, October 25, 1903, 7). In one sense, his dark skin actually made Wilcox seem *less* threatening than Riel because despite his U.S. citizenship, European Americans could easily distinguish Wilcox visually and, thus, recognize that he did not fit within the boundaries of the nation. They, therefore, did not feel compelled to find other, more elaborate means to exclude him.

The challenge that Wilcox's national status posed to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation also differed from the challenge posed by Riel. Riel was a bi-national Canadian and U.S. citizen who obtained his U.S. citizenship through the process of naturalization. Wilcox was a Hawaiian citizen who became a U.S. citizen through the process of annexation and destruction of the previous Hawaiian government. It was not possible to declare Wilcox a foreigner on the basis of his Hawaiian citizenship because U.S. annexation of Hawaii had taken away the possibility of Hawaiian citizenship and replaced it with U.S. citizenship. In this sense, Wilcox posed a *greater* challenge than Riel because U.S. policymakers could not convincingly argue that he belonged anywhere except the United States.

Wilcox also posed somewhat different challenges to the definition of the U.S. state. Like Riel, Wilcox expressed tremendous ambivalence toward the concept of U.S. annexation over the course of his political career, supporting it strongly at certain stages and opposing it wholeheartedly at others. Once annexation took place, Wilcox devoted himself to working within the new U.S. institutional framework. His goal was to adapt that framework to serve the needs and interests of Native Hawaiians, an aim that he was only able to fulfill in very partial ways. Wilcox's plan to achieve this goal involved persuading the U.S. Congress to grant Hawaii statehood, a move that Congress was unwilling to consider precisely because of Hawaii's large indigenous citizenry.

Wilcox understood the formal and informal political processes practiced both by men of U.S. descent in Hawaii and by members of the U.S. Congress well enough to adopt

and challenge them, as well as to translate them into meaningful terms for his Native constituency. In other words, he was able to speak both to his Native Hawaiian constituency and to his white opponents of U.S. descent and to negotiate between the different political cultures from which they came while challenging both of them. At the same time, however, Wilcox's lack of total fluency in both European American political discourse and the English language, in addition to his mixed racial status, prevented him from ever being fully accepted within U.S. political institutions such as Congress. Wilcox's delicate and ambiguous position between European American and Native Hawaiian political cultures made his status very precarious and contributed as much to his political failures as it did to his successes.

In addition, Wilcox refused to support any form of compromise that he believed would be detrimental to the interests of the Native Hawaiian people. His fierce commitment to the ideal of "Hawaii for the Hawaiians," his status as an independent thinker, and his desire for personal political power led him to oppose both Hawaiian monarchs and white politicians. Wilcox thus negotiated a political path that was even more treacherous than those followed by other Hawaiian leaders who sought to balance their desire for native sovereignty with the realities of imperialist encroachment (see Merry 2000, 13).

Wilcox was not only a person of mixed descent but also someone who occupied a profoundly ambiguous position between two very different political cultures. His ability to effectively use the tools of the European American political process in pursuit of

political goals that were antithetical to those of the majority political leadership in Hawaii frustrated his political opponents greatly and forced them to rethink their own assumptions and tactics. Ultimately, however, despite his considerable political skills, Wilcox lacked the power to prevent European American domination of Hawaii and Native Hawaiians or to implement a new, more inclusive definition of the American nation. Instead, his activities prompted European American policymakers to make superficial gestures toward Native Hawaiian citizens, including Wilcox, while simultaneously creating new barriers to the exercise of meaningful political power.

Wilcox's political opponents argued forcefully that his changing political tactics demonstrated inconsistency and immaturity and were motivated purely by the desire for personal gain. These charges were similar to many of those leveled against Louis Riel. Wilcox's actions could just as easily be interpreted, however, as attempts to find the most viable means of pursuing his goal of Native Hawaiian sovereignty in an uncertain and rapidly changing political environment. Indeed, Wilcox was hardly unique among Hawaiian politicians in changing his political affiliations and platforms over time. The political circumstances in Hawaii at the end of the 19th century were in such flux that many people in politics, including senior U.S. policymakers, changed their allegiances several times as they tried to maneuver within a very unstable and unpredictable political climate. Indeed, Wilcox's political opponents were just as guilty of pursuing frequently changing and seemingly contradictory political paths as he was. The difference was that they ultimately held greater discursive as well as political power than Wilcox and,

therefore, were able to present themselves as rational, moral, and legitimate leaders while portraying Wilcox as irrational, immoral and illegitimate in more ways than one.

Challenging the Cullom Bill

In early 1900, Wilcox traveled to Washington D.C. to lobby Congress on behalf of Native Hawaiians. His goal was to persuade Congress to pass a bill for the new U.S. government in Hawaii that would be beneficial to Native Hawaiians and would respect their rights as U.S. citizens. Wilcox was particularly concerned about discriminatory aspects of the Cullom Bill such as the proposed property requirement for suffrage.

Wilcox described his goal in Washington as an effort “to harmonize everybody here in order to gain a big victory for the benefit of our people” (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 16, 1900, 4). In a letter to his Hawaiian supporters in Hawaii, Wilcox took some of the credit for the ultimate defeat of the property requirement for Hawaiian suffrage in Congress. He wrote that members of the Committee on Foreign Relations said:

They were told that the Hawaiians hate the American bitterly, but my appearance and my mild speech, without spiteful language, dispelled all the calumny against the Hawaiians. In fact, the votes of the members of the Committee to strike out the property qualification in the bill for voters for Senator were unanimous (Quoted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 16, 1900, 4).¹⁷

¹⁷ Celso Caesar Moreno, another controversial figure in Hawaiian politics and occasional ally of Wilcox, reported that in a meeting before the Committee on Foreign Relations, Wilcox made an “eloquent and to the point speech of over half an hour in behalf of Hawaii, of the Hawaiians, and of the Chinese residents in Hawaii” (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 17, 1900, 5). The speech, according to Moreno, “was highly appreciated by the Chairman and members of the committee, because it

Wilcox's physical presence in the halls of Congress served as a reminder to U.S. Congressmen of the Native Hawaiians who now held the status of U.S. citizens. His lobbying efforts contributed to exposing the tensions between the universalistic, democratic principles that many of these Congressmen purported to uphold and the racist, restrictive policy measures they were preparing to enact in order to prevent Native Hawaiians from exercising meaningful political power.

Challenging the Hawaiian Republicans

Wilcox's presence in Washington D.C. during the Congressional debates not only challenged the perspectives of U.S. Congressmen but also acted as a thorn in the side of the local Hawaiian Republicans who were struggling to find their own footing in the arena of U.S. national politics. This project was a frustrating and often challenging one for the former members of the oligarchic republic, led by President Stanford Dole, who had transformed themselves into members of the Republican Party in the wake of annexation. Many U.S. politicians knew little about Hawaii and considered the islands an exotic outpost populated by primitive people. Others felt uncomfortable with the demands of the Hawaiian Republicans for suffrage restrictions to protect their political and economic power, and for provisions that would allow them to continue to use contract labor on their sugar plantations, a system that many mainland politicians likened to chattel slavery.

has thrown much more light on the Hawaiian question" (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 17, 1900, 5).

Despite their status as members of the Republican Party, the Hawaiian Republicans often held views closer to those of their Democratic counterparts in the Southern states. In an editorial entitled "The Future of Hawaii," for instance, the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, a major Republican newspaper, declared that "the nearer the future government of Hawaii, like the present government of the South, approaches to the white ideal of administrative capacity, the better it must be for the progress, the prosperity, and the trade of the whole people" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, March 1, 1900, 4). The *Advertiser* also suggested that it would be perfectly legal under the Constitution for the United States to hold Hawaii as a colony rather than as a formal U.S. Territory and, thus, to guarantee its continuing government by the small, property-owning white minority of U.S. descent (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, March 1, 1900, 4).

To the delight of Hawaiian Republicans, their perspectives on Hawaiian politics, including their insistence on the maintenance of a property qualification for local suffrage, were well represented in the bill for Hawaii's government that Senator Cullom proposed after his visit to the islands in 1898. The later erosion of support for the property qualification among U.S. Senators provoked considerable consternation among Hawaiian Republicans, however, leading the *Advertiser* to remark in one of its editorials that "it may be from one point of view that the property test is un-American, but there will be precious little Americanism in the Hawaiian legislature without it" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 10, 1900, 8). The exposure of the growing tensions between universalistic and particularistic definitions of Americanism by Democratic and anti-imperialist Republican Senators, as well as by Home Rule Hawaiian politicians such

as Robert Wilcox, frustrated the efforts of the Hawaiian Republicans to maintain their exclusive control of the Hawaiian government and fueled their resentment of Wilcox and the political positions that he represented.

The Hawaiian Republicans used a variety of means to discount Wilcox's political activities, including downplaying his influence among U.S. Congressmen and ridiculing him. A typical account asserted that Wilcox and his colleagues "went to Washington to slander the executive and the judiciary and they have done the Hawaiian government a service by showing our national legislators how full of petty spite, sour prejudice, and selfish ambition is the element with assails this government and its agenda" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 9, 1900, 4).¹⁸

Ultimately, neither Wilcox nor the Hawaiian Republicans fully achieved their goals with respect to the new government for Hawaii. While the Organic Act created relatively liberal suffrage laws for Hawaii, it restricted the Territory's political power in other ways and did not prevent informal discrimination from taking place against Native Hawaiians. At the same time, the Organic Act did not include the full range of political restrictions on Native Hawaiians desired by Hawaiian Republicans, nor did it allow them to continue the practice of contract labor through which they had accumulated so much of their wealth.

¹⁸ Another article, entitled "The Foes of Hawaii," quipped, "if a few more men like Colonel Little, Mr. Cayple, Mr. Wilcox, and Mr. Moreno could be engaged to oppose the Hawaii bill, it would assist in securing its passage, for these men have shown uncommon skill in overdoing the business" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 9, 1900, 1). One Washington observer compared Wilcox and his sometimes political ally Celso Caesar Moreno to an organ grinder and his monkey and noted that Congressional members laughed out loud at the length of Wilcox's Hawaiian wife's name (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, March 20, 1900, 5).

Wilcox and the Home Rule Party

Buoyed by the outcome of the Congressional debates over the future government of Hawaii, Wilcox returned home with renewed energy and prepared to launch a campaign to return to Washington as Hawaii's official Congressional delegate. He planned to pursue this goal by organizing a third political party called the Home Rule Party that would be devoted to addressing issues of importance to Native Hawaiians. Wilcox's organization of this third party and his campaign for delegate frustrated his Republican opponents enormously and led to a series of confused attempts on their part to articulate a clear definition of the relationship between U.S. party politics and their vision of "Americanism." Wilcox's promotion of Hawaiian statehood, one of the major aspects of his political platform, also challenged conventional definitions of the U.S. state and led Hawaiian Republicans to articulate the racist dimensions of their vision of the state more overtly.

Wilcox's interactions in Washington during the Congressional debates introduced him to the powerful and divisive role of party politics in the U.S. political process. He became immediately frustrated with this aspect of the U.S. political scene and sensed that party politics promoted rather than countered injustice. He expressed his frustration in a letter home.

Here in the United States everything is run by party politics and not by the justice of the cause. Whatever the Democratic Party supports, the Republican Party will surely kill it. The Hawaiian cause became the victim of party politics here. Justice cuts no figure in American politics – party politics above all (Quoted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 16, 1900, 4).

Wilcox's negative impression of party politics in Washington D.C. contributed strongly to his decision to run for Delegate to the U.S. Congress as a third party candidate. Wilcox believed it was necessary to run for office as a member of a local party in order to place the emphasis of his campaign on the issues that were most relevant to the needs and interest of Native Hawaiians. The issues being debated by the Republicans and Democrats on the mainland seemed to hold little relevance for Hawaii. In an interview given upon his return to Hawaii, Wilcox remarked:

I don't see what we have to do with the Republican or Democratic Parties in these Islands. We are hardly a Territory yet and know nothing of Mainland politics. I am for home rule, myself. I believe in home rule, in an independent party. I think we ought to establish a party to study the interests of the Islands alone. These Islands are a very small part of the great America. We can represent ourselves better by a home party than through Mainland politics (Quoted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 5, 1900, 2).

While the Home Rule Party clearly focused on issues of importance to Native Hawaiians, it also sought to demonstrate its inclusivity, adopting the motto, "Equal rights for the people" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 8, 1900, 1). During one of his first speeches for the Home Rule Party, Wilcox reminded his followers, "We are all Americans" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1900, 1).¹⁹ In a clear attempt to

¹⁹ George Markham, a founding member of the Home Rule party, reinforced this message, stressing that Native Hawaiians were now also U.S. citizens who intended to exercise their rights and privileges in this capacity and who welcomed alliances with and support from non-Native citizens.

When Congress assumed our independence flag and sovereignty which is ever so dear to us, we Hawaiians became by such act an American citizen whether we disavowed it or not, and we as citizens of such will exercise all the rights and privileges under the fundamental law of the United States... We shall exercise that privilege as a body politic with discretion, moulding and wielding that power in the spirit of true 'republicanism' and the spirit of true 'democracy'... We hold forth our hands of fellowship to our Anglo-Saxon friends who have a Christian feeling of Aloha, imbued with instincts of

refute Republican accusations that they were members of an anti-American, racist political party that excluded whites, the founders of the Home Rule Party stated in their platform. "We intend to strive in every way possible to secure from the United States benefits and privileges for the natives and other citizens alike who will work together for the good of the country, regardless of color" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 8, 1900, 1)."²⁰

Reflecting the views of many Hawaiian Republicans, the *Advertiser* reacted to the formation of the Home Rule Party with horror and urged Native Hawaiians to join the Republican or even the Democratic Party instead. If they did not divide themselves between these American parties, the *Advertiser* warned that Native Hawaiians could expect that their suffrage rights would be taken away in the same way that they were being removed from southern blacks in the wake of Reconstruction.

the native race, and interwoven by bonds of matrimonial ties (letter printed in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 24, 1900, 7).

²⁰ On the other hand, when George Markham refuted the accusations made against the Home Rule Party by the *Advertiser*, he referred to the white residents of Hawaii as "foreigners".

Articles are being published daily in the *Advertiser* trying to make it appear that we as natives are ranging ourselves against the foreigners. Our foreign friends are the ones who know best that such statements are altogether untrue. . . . We want to do all things that will bring equal benefits to everyone (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 8, 1900, 1).

It is possible, of course, that this was simply the term used to translate Markham's remarks from Hawaiian to English. The *Independent* claimed that the *Advertiser*'s account of the meeting from which this quote is taken was "garbled." However, the *Independent* did not provide its own translation of the proceedings (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 8, 1900, 4). It is interesting to note that Markham did not refer to either Native Hawaiians or white residents of Hawaii as Americans despite the fact that members of both groups were now U.S. citizens and Hawaii itself was now part of the United States.

Wise leadership would bid the natives divide between the two great parties as some of them long ago divided between the two great branches of the Christian faith... For them the doors of the Republican party and the Democratic party will be hospitably open, but for an aboriginal party with the motto 'No haole need apply,' there is a yawning gulf of disaster such as long ago swallowed up the suffrage of the Southern blacks (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 20, 1900, 4).²¹

Continuing its attack on the Home Rule Party, the *Advertiser* asserted, "Congress, which is made up of Republicans and Democrats and white people will not tolerate a party which is made up of the professed opponents of Republicans and Democrats and white people" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, May 19, 1900, 4). The *Advertiser* thus openly stipulated the racist parameters of U.S. government and the U.S. nation.

Eligibility for service in Congress depended not only on one's party affiliation but also on one's racial status. This latter prerequisite was particularly salient at a time when the last African-American legislators who assumed office during the Reconstruction era were losing those offices in the face of the reassertion of white supremacist political tactics.

The *Advertiser* then voiced a threat that it would repeat over and over again during the course of the campaign for the Hawaiian Congressional Delegate:

Suppose the Republicans and Democrats of Hawaii should unite and petition Congress to restore the property qualification to the suffrage, where would the native voter than be? If he wants to save his ballot he will cultivate the goodwill of the Republicans and Democrats by dividing up politically as other Americans do. To stand out and resist Americanism here is to try and push back the ocean with a broom (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, May 19, 1900, 4).

The *Advertiser* thus offered a definition of Americanism that combined adherence to conventional U.S. political norms by "dividing up politically" into Republicans and

²¹ "Haole" is the conventional term used to describe whites in Hawaii.

Democrats with support of the white supremacist underpinnings of these norms by opposing the development of a political party whose platform included fighting white racism. This definition of Americanism combined the trappings of democratic political institutions with overtly racist prerequisites for inclusion in the nation.

The *Advertiser* accused supporters of the Home Rule Party of being un-American and asserted that if Wilcox were elected delegate from a third party, he would be unable to accomplish anything in the U.S. Congress.²² While ostensibly claiming that Wilcox and supports of the Home Rule Party were un-American because they engaged in anti-white reverse racism, “going off by themselves to draw the color line against whites,” the *Advertiser*’s thinly veiled message was that Americanism meant support of white supremacy (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1900, 4). The Home Rule Party was not only anti-American because it was “anti-haole” but because it was a Native party that did not commit itself to the institutions of white supremacy. Indeed, the *Advertiser*’s underlying objection to the Home Rule Party was not that it was anti-white but that it was anti-white supremacy.

²² The *Advertiser* made the following predictions concerning Wilcox’s role in Congress.

If Congress had believed that the Hawaiians would oppose Americanism, going off by themselves to draw the color line against the whites, it would undoubtedly have retained the property qualification in the Cullom-Knox bill... Wilcox has told them that if a native – meaning himself – is elected to the Congress, he could prevent hostile legislation. Nothing can be further from the fact. If he went from an anti-American, anti-haole native party, he would not have a friend on the floor of either House or in the Executive Mansion. He could not appeal to Republicans or Democrats. Having no vote, he could offer them no help in exchange for favors asked, and belonging to no American party, he could not catch the eye of the Speaker and get a chance to be heard on the floor (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1900, 4).

In addition to warning Native Hawaiians against forming a third party, the *Advertiser* warned them against joining the Democratic Party, noting that this was the party that disenfranchised Southern blacks and that it could just as easily disenfranchise Native Hawaiians (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, May 25, 1900, 4). The *Advertiser* repeatedly quoted an article by Senator Ben Tillman that appeared in *Leslie's Weekly*, justifying the suppression of the "Negro vote" in the South and asserting, "There will be no toleration of a policy which demands one course to be followed in the South and another in Hawaii and in the Spanish Islands" (quoted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 4, 1900, 4).

Both the Republican and Democratic Parties in Hawaii sought new ways to counter the growing influence of the Home Rule Party and to attract Native Hawaiian voters. When the time came for the mainstream parties to announce their candidates for Delegate to the U.S. Congress, both continental-based parties named Native Hawaiian candidates. Sam Parker, a former leader in Liliuokalani's government who had accepted annexation to the United States, became the Republican candidate (Andrade 1996, 191). Prince David Kawananakoa was nominated as the candidate for the Democratic Party.

This line-up of candidates created a rather anomalous situation in which the two mainstream U.S. parties whose constituents were largely whites of U.S. descent were represented by Native Hawaiian candidates while the Home Rule Party whose major constituency consisted of Native Hawaiians nominated a man of Hawaiian and U.S. descent as their candidate for Delegate. Beyond the superficial paradox, however, these choices of candidates can be easily explained in terms of political strategy. The

Republican and Democratic Parties nominated Native Hawaiian candidates in an attempt to appeal to native voters and draw them away from the Home Rule Party. What was most important to the leaders of these parties was not the racial status of their individual candidates but their ability to attract widespread political support for the continued institutionalization of white supremacy in Hawaii. The Home Rule Party, on the other hand, nominated a candidate whom its members considered and who considered himself a member of the Party's Native Hawaiian base but who also spoke the language of European American politics, both literally and figuratively, more fluently than many of his Native Hawaiian colleagues.

As Wilcox and his Home Rule Party gained strength among the Native Hawaiian constituency, the *Advertiser* began to back-pedal from earlier positions. While still insisting that Wilcox was the candidate drawing the "color line," i.e. relying on racism and the exclusion of haoles to promote his campaign, the *Advertiser* now openly proclaimed its own racism, noting, "The white people of Hawaii detest and abhor the color line but if any color is to rule Hawaii it must be white" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 18, 1900, 4).

In an even more dramatic shift, the newspaper stopped trying to appeal to Native Hawaiians to demonstrate their Americanism by dividing up politically between Republicans and Democrats. Giving up on trying to persuade Native Hawaiians to join the Republican political cause, the *Advertiser* now began to appeal to Democrats to unite with the Republicans in order to defeat the Home Rule candidates. "Is it not the wise part

of Republicans and Democrats to combine their whole white and native strength to resist the Wilcox party," the paper asked (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 18, 1900, 4). Realigning its priorities once again, the *Advertiser* claimed, "Parties will mean very little here until Hawaii becomes a State; but the safety of our business, commercial, and wage-earning interests means very much all the time" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 18, 1900, 4).

The *Advertiser* thus shifted the emphasis of its definition of Americanism from support for white supremacy to protection of property, two closely related goals. The Republican newspaper appealed to its Democratic opponents to join together in order to ensure the safety of their economic property interests. In recommending this highly unusual tactic, the *Advertiser* implicitly suggested that by advocating for the inclusion of Native Hawaiians and their interests within the definition of Americanism, Wilcox and the Home Rule Party threatened the Republicans' property in land and business as well as in whiteness. To be American, the *Advertiser* suggested, now meant to possess and protect a commitment to the institution of private property, regardless of one's political party affiliation. In the face of the Home Rule challenge, the *Advertiser* relegated conventional party politics to the back burner and claimed that only when Hawaii achieved statehood would mainland party politics become relevant, precisely the claim that Wilcox had made in establishing the Home Rule Party.²³

²³ At an early rally of the Home Rule Party, Wilcox suggested that the time to join one of the large, mainland parties was after statehood.

After Wilcox's election, the paper changed its tune. Rather than supporting efforts to overturn the election results, the *Advertiser* adopted quiet acceptance of Wilcox's election as a strategic move designed to erode future support for the Home Rule Party among Native Hawaiians. It continued to portray Wilcox as an unworthy delegate, claiming, "Wilcox at Washington is sure to be conspicuous only as a failure," but went on to assert, "We do not object at all to letting the native voters see him in that light, for then, maybe, they will see the wisdom, next time, of choosing a worthy man" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, November 23, 1900, 4). In other words, the *Advertiser* suggested that perhaps in the next elections, Native Hawaiian voters would decide to support a candidate committed to the American institutions of white supremacy and private property.

Meanwhile, Wilcox continued to try to defend himself and his party against the continuous accusations made against them, stating, "The assertions made that we are 'anti-American' and 'anti-haole' are false" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 11, 1900, 12).

Those in power now are crying because that power is fleeing from them. In a few days they will mourn their loss. It is they that are accusing us of all sorts of wrong, but they forget the 'aihue aina,' (land steal) which they committed themselves (quoted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 11, 1900, 12).²⁴

The best thing for you to do is to organize your own party. In other words, to have home rule, to carry on your own affairs without looking at either party. When you become a State that is the time for you to go to one of other of the two great parties. At the present time we are only to have a delegate in Congress (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1900, 4)."

²⁴ On the other hand, Wilcox was well known for his dramatic oratory and there is compelling evidence that he did make speeches attacking the haole and calling them names. The *Advertiser* carried translations of some of these speeches, virtually all of which were made in Hawaiian. At a rally of supporters in October, for instance, Wilcox allegedly made the following statement.

Wilcox thus strove to change the terms of the debate and to focus attention on the dispossession of Native Hawaiians that had enabled the white men of U.S. descent to acquire their property in Hawaii in the first place. While his message resonated strongly with Native Hawaiians, it received little support from white citizens in Hawaii.

Hawaiian Statehood

One major aspect of the Home Rule Party's political platform was advocacy of statehood for Hawaii. Wilcox had long viewed statehood as a potential means for Native

I tell you it is only those small-headed and narrow-minded people who are jealous of me and deride me. The reason is because they want to send a man whom they can lead by the nose and dictate to him what they wish. They don't want a Hawaiian there. These haoles in this country are nothing but cockroaches (translated and reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 11, 1900, 3).

Indeed, while each party tried to defend the righteousness of its cause, both Republicans and Home Rulers also engaged in nasty name-calling, depicting their opponents as insects, rodents and the like. The Home Rulers apparently quite often referred to their Republican opponents, or more generally to the missionaries and haoles, as snakes and cockroaches (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 11, 1900, 3). At the same time that the Advertiser was piously complaining about such remarks, however, it ran a series of political cartoons in which Wilcox was depicted as a shark, a dog, and even the devil (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 16, 1900, 1 and October 17, 1900, 1). In other editorials, the Advertiser attacked Wilcox's manhood, asserting that "surely there is someone more representative of Hawaiian manhood than this skulking creature who never led the natives to anything but the quicksand and the precipice and then sent them on ahead (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 17, 1900, 4)." The newspaper accused Wilcox of being a "cheap adventurer," a "mere self-seeker," and a coward (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1900, 4, October 23, 1900, 4, and October 26, 1900, 1). The Advertiser also sought to discredit Wilcox and his campaign by comparing him to a number of marginalized figures often depicted as enemies of the American nation, including the Native American Indian chief, the Philippino leader, Aguinaldo, and the anarchist. The newspaper focused frequently on Wilcox's Italian connections, referring to him as the Hawaiian Garibaldi, and it predicted that Home Rule would fail in Hawaii just as it had failed in Ireland. Both of these latter associations drew attention to Wilcox's affiliation with Catholicism, another aspect of his identity that distinguished him from mainstream, Protestant U.S. society. Associating Wilcox with the Irish and with American Indians also served as a means of placing him firmly within a racialized view of society that had deep historical antecedents in the United States (see e.g. Smedley 1993). Categorizing Wilcox as racially other was an easy means of both representing his foreignness and cementing his exclusion from the U.S. nation, despite his status as a U.S. citizen and his successful bid to become Hawaii's first delegate to the U.S. Congress.

Hawaiians to secure greater control over their political and economic lives. For Wilcox, statehood implied the extension of the full range of U.S. democratic institutions and guarantees of liberty, justice and equality to the citizens of Hawaii. What Wilcox failed to take into account in his dream of statehood, however, were the explicitly racist criteria the U.S. government employed to determine whether a Territory was fit to become a State. As we have seen, Hawaii's admittance as a Territory was extraordinarily controversial due to its mixed race status and one of the only reasons that annexation succeeded was due to the informal assumption that statehood would not be granted in this particular case. Wilcox, however, did not seem to recognize the depth of U.S. racism and continued to place his faith in the universalistic promises and proclamations of its leaders.

The *Advertiser* rejected the suggestion of statehood out of hand, insisting that Native Hawaiians would have to become American before Hawaii would ever stand a chance of becoming a state. Once again, the *Advertiser* equated Americanism with particularistic traits such as language and suggested that the only way Native Hawaiians could make their Territory eligible for statehood was through a process of intense assimilation.²⁵ Far from serving as a means of furthering Native Hawaiian rights, the *Advertiser* suggested

²⁵ The *Advertiser* fully stated its position in the following terms.

Congress has never consented to admit as a State any Territory where the political sentiment did not run on American lines. Because of the presence of a large Spanish-speaking body of voters in Arizona and New Mexico, voters whose ideals and sympathies are un-American. Congress has steadily refused, in one case for over forty years, to confer upon these Territories the boon of statehood... There is but one way for the natives to help the cause of Statehood and that is to become American themselves and accept American politics with all the rest (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 9, 1900, 4).

that statehood would only be achieved after Native Hawaiians ceased to be Hawaiian and became American instead (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 9, 1900, 4).

Indeed, the newspaper argued that the best way to promote Hawaiian statehood was to promote white, male immigration to the Islands, claiming, “What Hawaii needs more than any one factor in its population is white men” (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 1, 1900, 4). According to the paper, “Good government, American institutions, the safeguarding of society, diversified industries, eventual statehood – all these can be benefited most by white immigration” (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 1, 1900, 4). The *Advertiser* thus reaffirmed its equation of Americanism with whiteness and support of white supremacy. “Good government” was white government, “American institutions” were white institutions, and the safety of society depended on its whiteness. Statehood would result not from petitions by Native Hawaiian citizens but from white domination of those citizens through white migration to and settlement in the Hawaiian Islands.

Wilcox's Election

Wilcox's election as Hawaii's first delegate to Congress prompted a flurry of mixed reactions. Some Hawaiian Republicans challenged the results immediately and called for renewed efforts to implement suffrage restrictions. Others advocated a more patient and cautious response. The continental press offered contradictory assessments of the election, focusing on Wilcox's alleged royalist background and allegations of anti-white racism. Undoubtedly, many individual Congressmen were frustrated by the election

result but the general Congressional response was to accept Wilcox's election with the knowledge that he would be unable to wield any significant political power.

The majority of Hawaiian Republicans also decided that acceptance of the election results was the most effective political strategy. Noting that despite the victories of Wilcox and the Home Rule Party, the majority of the votes for Republicans had come from Native Hawaiians, the *Advertiser* made the following astonishing assertion:

If the situation had been reversed, and a community of Americans or Englishmen felt and had felt for seven years that they had been oppressed and wronged by the natives, and then should suddenly have found themselves in possession of a free ballot, and had outnumbered the natives four to one, can anyone doubt that they would have voted for their own kind only, and have everlastingly snowed under every candidate of the party which they looked upon as responsible for their wrongs? It seems to us that instead of acting badly, the Native Hawaiians have been extremely moderate, and that instead of there being reason for discouragement and a feeling of fear for the future, we have every reason to feel encouraged, and to look forward to the Native Hawaiian vote as a conservative rather than a radical one (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, November 13, 1900, 4).

Perhaps more than any other statement made by the newspaper, this editorial indicates that the *Advertiser's* prior attacks on Wilcox and the Home Rule Party, particularly their accusations of racism and exclusion, were based largely on a projection of their own racist attitudes and rigidly exclusionary practices onto their political opponents. To the extent that Wilcox and other members of the Home Rule Party did make racially exclusive statements, they undoubtedly took their cues and models from their European American counterparts. While Wilcox attempted to refute charges of racism made by the Republicans, he was unable to step outside of the dominant, discursive frame imposed by his European American opponents sufficiently to articulate

the sources of his opponents' attacks and dismantle them on their own terms. Instead, he frequently found himself on the defensive, arguing vainly against the charges of racism brought against him and unable to prevent the questionable translation and publication in English of some of his more provocative references to his white political opponents.

Shortly after Wilcox's election, the *Washington Post* condemned both Wilcox and Congress in an editorial reprinted from the "New York press" entitled "Hawaii – Colonial Lesson No. 1: Free Reason Must Complement Free Speech in a Democracy" (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6). The author cited Hawaii's status as a Territory populated by an "ill-assorted conglomeration of race specimens, in which the inferior predominated," and its supposed history of cannibalism as evidence of its "political infancy" (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6).²⁶ According to the editorial, the people of Hawaii were not fit to exercise the same political rights as the "political experts among peoples" who included white Kentuckians, Ohioans and Iowans (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6). Furthermore, the article claimed that Wilcox's election proved the failure of Congress' policy approach toward Hawaii.

²⁶ The editorial read in part:

Only last spring a Congress, full of sublime confidence in the political perfectibility of the whole of mankind, conferred upon the 40,000 Kanakas, 45,000 Asiatics, 15,000 Portuguese, and 5,000 Anglo-Saxons of the lately cannibal islands all the powers and privileges of an embryo American State. First among these was, of course, universal suffrage and a seat without a vote in the House.

Congress was serenely persuaded that the sort of government that the sons of New England had carried across the continent could be worked by this ill-assorted conglomeration of race specimens, in which the inferior predominated. The thought was never entertained that the political infants and tyros among peoples could not handle the machinery of the political experts among peoples. Consequently a full Territorial government, the same as that given to Kentuckians, Ohioans, and Iowans was conferred upon the Hawaiians (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6).

The object lesson is...that free reason must complement free speech in a democracy. It is that independence without intelligence is anarchy. It is that there is in primitive man no more than the germ of a capability for self-government, which has to be developed for generations before it can be trusted with the entire control of a people. This is true even where, as among the Hawaiian natives, there is a high percentage of literacy and a civilized moral standard (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6).

“Literacy” and a “civilized moral standard” thus did not equate with “intelligence,” nor were they sufficient qualities to alter the “primitive” character of Native Hawaiians. Nor did the author suggest how one might judge when “capability for self-government” had actually been reached though presumably this had to do with the willingness of the electorate to support white supremacist, European American political principles and platforms. “Free reason” and “intelligence,” according to this author, were strongly associated with whiteness and white political domination (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6)

Furthermore, the editorial cited Wilcox’s prior affiliations with the monarchy as proof of his political incompetence. It described Wilcox as “a royalist politician, who headed the opposition to annexation and will now represent the Territory in Congress” and asserted that he “had two arguments for his enlightened constituents to consider: the Queen should be restored to her throne and the lepers to their homes” (*Washington Post*, November 29, 1900, 6).

The continental press emphasized Wilcox’s royalist affiliations frequently, associating them with despotism and treating them as a sign that Wilcox, and Native Hawaiians more generally, were at a low stage of political and social evolution. The *Philadelphia Record*, for example, claimed, “Wilcox has successfully arrayed the natives

against the whites, with the result that he comes to Congress in the capacity of a royalist sitting amongst Republicans and Democrats – the first one that has sat in an American representative body since the revolution” (*Philadelphia Record*, reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, December 18, 1900, 6). The *San Francisco Examiner* echoed this theme with a cartoon entitled “The Royalist Triumph,” that depicted the Sultan of Sulu, a Muslim leader of one of the Philippine islands who had been allowed to continue his rule under U.S. power, congratulating Wilcox and Queen Liliuokalani with the words, “I am pleased to observe that my imperial ideas of government are extending over our entire country” (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 17, 1900, 1). In an accompanying article entitled “Ex-Queen Political Boss of the Hawaiian Islands,” the *Examiner* made the following assertion.

The election proves conclusively that Liliuokalani has great strength in the islands. The only way to destroy this strength and give the control of the islands in the hands of the whites will be for Congress to establish some limitation upon the voting privilege (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 17, 1900, 1).

Both the *Philadelphia Record* and the *San Francisco Examiner* accused Wilcox of exhibiting racist and imperialist tendencies that were dominant features of European American politics and relied on these accusations to discredit him and to suggest the need for Congress to enact voting restrictions in order to reassert white supremacy in Hawaii. Voting, according to the *Examiner*, was not a right but a privilege and one that should be limited according to race (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 17, 1900, 1).

The *Los Angeles Times* echoed this theme, focusing on the so-called “race division.” According to the paper, Wilcox’s “campaign was an anti-white canvass” and “the natives

have won upon a race division” (*Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1900, 2). A few sentences later, however, the paper contradicted itself, stating, “The most encouraging feature to the whites of both parties is in the fact that the white majority is so small, which shows that very many of the natives were divided upon other than race lines” (*Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1900, 2). The *Los Angeles Times* concluded, “The present prospect is that the Congressman-elect will be utterly ignored by the commercial and other interests of the islands” (*Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1900, 2).

The *New York Times*, on the other hand, urged that the election results be treated with tolerance. Rather than condemning Congress for passing relatively liberal suffrage laws for Hawaii, it suggested that Wilcox should be allowed time to prove himself as a delegate and that if he did not, his constituents would vote him out of office. Supporting a universalistic vision of the nation, the *Times* argued that the limitation of Hawaiian suffrage at this stage would be outrageous.

Wilcox may not be the man to most creditably represent Hawaii in Congress, but he appears to be the choice of the largest party in the islands, and to have been elected under a law adopted by the United States Congress after deliberation. If he shall prove to be an incompetent or mischievous Delegate, the Hawaiians may be depended upon to find that out and to drop him two years hence. But if he brings average intelligence, industry, and honesty to Congress, any attempt to punish the Hawaiians for electing him, by depriving them of their votes in order that a particular party may prevail, though now in the minority, would be to perpetuate an outrage that we trust Congress will never sanction (*New York Times*, November 19, 1900, 6).

The contrast between these editorials and their different interpretations of Congressional responsibility once again highlight the presence of contending definitions of “Americanism.” One approach advocated an explicitly racist and exclusive definition

of Americanism by contending that Congress acted irresponsibly in granting suffrage to Native Hawaiians, a people “unfit for universal suffrage” (*Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1900, 2). The *New York Times* editorial, by contrast, suggested that Congress acted within its rights in granting suffrage to Native Hawaiians and implied that Americanism consisted of abiding by the democratic, universalistic political principles and procedures set forth by Congress. Challenging Wilcox’s election, according to this editorial, would be an “outrage” but only *if* Wilcox brought “average intelligence, industry and honesty to Congress” (*New York Times*, November 19, 1900, 6). This important qualification demonstrates the particularistic limits of the universalistic perspective. All of these qualities were conventionally associated with whiteness while incompetence and mischievousness, the traits with which they were contrasted, were often associated with racial otherness. Thus even the more universalistic approach to Americanism defined acceptable delegates to the U.S. Congress according to racialized criteria.

Representing the opposite end of the political spectrum, George Gear, a white Hawaiian Republican eager to be appointed a judge in Hawaii, brought a list of charges against Wilcox immediately after his election, with the goal of overturning the election result. The charges included bigamy, treason and invalid election (Andrade 1996, 219). All of these charges suggested, in different ways, that Wilcox was an illegitimate representative of the U.S. nation. Yet while Gear and many other white U.S. citizens clearly believed that Wilcox’s illegitimacy as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives stemmed from his non-white racial status, none of the charges that Gear

brought against him focused on his race. Rather, they suggested that Wilcox and his election transgressed the boundaries of the nation in other ways.

For example, Gear accused Wilcox of bigamy, asserting that he married his second wife, Theresa, before his first marriage to Italian baroness Gina Sobrero was properly terminated (Andrade 1996, 219). The charge of bigamy was a potent one because the institutions of monogamous marriage and the nuclear family were pillars of capitalist, European American society and violating the boundaries of these institutions was perceived as a serious threat. As Nancy Cott has noted, U.S. policymakers viewed plural marriage as a threat to the sociopolitical order of the same magnitude as that posed by anarchism (Cott 1995, 117). Crossing this marital boundary was also considered nearly as threatening as crossing racial boundaries. Gear hoped that if he could prove Wilcox guilty of bigamy, Congress would expel him just as it had expelled a recent Mormon delegate found to be involved in a bigamous marriage.

Gear based the second charge of treason on several letters that Wilcox wrote, supporting the Philippine cause and, in one case, offering his military services to the Philippine leader. The Report of the Committee on Elections concluded that “however improper it may have been, abstractly viewed,” Wilcox’s statements in these letters did not constitute grounds for his dismissal because they were made before the Organic Act for Hawaii went into effect (House of Rep. report no. 3001, 56th Cong, 2nd Ed., March 1, 1901, 3). The report also noted that Wilcox, as a non-voting delegate, had “no power to be feared, and is indeed merely the agent and spokesman of his people,” suggesting that

their decision was not based on the merits of the charge but on the absence of any significant political threat that Wilcox could pose as Hawaii's delegate (House of Rep. report no. 3001, 56th Cong, 2nd Ed., March 1, 1901, 3). Finally, the Committee threw out the charge that Wilcox's election was illegal for technical reasons. Rather, the report noted that "there was a full and free expression of the popular will" and that "Wilcox was chosen by a considerable plurality" (House of Rep. report no. 3001, 56th Cong, 2nd Ed., March 1, 1901, 3). At the end of their report, the Committee members addressed the underlying reasons for the attempt to eject Wilcox from his seat as delegate: his status as a representative of the Home Rule Party and of many Native Hawaiians.

We are not uninfluenced, in arriving at this conclusion, by a consideration of the fact that the people who send him here are to a large extent unfamiliar with the methods, the policy, and the inspiration, of a free government. They have undertaken to give expression to their desire. Since the organic act, they have, so far as we are advised, shown themselves to be loyal citizens of the American Republic, and we think that when they have thus spoken, their Representative ought to be welcomed as such. If he is not a suitable person to give expression to the wishes and feelings of the people who inhabit those islands, and who are, for all time, to be citizens of the American Republic, they will doubtless discover that fact, and in due time send another (House of Rep. report no. 3001, 56th Cong, 2nd Ed., March 1, 1901, 4).

By taking the high road and publicly confirming its commitment to the democratic, universalistic values that purportedly underlay U.S. political institutions, the Committee on Elections presented itself as a refined and relatively liberal institution, above particularism and petty political squabbles. It could assume this position without compromising white supremacy because, despite his position as Hawaii's delegate, Wilcox did not have the institutional authority to pose any political threat. The Committee's report seemed to confirm the *Advertiser's* assessment of how Wilcox would

be received by the U.S. Congress. Three months earlier, the newspaper had offered the following prediction.

The attitude of Congress generally is quite different from that of the people of Honolulu. They will treat Wilcox with outward respect and give him a full hearing. He is regarded as rightfully representing the majority of the people of the Islands, notwithstanding the fact that he is avowedly opposed to Republican institutions. The members of the House appear to regard the whole affair as a good joke on the white politicians of the Islands, and will take occasion to 'rub it in,' by treating Wilcox with consideration. Wilcox, however, will have no real influence (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, December 13, 1900, 1).

Wilcox as Delegate

Despite his lack of political clout, Robert Wilcox posed several significant challenges to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state as Hawaii's first delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives. First, his mixed racial status challenged the prevailing norm of whiteness in the U.S. Congress. Wilcox's presence served as a reminder of the tensions between Congressional support for U.S. expansionism and Congressional fears of the erosion of white supremacy. Although Wilcox was of mixed descent, many Washington observers perceived him as simply a Native Hawaiian or as black due to his appearance. In other words, they frequently assigned Wilcox to a non-white, mono-racial category and associated his mixture with his non-whiteness. When Wilcox's mixed descent was acknowledged, it was depicted as either a romanticized, exotic feature or as a sign of his moral degradation.

Second, Wilcox challenged conventional definitions of the U.S. nation by using his position as Hawaii's Congressional representative to advocate for the interests of Native Hawaiians. Two of the principal ways in which he pursued this goal were by presenting

himself as a delegate from a third political party, the Home Rule Party, and by seeking legislation allowing the official use of the Hawaiian language. Wilcox's position in between European American and Native Hawaiian political cultures and his sophisticated political skills allowed him to pursue these goals at the highest levels of the U.S. government but also ultimately prevented him from achieving them.

U.S. policymakers successfully controlled Wilcox's political influence by formally accepting him as Hawaii's representative in Congress but simultaneously denying him any significant influence in that capacity. As a Territorial delegate, Wilcox did not have the right to vote and his mixed race status, lack of fluency in English, and position as a third party representative prevented him from exercising effective informal influence. In addition, poor health and lack of finances prevented Wilcox from participating in Washington's political life as actively as he had hoped (Andrade 1996, 227).

Wilcox as a Delegate of Mixed Descent

Although there is little direct evidence concerning the reactions of U.S. Congressmen to Wilcox's racial status, the continental press focused considerable attention on the issue. The *New York Times* noted that Wilcox's Congressional peers treated him in the same manner as they would a "Negro" during his term as delegate and that Wilcox's inevitable status as an outsider in this context clearly diminished his ability to serve Hawaii effectively.

When Wilcox came to the United States and entered upon his Congressional duties he found himself an outsider. His dark skin placed him on the same footing as Negroes,

and he found few associates. He was quick to discover this, and he was seldom seen in the House of Representatives during his term. Though, on the stump in Hawaii, he talked loudly of his achievements in Congress, as a matter of fact he was hardly known even by sight to most of his colleagues (*New York Times*, October 25, 1903, 7).²⁷

Wilcox's biographer insisted that racism, while "normal for Americans" at the turn of the 20th century, should not be overestimated in assessing the reasons for Wilcox's inability to gain more political influence in Congress, but contemporary accounts such as the one above suggest that racism was indeed a primary factor (Andrade 1996, 231). In the post-Reconstruction era, Congress had returned to being the purview of white men and, as demonstrated by the Congressional debates discussed earlier, racism was overt, alive and well.

Wilcox's racial status became much more of a focus in the continental press than it was in the Hawaiian press. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, for instance, treated Wilcox as a Native Hawaiian, in spirit if not in total ancestry, and rarely commented on his racial status or physical appearance although it launched vicious assaults against his politics and his alleged racism against whites.

Wilcox's mixed and indigenous Hawaiian status apparently seemed much more unique and worthy of comment in the continental United States. Newspaper articles on the mainland described Wilcox as a "half-breed" or "half-caste" and provided detailed descriptions of his ancestry and physical appearance. These accounts seemed designed to

²⁷ It is also interesting to note that this passage from Wilcox's obituary refers to him coming to the "United States," as though Hawaii were not a part of the United States despite its official annexation and the fact that Wilcox was in Washington as the new U.S. Territory's official Congressional delegate.

serve either as proof of Wilcox's moral and political illegitimacy or as evidence of his romantic exoticism. For example, one account described Wilcox as a "half-caste Hawaiian" who had "openly proclaimed in the legislature... that he was of illegitimate birth and that a white man was to blame therefore" (*New York Times*, November 18, 1889, 2).²⁸

The most detailed descriptions of Wilcox's racial background often appeared in sensationalist articles about his marriage to and separation from his first wife, Gina Sobrero, who came from an aristocratic Italian family. These articles either romanticized Wilcox's royal ancestry, a popular Orientalist alternative to denigrating royalism as depotism in this era of obsession with refinement, or vilified him for being racially mixed. A feature in *Town Talk*, a Washington weekly that appeared shortly after Wilcox took office treated Wilcox as a novel possession, asserting, "the Hawaiian representation, officially and socially, is an intelligent and charming acquisition to Washington," as though Wilcox were a quaint addition to Washington's collection of political personalities (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 11, 1901, 3).²⁹

The *New York World* ran an article that romanticized Wilcox in a much different fashion.

²⁸ The *Philadelphia Record* referred to Wilcox as "a half-blood, the son of an American sailor and a kanaka woman (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, December 18, 1900, 6)." The *San Francisco Examiner* noted that Wilcox's "father was... a sea captain of Newport, RI and his mother a native woman (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 17, 1900)."

²⁹ The *Advertiser* reprinted this article, unusual in its relatively complimentary though Orientalist tone, with the comment that it contained "plain signs of Mr. Wilcox's fine Italian hand" (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 11, 1901, 3).

Gigantic of stature, swarthy of skin, accomplished of manner, martial in carriage, romantic and impulsive of temperament is Robert W. Wilcox, the Native Hawaiian who has just been elected as the first delegate to Congress from that Territory... His father, William S. Wilcox, of Newport, RI, was a ship carpenter. His mother was a black kanaka – a Native Hawaiian (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, January 15, 1901, 9).

Whereas the articles that attempted to portray Wilcox in a romantic but positive light referred to his father as a sea captain and emphasized his mother's royal lineage, those that stressed Wilcox's mixed racial heritage tended to portray his father as a laborer and omitted any reference to his mother's royal ancestry, identifying her only as a "kanaka" or Native Hawaiian. Racism and classism were thus inextricably linked.

The *New York World* article continued with a sensationalist depiction of Gina Sobrero's disappointment upon learning that her husband was not a member of the Hawaiian royalty. According to the author, Gina "dropped beneath the weight of shame when she discovered that she had not married a Prince, but the son of a white carpenter and a black woman" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, January 15, 1901, 9). The embellished retelling of Wilcox's alleged betrayal of his aristocratic Italian wife by falsely claiming to be a member of the Hawaiian royalty was a common theme in many press mainland accounts of his personal life.³⁰ Inevitably, these accounts contrasted his claim to royalty with his mixed racial status. The intent was clearly to accentuate Wilcox's apparent betrayal of his wife by asserting that not only did he falsely claim to

³⁰ The *New York Times*, for example, reported that Gina was shocked to learn that Wilcox was not "heir to the throne" but "simply one of the many half-breeds of the islands. He was the son of a white man, a carpenter, by a Kanaka woman" (*New York Times*, November 3, 1895, 17). In a similar vein, the *San Francisco Call* wrote that Mrs. Wilcox learned that Wilcox "was not of royal birth, but the son of a Kanaka girl and an American laborer (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, July 27, 1900, 9)." In fact, as stated previously, Wilcox's mother was distantly related to a member of the Hawaiian royalty.

be royalty but that his true identity was that of a half-breed. These reports thus suggested that not only did Wilcox *not* hold a superior social status but, in fact, held a decidedly *inferior* status on the basis of his mixed racial ancestry.

The *New York World* emphasized this theme of Wilcox's alleged racial inferiority and contrasted it to Sobrero's claim to an elevated class and racial status in a vivid and sensationalist depiction of Sobrero's reaction to the birth of her daughter (Sobrero is described here as the Italian Princess).

The child, as often happens, had harked back to the type of its grandmother. Negro blood showed in it unmistakably. The Princess almost raved in delirium when she discovered this. She begged that the child be taken from her sight forever. Death claimed the tiny bit of humanity, and the young mother, more relieved than grieved, fled to Italy (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, January 15, 1901, 9).

What is significant about these accounts is not so much their accuracy or inaccuracy, but the insight they provide into how mainland U.S. citizens perceived Robert Wilcox. While some viewed him as a quaint, royal member of a distant, exotic and now extinct kingdom, others attempted to assimilate him into the racialized dichotomy that defined social identity in the United States. Even when his mixed ancestry was acknowledged, Wilcox was often identified as "a splendid physical specimen of the Kanaka race" (*Washington Post*, January 2, 1900, 2). In other words, despite frequent mention of his white, American father, Wilcox himself was clearly identified as non-white. The imposition of this racialized non-white identity, whether it was specified as Native Hawaiian, half-breed, or black had negative implications for Wilcox's ability to serve effectively as Hawaii's delegate in Congress. It also provided evidence of the response

of European Americans to the challenge that Wilcox posed to conventional definitions of the American “we”, and the property of whiteness. By stressing Wilcox’s non-white status, the continental press sharpened the distinction between U.S. citizens and full members of the nation.

Legislative Language

A second way in which Wilcox and the Home Rule Party challenged the prevailing definitions of Americanism was by asserting themselves as Hawaiian-speaking U.S. citizens and American legislators who conducted much of their political business in Hawaiian. At the same time, their lack of fluency in English led to their marginalization and dismissal by members of the mainstream U.S. parties at both the local and national levels. Benedict Anderson noted the important role that shared language and, particularly, the printed word, played in the development of modern nationalism (Anderson 1991). In the case of the United States, as one historian observed, language and words took on increasing significance in a late 19th century society where “a man was his ‘word’ or the words others used about him” (Bledstein 1976, 73). According to Burton Bledstein, “Those armed with words would get ahead in the new society; the inarticulate, barely literate, and foreign speaking would not” (Bledstein 1976, 73).

Responding to the election of Robert Wilcox and other Home Rule politicians, the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* claimed, “Americanism cannot be guarded, inculcated, or spread by men who can barely speak the language, who know nothing of the traditions, and who care nothing for the principles of the American people” (*Pacific Commercial*

Advertiser, April 30, 1901, 4). Once again, the paper effectively combined universalistic and particularistic definitions of the nation, associating the English language with U.S. traditions and principles, and implying a very narrow definition of the American people.

One of Wilcox's legislative goals was to have Congress amend the Organic Act to permit the use of the Hawaiian language in Hawaiian courts and in the Hawaiian legislature (*Washington Post*, December 16, 1900, 13).³¹ The Organic Act stipulated that Hawaii's legislative sessions had to be conducted in English. Many members of the Home Rule Party, including some of those who were elected as legislators, had only a superficial grasp of the English language. Most of the Home Rule campaign, including speeches at rallies and conventions, was conducted in Hawaiian.

Wilcox himself did not speak English entirely fluently and felt much more comfortable expressing his political views in Hawaiian. His lack of fluency in English was one of the major barriers that prevented Wilcox from functioning more effectively within the U.S. Congress (Andrade 1996, 231). The press often commented on his "broken accents" and noted, "His speech is easier when he attempts the tongue of the Kanakas, but his English is readily understood" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 15, 1901, 4 and *Washington Post*, December 16, 1900, 3).

During the campaign, Wilcox attempted to circumvent the English language requirements by downplaying the stipulation that Hawaii's legislators conduct their

³¹ Unfortunately, as with so many of his political attempts to serve the needs and interests of Native Hawaiians, this effort did not succeed.

sessions in English and asserting that it would be acceptable to have an interpreter translate remarks from Hawaiian for members who felt more comfortable speaking in that language. Ultimately, however, the language question became contentious, controversial, and significantly intertwined with questions about the definition of Americanism.

To the extent that the U.S. political system allowed Hawaiian voices to be heard at all, it did so only in order to more effectively discredit them. By ridiculing the Hawaiian language as “a vehement succession of vowel sounds,” European Americans ensured that the language would be viewed simply as an oddity and that the meaning and content that its speakers sought to convey would not be taken seriously or understood in the way in which they were intended (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 17, 1901, 1). This ridicule and marginalization of the Hawaiian language was an effective means of ensuring that membership in the U.S. nation was associated with exclusive use of the English language.

Under the headline, “One Legislative Tongue,” the *Advertiser* observed that some prospective Native legislators who were well qualified in other respects would be unable to run for office due to their lack of literacy in English. The *Advertiser* defended the English-only policy.

The provision that there shall be but one official language for the United States is just and reasonable. Were it not insisted upon in all the States and Territories, New Mexico might have a Spanish Legislature, Minnesota might have to put up with English, German, and Scandinavian law-makers and the Municipal Assembly of Greater New York might be a babel of Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Gothic, and Slavic tongues. One official language is a gain to the national idea, a safeguard of union, an inspiring influence upon naturalized aliens who, but for it, might always content

themselves with foreign speech and customs... In the course of years the uncouth Hawaiian dialect will be as rarely heard as is the original Gaelic among the inhabitants of Ireland. With knowledge of English must come the absorption of the ideas which that language embraces and conveys; a process which will make the native islander eventually an American in his habits as are the descendants of the Spanish Dons who live in California (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 21, 1900, 4).

This passage suggests that the designation of a single official language was as important as the insistence that the official language be English. This vision of a monolingual nation mirrored the goal of a homogenous, mono-racial nation. Language purity constituted a national priority, as did racial purity. The prospect of a “babel of Anglo-Saxon, Latin, gothic, and Slavic tongues” was a threat to the American nation (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 21, 1900, 4). Hawaiian was not even granted the status of a full-fledged language but was treated as an “uncouth dialect,” suggesting that it was not only un-American but also immoral (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 21, 1900, 4). The *Advertiser* thus defined acquiring knowledge of the English language as an essential part of the process of becoming American. By contrast, it predicted that the Hawaiian “dialect” would gradually disappear just as many European American analysts were predicting that the Native Hawaiians themselves would disappear.

Lack of fluency in English became associated with political incompetence. One editorial cited Wilcox’s imperfect English as evidence of his lack of political qualifications for service in Congress.

No one with any grain of common sense can possibly suppose that Wilcox is a representative of any value of force in Congress, or that he is really qualified to give even accurate and intelligible information upon matters Hawaiian. His ignorance of

the English language would preclude that, even if his actual knowledge did not (reprinted in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* from *Hilo Tribune*, April 23, 1901, 9).³²

The English language had a very different meaning for Wilcox. In the short-lived, bilingual Home Rule Republican newspaper that he founded and produced with his wife, Theresa, Wilcox described himself as the product of two, gendered tongues but openly asserted that he hated many of those associated with the English language for their continuous oppression of Native Hawaiians (*Home Rule Republican*, November 13, 1901, 1).

We have no prejudice against the haole as such. How can we? On the contrary, we love him in the abstract. We are half haole ourselves. We appear in our mother tongue, Hawaiian, and in our father's tongue, English; but we hate with a fierce hatred the actions of some of the brethren of that father's side, who never neglect a chance to down the Native Hawaiian; who seem to be actuated by motives of envy and jealousy against any Native Hawaiian occupying any position of honor or prominence (*Home Rule Republican*, November 13, 1901, 1).

Wilcox portrayed speaking two languages as a phenomenon as natural as having two parents. His comments concerning bilingualism mirror Riel's comparison of bi-

³² The equation of the inability to speak fluent English with political incompetence was also applied to the Home Rule-dominated legislature in Hawaii. In a particularly scathing editorial, the Advertiser accused the legislature of proposing a bill for local county and municipal government that it described as "the most extraordinary conglomerations of rubbish ever put before a Legislature purporting to transact its business in the English language" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 1, 1901, 4). The article went on to claim that no Home Rule legislator seemed to have any knowledge of the bill, much less to have read it. The editorial attributed this situation to the fact that the bill was printed in English and speculated on how it had been produced.

Some smarty whose chief qualifications were a glib tongue and an unlimited supply of self-confident assertion was provided with a scissors and a paste-pot and set to work. When the piling and compiling was done the scraps appear to have been handed over to some typewriting master of "English as she is wrote," who proceeded to further mutilate and muddle the work of the professor of paste and scissors. Then apparently, without any attempt at editing, correcting, arranging, or coordinating, the whole mass of legal protoplasm was dumped in the House. The result is before us and speaks for itself with a wealth of bad English, uncertain spelling, legal ignorance and general all round incompetence which leave nothing to be desired (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 1, 1901, 4).

nationalism with having two hands or two sides to one's head. Wilcox emphasized the naturalness of bilingualism by referring to the two languages he spoke as tongues, suggesting that language held a close, physical relationship to the body. When Wilcox wrote, "we appear in our mother tongue... and in our father's tongue," he suggested that by speaking both of his parents' languages, he appeared in their image (*Home Rule Republican*, November 13, 1901, 1). The languages of Hawaiian and English were as much a part of his heredity as his physical appearance.

This interpretation of language contrasted sharply with the abstract depiction of language in the *Advertiser*, as something that could be learned or unlearned at will as part of an assimilation process. It also differed from the hierarchical ranking of languages, in which some, such as English, merited the designation of language while others, such as Hawaiian, were depicted as mere dialects.

On the other hand, the *Home Rule Republican's* gendered description of the linguistic identity of the people it represented reflected not only the relationships within most families of European American and Native Hawaiian origin but also served as a metaphor for the power dynamics within the larger, patriarchal society. People of European American descent dominated Hawaiian society just as the father tended to dominate the family. At the same time that he expressed fierce resentment of this European American domination of Native Hawaiians, however, Wilcox continued to identify himself as "half haole," thus recognizing and acknowledging that aspect of his heritage despite his mixed feelings about it. While Wilcox's "we" included the English language and the haoles

despite his discomfort and difficulty with them, the mainstream European American “we” rejected any inclusion of the Hawaiian language or people despite their official inclusion within the state.

Third Party Delegate

A third way in which Wilcox challenged conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state as Hawaii’s first delegate to the U.S. Congress was through his status as a third party candidate. As the *Advertiser* so pointedly noted, Congress was comprised of “Republicans, Democrats, and white people” and Wilcox did not conform to any of these categories (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, May 19, 1900, 4). He challenged the boundaries of party politics just as he challenged the boundaries of race. For Wilcox, the promise of America was a promise of equal rights for all of its citizens and Wilcox did not believe that the rights of Native Hawaiians could be adequately granted through representation by the two, major U.S. political parties. Wilcox’s status as a Home Rule Party candidate challenged the limits of political discourse and the boundaries of the U.S. nation established by the Republican and Democratic Parties. At the same time, however, Wilcox’s status as a third party delegate in Congress rendered him visibly invisible within that U.S. political institution, a presence clearly located outside the boundaries of political power and the nation.

Wilcox’s third party status took on a physical manifestation when he arrived for the Fifty-Seventh Congress and sat on neither the Democratic nor Republican side of the aisle, but in a new addition to the building that had not yet been split between the major

parties (Andrade 1996, 222). Wilcox was thus literally situated between the two mainstream political parties and was distinctly alone within the Congress. His politically ambiguous position was as visibly marked as his racially ambiguous status.

The *Advertiser* had long predicted that Wilcox' status as a third party representative would prevent him from serving as an effective delegate in Congress. In one editorial, for instance, the *Advertiser* asserted, "he would have less influence on Congress than an assistant janitor of the Capitol's basement" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1900, 4). According to the paper, "the vital interests of Hawaii demand that its delegate should be a party man" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1900, 4). The most telling charge, however, was the *Advertiser's* repeated assertion that as the member of a third party, Wilcox, if elected as Hawaii's Delegate, would be a "nonentity" in the U.S. Congress (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1900, 4).³³

After Wilcox won the election and began his term in Congress, the *Advertiser* claimed smugly, "Wilcox is precisely the nonentity which owing to the fact that he belongs to neither party, we long ago said he would be" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, February 12, 1901, 4). Wilcox was thus described as an absence rather than a presence.

³³ The *Advertiser* stated its case in the following manner.

Third party men are usually found in Congress but they are the least useful of representatives... The Populists never got much for their districts though they were full-fledged members of Congress. A Prohibitionist in either house, or that hybrid politician a Silver Republican, could do little else than draw his pay. What then could a voteless Delegate from a new Territory, who is neither a Republican nor a Democrat but inimical to both, possibly hope to accomplish? Such a man would be a lay figure, a nonentity (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, October 3, 1900, 4).

He did not possess the political credentials, including whiteness, which would have allowed him to exercise political power in Congress. Rather than being acknowledged as an indigenous Hawaiian leader and a representative of the Home Rule Party, Wilcox was dismissed due to his non-whiteness and the fact that he belonged to "neither party." In the realm of Washington politics, Wilcox's failure to conform to the dominant categories of race and party politics rendered him politically non-existent.³⁴

During his first session in Congress, Wilcox began to recognize the challenges he faced as a third party representative in Congress and sought creative ways to overcome them without abandoning his Home Rule Party and the principles for which it stood. As soon as he arrived in Hawaii for the interval between Congressional sessions, Wilcox launched a move to change the name of the Home Rule Party to the Home Rule Republican Party. He made clear to his followers that this change in no way indicated a decision to affiliate with the local Hawaiian Republican Party but rather, was a bid to attract more attention from the majority Republicans in Congress. Wilcox told his supporters that he would have a much better chance of achieving statehood for Hawaii if he came from a party that included the word Republican in its name (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 17, 1901, 1).

The *Advertiser* predictably ridiculed Wilcox's efforts to gain some measure of influence within the context of U.S. party politics. The paper referred to the newly

³⁴ Sereno Bishop echoed this theme, claiming that Wilcox "has always been regarded as a rather incapable and innocuous nonentity, an object of derision rather than of antipathy, while his domestic relations have placed him beneath social notice" (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, December 25, 1900, 7). Wilcox was visibly invisible in both the political and social arenas.

labeled Home Rule Republican Party as the “Independent-Home-Rule-Republican-Any-Old-Thing-Party,” the “polyglot party,” and a “hybrid body,” claiming that the name change was simply further evidence of Wilcox’s political manipulations for personal gains (*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, April 18, 1901, 4). Wilcox’s fellow Home Rule members readily accepted the party name change but it failed to gain Wilcox any additional influence when he returned to Congress. In particular, the elusive goal of statehood remained a distant dream.

Assessment of Wilcox’s Congressional Career

The strategies that Wilcox used to pursue his political goals as Hawaii’s first delegate were often incomprehensible to his fellow Congressmen. To some extent, they reflected his lack of total familiarity with European American political processes and his failure to conform to the subtle, informal cultural norms and behaviors that defined national U.S. political institutions such as Congress. In many cases, however, Wilcox’s unconventional political strategies can be attributed to his recognition that he lacked the power to achieve his political goals through more conventional means. He, therefore, used the means at his disposal, including manipulating the political system, circumventing standard processes and rules, and withholding or presenting misleading information in order to obtain as many political advantages for his Native Hawaiian constituency as he could. In this way, Wilcox constantly challenged the boundaries of the U.S. nation that sought to exclude him.

Wilcox and the Home Rule Party suffered a serious defeat in the 1902 elections that signaled the beginning of their political demise. In 1903, Robert Wilcox died from hemorrhages while he was involved in a campaign for sheriff of O'ahu. The Home Rule Party continued to exist for several more years but never regained the political influence it had achieved under his leadership.

Wilcox's position as a Congressional delegate from a third party served as one more indication of his in-between status, a status that challenged prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation but ultimately prevented Wilcox from being accepted within its boundaries. The descriptions of Wilcox as a nonentity echoed the characterization of people of indigenous and European descent as liminal, unidentifiable figures, neither Indian nor white. Because they did not fit into standard categories, their presence was often completely ignored. By failing to conform to conventional mono-racial or political categories, people like Robert Wilcox challenged those categories on one level but also often found themselves beyond the boundaries of national discourse.

As the Home Rule Party nominee, Wilcox was not simply the political opponent of the Republican and Democratic nominees. He literally had no place within the context of mainland party politics, and, in this sense, did not exist. The vocabulary of U.S. party politics and conventional definitions of the nation did not include him. Like so many of his contemporaries of mixed descent, Wilcox could no longer be defined as a foreigner but neither was he accepted as fully American by either his European American political colleagues or the European American-dominated press.

Conclusion

U.S. policymakers officially annexed the islands of Hawaii via a joint Congressional resolution in 1898. This decision officially extended the territorial boundaries of the United States beyond the North American continent and raised a host of new questions about the definition of the U.S. nation and state. The mixed race status of the new Territory of Hawaii and much of its population challenged conventional understandings of what it meant to be American.

In response to these challenges, U.S. policymakers and other European American observers began to articulate revised definitions of the nation and state that were based more on abstract, ascriptive and ideological criteria than on material links to land. Contemporary observers often referred to Hawaii as one of the United States' new possessions, but with its acquisition European American members of the nation developed other possessions as well. Americanism itself increasingly became defined as a form of property that granted certain privileges and rights to those who possessed it. Once, membership in the U.S. nation was associated with ownership of land on the North American continent. Now, membership in the nation came to be associated with the possession of an ideological commitment to the institution of private property. Once, the ascriptive trait of race was treated as a visible marker that distinguished those who were members of the nation from those who were not. Now, national membership was determined both by scientific definitions of race that sometimes defied visual recognition and by one's ideological commitment to the institutions of white supremacy.

Several years earlier, U.S. authorities had chosen not to pursue annexation of the Northwest Territories. This decision seemed to be largely based on the rival claims of friendly Anglo powers, Canada and England, the large and dominant Metis population in the Territories, and the Metis leadership in the Northwest. By contrast, U.S. Congressmen decided to annex Hawaii as a result of fears of Japanese dominance in the Islands and reassurance that an elite of white men of U.S. descent dominated the existing government of Hawaii as well as its economy. In both cases, the desire for territorial expansion was fuelled by economic and military motives, supported by moral justifications.

Hawaii's status as a mixed race, noncontiguous territory forced U.S. policymakers to revise their definitions of the state as a union of racially homogenous and territorially contiguous States and Territories. The annexation of Hawaii necessitated a definition of the U.S. state that did not depend on material links to the North American continent or a demographically dominant white population. This new definition of the state revolved instead around ideological commitments to the institutions of private property and white supremacy. Those who possessed these ideological commitments in certain accepted versions, and who conformed to various ascriptive criteria, became eligible for national membership.

The 1900 Congressional debates about the new government for Hawaii that resulted in the Organic Act revealed the contentious process through which these new definitions of nation and state emerged. Concerns about Hawaii's mixed race character and its

implications for the definitions of the U.S. nation and state emerged in gendered metaphors of the islands and their political identity, heated arguments about the relative safety or danger of allowing Hawaii and Native Hawaiians self-government, and proposals to restrict suffrage and political autonomy for Hawaii. They also emerged in the refusal of the vast majority of Congressmen to consider the possibility of statehood for Hawaii. Hawaii became an official but not an equal part of the United States.

These debates and subsequent efforts to implement the Organic Act that resulted from them revealed two key conflicts that shaped the changing definitions of nation and state at the turn of the 20th century. First, they exposed a clear gap between the universalistic, democratic principles that many U.S. policymakers espoused and the racist, ascriptive policies that they proposed to implement in order to guarantee white domination in all parts of the United States. This gap became the focus of intense party politics as allegations of hypocrisy persuaded many policymakers to support more universalistic approaches to state citizenship and national membership than they initially endorsed. Second, the Congressional debates and implementation of the Organic Act revealed sharp tensions between the goals of expanding the territorial boundaries of the U.S. state through annexation of additional lands and protecting white supremacy.

Robert Wilcox, Hawaii's first delegate in the U.S. Congress, an active advocate for Native Hawaiian rights, and a person of mixed descent, also challenged prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation and state, prompting revisions and redefinitions by European American politicians and press members. While Wilcox pursued his vision of

“Hawaii for the Hawaiians,” his fellow Congressmen struggled to assimilate his presence into their understanding of American political institutions, the American people and the American nation. For most, the incongruity seemed to be too overwhelming. Rather than broadening their definition of American to include Wilcox as a fellow U.S. citizen and member of Congress, mainstream Republicans in both Hawaii and on the continent drew the boundaries of their political party and their nation ever more tightly as they struggled to reconcile their exclusion of Wilcox with their commitments to both geographic expansionism and to the American, liberal, universalistic principles they claimed to uphold.

Wilcox did not possess the properties of the new Americanism. He possessed neither whiteness nor a commitment to the institutionalization of private property in the service of white supremacy. His mixed race status and his unconventional political path rendered him a nonentity in the U.S. Congress. Wilcox demanded that U.S. policymakers expand the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state to include him and his Native Hawaiian constituents, thus fulfilling the democratic, universalistic principles to which they claimed to adhere. These European American policymakers (and other European American observers) responded by paying lip service to those principles, allowing Wilcox a chair in the Congressional chamber, but simultaneously defining the qualities that one had to possess in order to be considered truly American in ever more racially and ideologically rigid terms.

The annexation of Hawaii led to an expansion of the territorial boundaries of the United States but it did not enlarge the boundaries of the nation. Instead, it led to their ascriptive strengthening and ideological restriction. As a result of overseas territorial expansion and other changes such as industrialization, to be American increasingly meant to possess a recognized commitment to the intertwined institutions of private property and white supremacy.

Chapter 5

Anarchist Americans:

Lucy Parsons, Foreign Bodies, and American Soil

Introduction

At the same time that U.S. soldiers were fighting the last Indian Wars and the frontier era was on the verge of being replaced by overseas imperialism, the initiation of tremendous industrial expansion posed its own challenges to conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state. The rapidly growing capitalist economy required laborers, prompting large numbers of new immigrants from Europe to convene in crowded, U.S. cities to fill these positions. Working conditions were harsh and most laborers found it difficult to earn enough to provide themselves and their families with the basic necessities of life, let alone any additional comforts.

In this new, urban context, a variety of labor movements began to address the concerns of working people. Some of them advocated an eight-hour working day and called for strikes when laborers did not receive sufficient pay or were denied other basic benefits. Occasionally, the U.S. government employed the same military personnel who were involved in fighting American Indians to control strikers and oppose demonstrations that authorities feared might become violent (Smith 1995, 106-107). Many wealthier,

U.S.-born European Americans came to view laborers in the newly industrialized economy as a threat to the sociopolitical order. Reflecting these views, U.S. officials, members of the capitalist press and other observers applied the same racialized stereotypes that had once been applied to American Indians to members of the growing industrial workforce (see e.g. Slotkin 1985, Rogin 1987, and Kovel 1997).

U.S. observers were particularly likely to apply these stereotypes to workers engaged in socialist or communist politics. Socialists of varying persuasions called for fundamental changes in a sociopolitical system that allowed great disparities and inequities to develop between the working poor and the capitalists who owned the vast majority of the country's wealth. Some socialists believed that the necessary political and economic changes could be obtained through peaceful, democratic means. Others, however, became convinced that more revolutionary means were needed to effect meaningful change. Among those advocating revolutionary change were groups of socialists in New York, Chicago and other major, U.S. cities who accepted the label of anarchists.

Policymakers, local government authorities, and members of the press feared the challenges posed by the anarchists to the prevailing sociopolitical order. They responded to these challenges by conceptualizing anarchism not simply as a radical and foreign political doctrine to which people voluntarily adhered, but as an aberrant, racialized trait that placed its adherents outside the ascriptive boundaries of the nation. How did the challenges that anarchists posed to the dominant, capitalist sociopolitical order, and the

responses of U.S. officials and observers influence the conventional definitions of the U.S. nation and state? What role did the threat of mixture play in this process?

In this chapter, I will argue that responses to the anarchist challenges led to the development of increasingly abstract and ideological definitions of the U.S. nation and state. Efforts to define anarchists as foreign despite their legal U.S. citizenship involved attempts to make ideological foreignness more visible by associating it with ascriptive qualities. In addition, critics of anarchism linked adherence to this marginalized political ideology with transgression of a variety of social and behavioral boundaries. In this way, U.S. officials and capitalist reporters constructed tighter and more rigidly homogenous definitions of both nation and state as they tried to protect these institutions from new perceived threats of mixture, including the mixed populations of predominantly European nationalities in industrial, U.S. cities, and the mixture of political ideas that developed in these urban environments. The resulting conceptions of nation and state also served to sharply demarcate the properties of Americanism in both ideological and ascriptive terms.

I will examine how the process of defining Americanism as a form of ascriptive and ideological property occurred by focusing on two common responses to the anarchist challenge. First, many policymakers, policemen and reporters tried to marginalize and delegitimize the concerns articulated by anarchists by portraying these political activists as racialized foreigners. This effort was complicated by the fact that the majority of the anarchists were immigrants from Europe and naturalized U.S. citizens. It, therefore,

required a redefinition of racial otherness and of what it meant to be foreign, both of which had important implications for the definition of the nation.

Second, many U.S. officials and observers depicted the urban environments in which anarchists lived as mixed, and debated ways to restore the purity not only of the American people but also of American soil. In this sense, they viewed the anarchist challenge as a threat to the territorial integrity of the U.S. state and sought ways to restore the homogenous, American character of that territory. In the context of debates over anarchists and anarchism, the concepts of purity and homogeneity developed ideological as well as racial connotations.

In order to assess how the debates concerning anarchists and anarchism both reinforced and reconfigured the boundaries of nation and state, I will pay particular attention to the role that Lucy Parsons, a leader in the anarchist movement, played in them. Parsons, a U.S.-born woman of mixed descent, married to a U.S.-born, European American man who also played a leading role in the anarchist movement, challenged both conventional definitions of anarchists and prevailing understandings of the nation and state. She posed these challenges through both her physical presence as a woman of mixed descent and her anarchist political activities.

I will discuss several ways in which Parsons resisted efforts by U.S. officials to define the U.S. nation and state in exclusively capitalist terms by declaring anarchists foreign and describing the cities where they lived as mixed and contaminated. Through her resistance, Parsons exposed and challenged the inconsistencies and tensions within

conventional, capitalist attempts to declare both anarchists and anarchism un-American. First, Parsons defied efforts to declare anarchists foreign based on their birth in foreign countries by publicly declaring herself an American anarchist not only by virtue of her own birth on U.S. soil, but also on the basis of the birth of generations of her ancestors on the North American continent. Parsons took this argument one step further by identifying herself as an indigenous American and, thus, implying that her embodiment of anarchist principles constituted an indigenous, American political perspective.

Second, Parsons complicated attempts to portray anarchists as racialized others by resisting efforts to undermine the salience of her political views by characterizing her as a Negro or colored woman. She tried to deflect attention from her mixed, non-white racial identity as well as her mixed marriage. Third, Parsons challenged the notion that American soil was becoming contaminated and polluted by radicals and radical ideas in large, mixed cities by offering an alternative perspective in which anarchism and anarchists were not foreign imports unsuited for growth in American soil, but rather had a natural affiliation with the land of America.

At the same time that Parsons devoted her life to promoting anarchist ideals and resisting the definition of the U.S. nation and state in exclusively capitalist terms, she did not overtly resist other aspects of European American dominance. Parsons did not explicitly contest many of the racist and sexist policies and practices that limited her activities and opportunities as an individual, and that contributed to prevailing definitions of the nation and state. Indeed, she even embraced certain aspects of the prevailing

European American, middle class culture and argued that they could be furthered within an anarchist context. For example, Parsons selectively adopted the discourses of refinement, civilization and science, and employed them in her advocacy of anarchism. As Gail Bederman has noted, “the interesting thing about ‘civilization’ is...the multiple ways it was used to legitimize different sorts of claims to power” (Bederman 1995, 23).

At the same time that anarchists and anarchism posed a new and serious challenge to key aspects of the prevailing definitions of political fitness and the U.S. nation and state, they left other aspects of those definitions unchallenged and, indeed, reinforced them by either quietly accepting them or by incorporating them into their oppositional discourse. An examination of Lucy Parson’s political resistance demonstrates that even those who posed the greatest challenges to the prevailing sociopolitical order accepted many of the parameters of the dominant discourses.

This chapter will proceed with a brief consideration of the theoretical and sociopolitical contexts in which I analyze the anarchist movement and an overview of Lucy Parson’s life and political career. I will then move into a discussion of how U.S. officials and members of the press responded to the perceived threat posed by American anarchists by portraying them as foreigners. I will analyze the challenges that Lucy Parsons posed to these efforts and dominant responses to those challenges.

In the second part of the chapter, I will consider how U.S. officials and press members depicted anarchism as a threat to American soil. Once again, I will consider how Lucy Parsons challenged these assertions and offered an alternative definition of the

relationship between anarchism and U.S. land. By organizing the chapter in this manner, I hope to convey how new understandings of the definitions of nation and state emerged from intense debates and contestations over who was American, what was Americanism, and where was America.

Theoretical and Sociopolitical Context

Many scholars have examined the role of the late 19th century anarchist and socialist movements in U.S. society and politics (see e.g. Avrich 1984 and Nelson 1988). Although most analyses focus on the class dimensions of these movements, the xenophobic responses to anarchists and socialists that led to the first Red Scares have been well documented. Paul Avrich, for example, the leading scholar of U.S. anarchism, observed that in the wake of the Haymarket tragedy, "Anarchism became identified with foreigners and subversion... and the stereotype of the anarchist as a foreign-looking, black-cloaked, bomb-wielding fanatic, dedicated to chaos and destruction, became firmly established" (Avrich 1984, 219).

Despite anarchism's status as a new political phenomenon, the discursive links drawn by U.S. officials and observers among anarchism, foreignness and subversion had deep historical and sociopolitical roots. Scholars such as Michael Rogin, Richard Slotkin and Joel Kovel have documented some of the ways in which racialized stereotypes that had conventionally been applied to American Indians were now transferred to anarchists and other laborers as the apparent threats posed to the U.S. nation and state by indigenous people waned and those posed by industrial workers increased (see e.g. Rogin 1987,

Slotkin 1985, and Kovel 1997). Anarchists were not only depicted as foreign. U.S. officials and members of the capitalist press depicted them as savages beyond the boundaries of civilization, thus conveniently obviating any need to seriously address the criticisms they leveled against capitalist U.S. society, or to engage with the political ideas they advocated (see Jacobson 2000, 96-97 and Smith 1995, 150-151).

Yet, as mentioned above, anarchists themselves internalized many aspects of the racialized discourse of civilization. This latter dimension of the anarchist and socialist movements has received little serious scholarly attention. Apart from passing references to anarchists being “at best fuzzy about the very existence of racism,” most scholars have had relatively little to say about the role that dominant, ascriptive discourses played within the U.S. anarchist movement (Paul Le Blanc quoted in Nelson 1988, 171).¹

My contention is that in order to understand how the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state were being contested and continuously redefined at the turn of the 20th century, it is necessary to examine both the dominant, capitalist responses to marginalized political movements such as anarchism, and the selective incorporation of dominant discourses within these movements. Both of these processes contributed in important and insufficiently examined ways to the articulation of the boundaries of the U.S. nation and state.

¹ Carolyn Ashbaugh, Lucy Parson’s biographer, might be considered one exception to this general rule. She emphasized the role that racism played in Parson’s life and Parson’s personal and political struggles against it (see Ashbaugh 1976).

Lucy Parsons as Anarchist: Historical Background

In 1873, still in her late teenage years, Lucy Parsons left Texas, where she had grown up on her uncle's farm, and moved to Chicago with her husband, Albert Parsons. Lucy was an indigenous woman of mixed descent whose ancestors most likely included North American Indians from both the United States and Mexico, and possibly Africans (Ashbaugh 1976, 14, Avrich 1984, 11-12, and Nash 1995, 949-950). Albert was several years older than Lucy. His ancestors were among the first European immigrants to the United States and had fought in the American Revolution. Albert joined the Confederate army during the Civil War, but after the war was over he became a Radical Republican and strongly advocated reconstruction measures and equal rights for blacks. His political views caused him serious harassment in Texas, and he and Lucy ultimately decided to leave and move north.

In Chicago, Lucy and Albert both became involved in the growing labor movement as thousands of people, many of them recent immigrants from Europe, struggled to make a living in the newly industrialized urban environment, amidst appalling working conditions. Lucy and Albert initially identified themselves as socialists. Within a few years, however, they both came to the conclusion that the problems inherent in an industrialized, capitalist economy could not be solved through the ballot box, and that liberation from "wage slavery" could only be achieved through more direct and, if necessary, violent means. They advocated social revolution and accepted the label of anarchists imposed on them by local officials and members of the capitalist press.

In 1884, Albert Parsons became the editor of the *Alarm*, an English-language anarchist newspaper published by the International Working People's Association. On the front page of its first issue, Lucy published an article entitled "To Tramps," in which she advocated suicide bombing as a means of furthering the cause of the working class. She suggested that despondent men who were contemplating suicide because they were unable to find work or feed their families should not throw themselves in the lake. Rather, she advised them to take a walk to the wealthier part of town with dynamite in their pockets and "let your tragedy be enacted *here*" (*Alarm*, February 21, 1885, 1).²

Chicago police, local authorities, and members of the press all considered Lucy to be more violent and to hold more dangerous political views than her husband (see, e.g., *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1886, 2). Nevertheless, the officials treated her more leniently than they did Albert, largely because of her gender. On May 4, 1886, Albert Parsons and several other anarchists spoke at a hastily organized public meeting at the Haymarket Square to protest police brutality against strikers. Toward the end of the meeting, after the Parsons family and the Mayor of Chicago had already left, the police marched in to disperse the crowd. An unknown person threw a dynamite bomb into the

² Parsons' famous article continued:

Then send forth your petition and let them read it by the red glare of destruction. Thus when you cast 'one long, lingering look behind,' you can be assured that you have spoken to these robbers in the only language which they have ever been able to understand, for they have never yet deigned to notice any petition from their slaves that they were not *compelled* to read by the red glare bursting from the mouths of the cannon, or that was not handed to them upon the point of the sword. You need no organization when you make up your mind to present this kind of petition. In fact, an organization would be a detriment to you: but each of you hungry tramps who read these lines, avail yourselves of those little methods of warfare which Science has placed in the hands of the poor man, and you will become a power in this or any other land. *Learn the use of explosives!* (*Alarm*, February 21, 1885, 1).

police ranks, killing several people, injuring dozens of others, and creating massive confusion as the police began shooting people around them. It was the culminating moment of rising tensions between police and anarchists, socialists and other working people in the city.

The authorities responded by immediately arresting the most prominent male anarchists in Chicago and charging them with murder, despite the total lack of evidence that any of them had anything to do with throwing the bomb. Albert Parsons was among those charged, tried, and ultimately executed for murder. Lucy Parsons was briefly arrested several times but she was not charged with murder despite the fact that, as the *Chicago Tribune* reported, "The police were more afraid of mischief from Mrs. Parsons and other female Anarchists that night than from the blatherskites that mounted the wagon" (*Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1886, 2).

The authorities were apparently reluctant to put Lucy Parsons on trial because they did not think that a jury would vote to execute a woman. Parsons resented not having the opportunity to become a martyr for her cause (see Ashbaugh 1976, 109, 139). The discrimination that she faced as a result of sexism and racism extended not only to matters of everyday life but also to decisions about whether she should be tried and punished by death. This chapter does not focus on a specific legal case because Lucy was excluded from that case, largely on the basis of her gender. She devoted herself instead to presenting her husband's case to the U.S. public by conducting a series of national speaking tours and raising money for the defense.

At the end of a long, sensational legal struggle, Albert Parsons and three other anarchists were executed by the U.S. state on November 11, 1887. Lucy Parsons devoted the rest of her long life to furthering the anarchist cause for which they died. The press almost invariably characterized Lucy as “Mrs. Parsons,” Albert’s wife and widow. Lucy, however, was very much a political leader in her own right and, if anything, held stronger views and presented them more forcefully, eloquently, and persuasively than her husband.

Foreign Politics and Foreign Bodies

U.S. officials and observers sought to counter what they perceived as a growing threat of anarchism in the late 19th century by portraying it as a foreign doctrine and defining its adherents as foreigners. The national, capitalist press published frequent attacks on anarchism, depicting it as an un-American ideology and arguing that adherence to anarchism was a detriment to working people rather than an advantage. The capitalist press characterized anarchists as foreigners by making repeated references to the claim that they were foreign-born, European immigrants and ignoring the fact that most were also naturalized U.S. citizens, if not citizens by birth.

Editorials in major newspapers provided evidence of an internal struggle over how to reconcile the conceptualization of anarchists as foreigners with their legal status as U.S. citizens. One day after the Haymarket tragedy, for example, the *Chicago Tribune* asserted that none of the anarchists in the city were “true American citizens” (*Chicago Tribune*, May 5, 1886, 4).

These alien Anarchists not only seek to inflame the passions of the mob and urge them on to violence, but they have the effrontery to claim that they are 'true American citizens,' and that they are defending the liberty for which their sires fought. Not one of them is a true American citizen. Not one of them performs the duties of a good citizen, is loyal to his Government, or has the interest of the community at heart (*Chicago Tribune*, May 5, 1886, 4).

The definition of a "true" American citizen, according to this editorial, was a moral rather than a legal or ascriptive one. "True" American citizens were "good citizens" who were "loyal" to their government and had "the interests of their communities at heart" (*Chicago Tribune*, May 5, 1886, 4). In other words, "true American citizens" were those who upheld republican values. This definition of Americanism raised the question of why people who were neither born in the United States, nor apparently morally qualified for U.S. citizenship, were still able to obtain the legal status of citizens. It also raised questions about exactly how these moral prerequisites for "true" citizenship would be defined, and by whom.

Perhaps recognizing the difficult questions that its ideologically based, republican definition of "true American citizens" raised, the newspaper changed tactics the following day. Rather than asserting that anarchists were not "true American citizens," it portrayed them as ungrateful and inhuman U.S. citizens who held treasonous views that rendered them politically alien. In other words, the newspaper now recognized the anarchists as technical, legal citizens of the state but portrayed them as politically, morally, and ascriptively unqualified for membership in the nation. Indeed, it portrayed them as enemies of the nation despite their U.S. citizenship, which, if anything, made them a greater threat.

These aliens, driven out of Germany and Bohemia for treasonable teachings by Bismarck and the Emperor of Austria have swarmed over into this country of extreme toleration and have most flagrantly abused its hospitality. After warming these frozen vipers on its breasts and permitting them to become citizens, with the right to vote and hold office and take part in the government of city, county, State and nation, it has given them three or four times the wages they could possibly get in their own country, given them free schools, free care in case of destitution, and an opportunity to better their condition limited only by their own ability. These ungrateful hyenas have repaid this hospitality by organizing themselves into associations whose object is the destruction of the property, law and government of the land that shelters and feeds them (*Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1886, 4).

Their alleged commitment to the “destruction of property, law, and government” transformed naturalized European American citizens into “aliens,” “frozen vipers,” and “ungrateful hyenas” (*Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1886, 4). Their political views, according to the *Chicago Tribune*, rendered American anarchists not just foreign, but non-human. Together, these editorials summarized the emerging attitudes toward anarchists, communists and socialists that would eventually lead to legal changes in immigration laws designed to prevent entry into the United States by people viewed as holding “foreign” and dangerous political views.

In 1903, following the assassination of President William McKinley by a man loosely associated with the anarchist movement, the new federal immigration act stipulated that anarchists would not be allowed to enter the United States (Jacobson 2000, 94). The 1906 naturalization act stipulated that prospective U.S. citizens had to swear that they were not “opposed to organized government,” and had to demonstrate their “good moral character” and attachment to the “principles of the Constitution” (quoted in Jacobson 2000, 94-95). Thus, in the 20th century, adherence to political ideologies defined as radical, including anarchism and, later, communism, became legal barriers to

immigration to the United States and the attainment of U.S. citizenship. Affiliation with such political ideologies came to legally define what it meant to be un-American. To be an anarchist or a communist deprived one of the right to become an American citizen if one was born outside of the United States, and caused one to be labeled un-American and deprived of national membership if he or she were born within state boundaries. In the late 19th century, however, the legal association between anarchism and foreignness did not yet exist. Anarchists, therefore, could not be defined as legally alien and other criteria had to be employed in order to strengthen the argument that they were foreigners.

Adherence to an abstract set of political beliefs apparently did not seem a sufficient basis on which to declare someone foreign, just as it did not seem a sufficient basis on which to accept someone as a member of the nation. U.S. officials and observers, therefore, sought to distinguish anarchists from “true American citizens” or members of the nation on the basis of ascriptive criteria. Reporters and government authorities began to redefine anarchism according to its alleged physical and behavioral manifestations. They depicted anarchists as dirty, lazy, longhaired, disorderly people who spoke English with foreign accents, if they spoke English at all (see e.g. *New York Times*, November 1, 1886, 1 and November 18, 1890, 5, *Harper's Weekly*, October 9, 1886; and *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1886, 4 and August 8, 1886, 14). In other descriptions, anarchists lost any human qualities whatsoever and became “venomous serpents,” “hyenas,” “reptiles,” and “tigresses,” among other beasts (see e.g. *Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1886, 4, and *New York Times*, May 5, 1886, 4). National newspapers frequently likened anarchists to the devil and associated them with fire and blood (see e.g. *Chicago Tribune*, May 28, 1886,

4; August 7, 1886, 1; November 3, 1887, 1; and *New York Times*, May 5, 1886, 1).

Anarchists represented a greater threat even than members of other groups excluded from the nation on the basis of their race or other ascriptive criteria. The *Chicago Tribune* asserted, "One howling Anarchist is the cause of greater evil in this country than a hundred Chinamen" (*Chicago Tribune*, May 5, 1886, 4).

Through their characterizations of anarchists, government authorities and capitalist reporters redefined what it meant to be foreign in terms of ascriptive traits such as race and gender; and behavioral attributes such as personal hygiene, laziness and alcohol consumption. They not only associated anarchism with foreign bodies. They also sought convincing ways in which to depict the human bodies of individual anarchists as foreign. In other words, they described those bodies in which anarchism seemed to reside as alien, regardless of their legal status. This project seemed to be particularly urgent and challenging because the vast majority of anarchist bodies were male, European American bodies that could not easily be visually distinguished from the bodies of accepted members of the nation. U.S. officials and capitalist reporters, therefore, sought other ways to make the political boundaries of the nation visible and thus to protect possession of the property of Americanism that members of the nation enjoyed.

In this context, one's political persuasion became a naturalized, fixed identity. Anarchism became a bio-physical attribute, a negative, stigmatized possession. By trying to define anarchists in terms of particular physical and behavioral attributes, U.S. authorities and members of the mainstream press exposed their fear that the invisibility of

anarchism rendered those who adhered to it particularly dangerous. In this sense, anarchists posed a threat similar to that posed by people of mixed descent who could pass for white.

The challenges that this lack of visual correspondence posed to efforts to categorize people according to their racial or political identities, and thereby decide whether or not they were fit for national membership, raised considerable anxieties among many European Americans. The ability to conceal one's political views or one's racial identity increased the apparent threats that people posed, just as the ability to conceal dynamite in one's pocket seemed to render the explosive a greater threat to society. Not only did the invisibility of anarchism make its individual adherents difficult to identify, it also made the process of tracking the transmission of these political beliefs from one person to the next in mixed industrial cities more challenging.

In order to counter the threat of invisibility, authorities and reporters sought to render anarchism visible, at least in theory, by characterizing anarchists as physically and behaviorally outside the boundaries of the nation. This tactic served two purposes: first, to transform anarchist political beliefs into an ascriptive and, therefore, theoretically, a more easily identifiable trait; and second, to marginalize anarchists by constructing them as racialized and gendered others. I will briefly discuss three examples of how officials and observers sought to transform anarchism into an ascriptive trait. They include the racialized depiction of anarchists as the new Red savages; the association of anarchists with alcohol consumption; and the portrayal of anarchists as defying conventional gender

roles. These examples are intended to illustrate different dimensions of a common process but are by no means exhaustive. All of these associations emphasized the threat of disorder and turbulence that U.S. officials and other observers felt anarchists posed to the U.S. nation and state.

As I have noted, conceptualizing anarchists, socialists and other laborers as foreign by applying the same racialized stereotypes to them that had historically been applied to American Indians was a well-documented tactic (see e.g. Kovel 1997, Rogin 1987, and Slotkin 1985). This approach was inspired in part by fact that the last major Indian wars took place at the same historical moment that the industrialization of U.S. urban centers and the employment of masses of wage laborers were accelerating. Newspapers reported on Indian wars and labor struggles on the same page, referring to members of both groups as Reds (see Slotkin 1985, 494 for analysis of one such example). Due to the ambiguous national status of American Indians, the application of the label "Reds" to anarchists strongly suggested that these opponents of the capitalist wage labor system were both racially other and nationally foreign.

In addition to calling anarchists Reds, the capitalist press repeatedly referred to them as savages, suggesting that anarchists were excluded not only from the nation but also from the entire realm of civilization. The *New York Times* contrasted the "cowardly savages" who perpetrated the Haymarket bombing with the Chicago police, "the brave men on whom the safety of society rests" (*New York Times*, May 6, 1886, 4). Similarly, the paper compared the "decent solemnity" that supposedly marked the execution of the

Chicago anarchists, with the “savage fury” of the bombing for which they were wrongly hanged (*New York Times*, November 12, 1887, 4). One article declared that the Chicago anarchists were not only a “miserable lot of aliens – the wretched, rotten rubbish cast upon our shores by the political convulsions in distant lands - foreign to us in aspect, feelings, ideas, aims and designs,” but were also “murderous tramps” and “enemies of the human race” (*Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, July 31, 1886, 370). The editorial concluded, “Strangulation and the stamping-out process are the only sure remedies yet found for such insane destroyers of civilization” (*Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, July 31, 1886, 370).

The transfer of racialized stereotypes from American Indians to Chicago socialists was illustrated in two articles published in Frank Leslie’s *Illustrated Newspaper* one month apart. In the first article entitled “Our Uneasy Wards,” the newspaper claimed, “the time has come to settle the Indian question” (*Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, July 18, 1885, 346). Despite “ominous activity” among the Indians, the author implied that they no longer posed a grave threat to the nation and willingly acknowledged that whites had caused many of the problems the Indians faced.³ At the same time, the author wrote condescendingly of many Indians being “‘in a starving condition,’ the condition that the Indians are always in,” and suggested that this condition stemmed from a lack of self-control as much as from any government policy or individual actions on the part of white settlers (*Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, July 18, 1885, 346).

³ According to Richard Slotkin, articles in the *Nation* expressed similar sentiments (Slotkin 1985, 494).

Indians are always in want. They are always hungry and always thirsty – especially the latter – and so they are ready to sell anything they have for a moment's indulgence. Indians just going into battle have been known to sell their muskets for a meal of victuals (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, July 18, 1885, 346).

The article recommended that the Indian “question” be “settled” by allocating a section of land to each Indian head of family for cultivation under the supervision of “white men, whose knowledge of crop-growing, and whose strong commercial instincts would in time teach the savage to become self-supporting” (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, July 18, 1885, 346). In other words, the solution to the “Indian problem” lay in incorporating them into a white supremacist, liberal individualist and capitalist way of life.

The newspaper did not extend the paternalistic sympathy that it expressed toward the plight of the Indians to the “Chicago Socialists.” Instead, using many of the same stereotypes that had often been applied to American Indians in the past, the newspaper described this new “enemy” as a much greater threat than the Indians themselves.

Chicago Socialists, like others of their class, who are too lazy to work and too vicious to obey laws except under a wholesome fear, are at once too silly and too foolhardy to be at any pains to conceal their real purposes. Cowardly and sneaking like the individual wolf, they become bold and blatant with the bravery of the bully when they assume the proportions of a mob. They demand “bread or blood” – the bread that honest men have earned and on which they have no claim, moral or legal... For this lack of food they seek to make society responsible; it has apparently never dawned on these incendiary, revolutionary, and Nihilistic individuals that the responsibility for properly providing for their own offspring rests on the individual fathers and mothers, and not on the public at large. The grotesque criminality of these would-be robbers of the money that others have earned or saved has never been more forcibly illustrated than by the fact that the same mob that proclaimed through the streets of Chicago the hunger of their offspring only managed to appease their own thirst by the consumption of three hundred kegs of beer. It never occurred to these howlers after ‘an equal division of property’ that the cost of three hundred kegs of beer, invested in

the purchase of bread, would appease a good deal of hunger. But one must not look for reason, common-sense, or any other commendable quality, in a Chicago Socialist (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 29, 1885, 19).

The characterization of "Chicago Socialists" as "lazy," "cowardly," "vicious," and "incendiary," echoed countless descriptions of American Indians.⁴ The newspaper compared both the Indians and the socialists to wolves and emphasized the hunger of both populations, suggesting that this hunger stemmed from impulsiveness and lack of self-discipline and self-control. Yet while the newspaper also acknowledged that whites held considerable responsibility for the plight of the Indians and advocated providing government assistance to the Indian population, it made no such suggestions with regard to the socialists. Instead, this editorialist interpreted the hunger of the socialists as a sign of their immorality and criminality for which they were personally responsible. The Chicago socialists were "incendiary revolutionaries" who deserved no assistance from anyone, least of all the U.S. government. They had replaced the Indians as the new Reds, the new savages, the new heathens, the new "incendiaries", the new "mob," and the new enemies of private property (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 29, 1885, 19).⁵

⁴ Many of the attributes this article used to describe Chicago socialists were also commonly applied to other groups deemed non-white, including blacks (see Haney Lopez 1996).

⁵ The depiction of anarchists and socialists as new Reds and as savages was a widespread phenomenon. In his account of anarchy and anarchists written after the Haymarket bombing, Captain Michael Schaack referred to female anarchists as "squaws" and reported that they were always invited to the anarchist "war dances" (Schaack 1889, 207). It is perhaps surprising that there were not more specific references to Lucy Parsons in this vein given her claim to indigenous origins but, as has been shown, Parsons was categorized as a "Negro," not an "Indian." Nevertheless, at least one newspaper reported that Parson's "dark eyes glistened savagely, and she bit her lips until the blood almost came" (*Washington Post*, May 9, 1886, 1).

The articles about the Indians and the Chicago socialists also mentioned an additional similarity between the two populations. They implied that the hunger both experienced could be avoided if they spent fewer of their resources on alcohol. The association between anarchism and alcohol consumption was another means frequently employed to distinguish the alleged immorality of anarchists, their supposed lack of self-discipline and reason, and their wild behavior from the morality, rationality and proper behavior attributed to capitalist citizens. At a time when the temperance and prohibition movements received strong popular support for their efforts to preserve moral order in U.S. society, the association with alcohol consumption suggested that the anarchists fell outside the moral and behavioral boundaries of the nation. According to one newspaper article, "Chicago has become the rendezvous for the worst elements of the socialistic, atheistic, alcoholic, European classes" (*Chicago Tribune*, May 7, 1886, 2).

Reporters included frequent references to beer drinking in their articles concerning anarchist activities, regardless of the relevance of these references to the main story. One *Chicago Tribune* article concerning the Haymarket trial, for instance, noted sarcastically:

Anarchist Brown swears that ten minutes before the bomb exploded Parsons and his wife were in Zepf's saloon drinking beer! The whole business, it would seem, was only a beer frolic (*Chicago Tribune*, August 7, 1886, 1).

The author went on to suggest that the anarchists might seek to excuse each step of what he believed was a murderous conspiracy by asserting that they were only drinking beer.

The association of anarchists with alcohol consumption was a means of portraying them as wild, disorderly people whose behavior fell outside the boundaries of

acceptability defined by the more refined members of the nation. People who drank beer were more likely to act in uncontrolled, undisciplined and unpredictable ways, transgressing the boundaries that defined the sober, settled sociopolitical order. A cartoon of Johann Most, the most infamous anarchist in the United States in the late 19th century, depicts him with a beard and frazzled hair, holding a rifle with one outstretched hand, and lifting his other fist in the air. Far from standing in a settled pose with his two feet on the ground, it looks as though Most is about to leap into the air. To one side of him a sign reads, "Address by Most, the enemy and terror of capital," and on the other side is a large keg of beer (*Chicago Tribune*, May 18, 1886, 3).

Linking anarchism to alcohol consumption constituted an attempt to emphasize the pathology, lack of reason, and lack of self-control among those who adhered to these political beliefs. It also linked anarchists to notions of turbulence and unsanctioned forms of movement. Associating anarchists with alcohol was part of a larger effort to depict anarchism as a threat to the sociopolitical order and anarchists as unfit for membership in the nation.

A third way in which the mainstream press sought to portray anarchists and other laborers as ascriptive foreigners was by depicting them as transgressing gendered boundaries and defying conventional gender roles. One newspaper account, for example, referred to striking women as "shouting Amazons" (*Chicago Tribune*, May 4, 1886). In the aftermath of the Haymarket tragedy, the *New York Times* asserted:

The Bohemian women have been taught a lesson. They acted like tigresses on the night of the shooting and the following day. They developed more courage, as well as ferocity and venom, than the men and showed so little of the woman in their words or actions that the police in self-defense were compelled at times to forget the sex of their assailants (*New York Times*, May 8, 1886, 1).⁶

Reporters sought to discredit Lucy Parsons not only on the basis of her status as a woman, but also by portraying her as an unwomanly woman. They described her as a “tigress,” a “rabid, screaming Anarchist,” and as that “wild, mad Parsons woman” (*Chicago Tribune*, March 11, 1887, 1 and *New York Times*, March 10, 1887, 1).

Reporters emphasized the fact that Lucy’s husband, Albert, worked for her in her dress shop, suggesting a reversal of conventional gender roles, and implying that she was overly masculine while he lacked the requisite qualities of manhood (*New York Times*, May 5, 1886, 4).

The capitalist press portrayed Lucy Parsons as a proper woman only in her moment of greatest grief, after the state executed her husband. Newspaper accounts compared her feminine demeanor in sorrow to her behavior as a “tigress” when she was challenging the political status quo. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, “Woman’s nature had asserted its sway, and the fearless wife of the dead Parsons was absolutely prostrated by the violence of her emotions” (*Chicago Tribune*, November 12, 1887, 2). The newspaper quoted one of Parson’s associates as saying:

⁶ Similarly, the *Chicago Tribune* commented:

A study of the faces of these German and Bohemian women as they tramped by, with a tread that was almost masculine, brought up thoughts of the exciting part played by women in the French Revolution, and, later in the Commune. Dressed in the deepest black, their stern faces wearing little indication of mourning, large slashes of red ribbon on their breasts, these typical Communists looked more fierce and revengeful than their husbands (*Chicago Tribune*, November 14, 1887, 1).

I am actually afraid the woman is dying. And this is the female tiger the papers tell us about (*Chicago Tribune*, November 12, 1887, 2).

The *San Francisco Examiner* contrasted “the conduct of Mrs. Lucy Parsons in preaching anarchy from one end of the country to the other, and in declaring that, although she ‘looked into the hereafter through a noose,’ she would continue to proclaim herself an anarchist,” with the conduct of the “majority of the wives of the anarchists [who] have kept themselves out of the newspapers by very properly attending to the duties of wife and mother” (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 13, 1887, 13).

They have come and gone in a quiet way without flaunting their grievances by expressions of wild vituperation against ‘the capitalistic system.’ They have...been patient sufferers...suppressing all outward signs of resentment...against the authorities (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 13, 1887, 13).

These comments equated being a proper woman with being a “patient sufferer” and refraining from openly challenging authority. Only when she was sad and submissive was Lucy Parsons considered a proper and normal woman by the mainstream press. When she asserted herself as a political leader and spokesperson for the anarchist movement, she immediately became transformed into a “tigress.”

These examples demonstrate a few of the ways in which U.S. officials and press members constructed U.S. anarchists as foreigners by depicting their physical bodies and actions as alien because they transgressed conventional boundaries and failed to conform to ascriptive prerequisites for membership in the nation. Among other things, they portrayed anarchists as people with inferior racialized and gendered bodies who engaged

in immoral, disorderly and unreasonable behaviors such as beer-drinking, and upset conventional gender roles.

In contrast, capitalist reporters depicted the majority of native-born, U.S. laborers as possessing white, manly, healthy, intelligent, and obviously superior bodies.⁷ Perhaps most importantly, they possessed capitalist bodies. According to the *Washington Post*:

The native American is without doubt the highest existent type of manhood. All the circumstances and conditions of his birth and of his training combine to produce in him the best human average of the nineteenth century... There is no chance of anarchical infection among the native masses of the people. The germs of anarchy develop only in the veins of ignorance. The keen intelligence of the American workingman, his quick appreciation of the fundamental principles of all good government, his instinctive apprehension of his own relation to the social system, and above all his knowledge of the cardinal fact that the opportunity for elevation waits always upon the inherent ability to rise – all this insures his contemptuous rejection of anarchical theories as unworthy of the worst that is in him... [I]t is quite impossible to believe that the professional anarchist will ever become an article of home manufacture (*Washington Post*, May 9, 1886, 3).

Anarchism, according to this editorial, was an “infection,” a disease – but one to which the body of the native U.S. workingman was immune. America, it claimed, did not produce the “veins of ignorance” in which anarchism allegedly developed. In this land of opportunity, anarchism would have no opportunity to thrive or to become an “article of home manufacture” (*Washington Post*, May 9, 1886, 3).

Challenges to Ascriptive Anarchism: Lucy Parsons as Indigenous American

Lucy Parsons challenged the conventional definition of what it meant to be both an anarchist and an American by offering her own body as a refutation of the notion that the

⁷ Most accounts depicted the working class as male despite the large number of female laborers.

bodies of native-born American workers were white, male, capitalist and immune to the “infection” of anarchism. Parsons portrayed herself as an indigenous, working class woman who was both an anarchist and a “genuine American”. “I am an Anarchist from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and I am proud of it,” she declared (*New York Times*, October 17, 1886, 9). Furthermore, Parsons offered a direct challenge to the charge that anarchists were foreigners.

They make the argument that we are foreigners. Well, my ancestors on my mother's side greeted the white man as he first planted his feet on the newly-discovered continent, and met Cortez when he marched against Montezuma (*New York Times*, October 17, 1886, 9).

Parson's claim to an indigenous, anarchist body challenged mainstream efforts to create and legitimate an ascriptive distinction between capitalist, American bodies and foreign, anarchist bodies. Her physical and vocal presence as a leader in the anarchist movement also challenged attempts to construct an ascriptive profile of anarchism in other ways. Unlike the majority of U.S. anarchists, Parsons was neither white nor male.

Parsons not only challenged the emerging, ascriptive definition of anarchists. She also contested prevailing definitions of state citizenship and national membership in at least two major ways. First, she challenged the mono-racial categories that structured prevailing concepts of citizenship and nationhood through her physical presence, her disputed, mixed ancestry, and her resistance to persistent efforts to label her a Negro. She also challenged racial boundaries through her marriage to a native-born, European American and her role as mother of their two children.

Second, Parsons challenged the boundaries of citizenship and nationhood through her anarchist political activities. Her ideological beliefs involved overcoming oppression that she associated with the capitalist wage labor system through the destruction of the private property system and the overthrow of all forms of statute law and state government, using violent means if necessary. Parsons considered herself a revolutionary and government authorities and members of the capitalist press viewed her as a dangerous radical.

One of the ways in which U.S. officials and members of the press sought to marginalize Parsons and render her alien despite her native birth was by labeling her a Negro. Chicago police called Parsons a "black bitch" (quoted in Ashbaugh 1976, 81). The *New York Times* described her as "Mrs. Parsons, the Negro wife of the agitator and a blatant Anarchist herself" (*New York Times*, May 6, 1886, 1).⁸ The press also referred to Lucy's racial status in efforts to discredit her husband, characterizing Albert Parsons as "an Anarchist with a Negro wife" and as a "miscegenationist, murderer, moral outlaw, for whom the gallows wait" (*New York Times*, May 5, 1886, 1 and *Waco Daily Examiner*, quoted in Ashbaugh 1976, 86).⁹

⁸ Other examples include the following: "Lucy Parsons, the Negro wife of one of Chicago's condemned anarchists" and "Mrs. Lucy P. the colored wife of the doomed Chicago Anarchist" (*New York Times*, October 16, 1886, 5 and November 1, 1886, 1).

⁹ In addition to the many references to Lucy as a "Negro," the mainstream press called her "the dark-skinned wife of anarchist Parsons", "the dusky goddess of anarchy"; and "the mulatto Anarchist, Mrs. Lucy Parsons, who has been traveling over the country advocating murder, arson, and robbery" (*San Francisco Examiner*, November 8, 1887, 1; *Chicago Tribune*, October 18, 1886, 1 and *New York Times*, March 28, 1887, 8). One account described her in the following terms.

[Parson's] wife is an agitator and public speaker as well as her husband. She is a colored woman. She is poorly clad, but very intelligent. It is said that she has Indian blood in her veins. She preaches anarchy like Louise Michel (*New York Times*, May 6, 1886, 1).

These references demonstrate how members of the capitalist press seemed to insist on categorizing Lucy Parsons as someone of African or at least partial African descent in an effort to discredit her political activities, and portray them as alien and irrelevant to white, capitalist society. By emphasizing both her racial status and her gender (she was dubbed “The Female Anarchist” by the *New York Times* and the “High Priestess of Anarchy” by the *Washington Post*), reporters appeared to try to minimize Parson’s political influence by focusing on ascriptive traits that placed her outside the boundaries of national membership (*New York Times*, October 18, 1886, 8 and *Washington Post*, November 29, 1890).

The efforts of the capitalist press to substantiate its claims that Parsons was of African descent led to the publication of a story concerning Oliver Gathens, a former slave from Waco, Texas, who insisted that Lucy Parsons had been his wife and that they had not divorced before Albert stole her away. Both Lucy and Albert vehemently denied the charges. Albert acknowledged that he had an affair with Gathens’ wife but insisted that she and Lucy were not the same person. Lucy claimed that Gathens’ wife was a woman at least 20 years older than herself and said that she did not consider herself to be “on trial for bigamy” (Ashbaugh 1976, 100). The implication of this rebuttal is that Parsons, like so many other individuals of mixed descent, was accused of threatening the sociopolitical order by transgressing marital boundaries, as well as racial and political ones.¹⁰ The insistence of Albert and Lucy on both the “purity of the Indian and Spanish blood in her

¹⁰ As mentioned earlier, Robert Wilcox also faced charges of bigamy during his political career in the U.S. Congress. The issue of plural marriage was also raised in discourses concerning the metis and although she was never accused of bigamy, Jane Waldron’s marriage to a white man became an important aspect of her disputed allotment case.

veins” as well as on her sexual purity suggested their internalization of associations between racial and sexual purity that were dominant in mainstream discourse (Ashbaugh 1976, 99). The irony of these apparent accusations of sexual and marital impropriety was that Lucy Parsons, unlike a number of other female anarchists of her generation, supported the institutions of monogamous marriage and the nuclear family, and declared that she participated in both.¹¹

Sometimes the obsessive efforts to depict Parsons as racially foreign resulted in contradictory observations. For example, in one detailed description of Parsons’ physical appearance, the *New York Times* seemed to accept her claim of indigenous origins, characterizing her as “the dusky representative of Anarchy” (*New York Times*, October 17, 1886, 19).

Mrs. Parsons is of medium height, and her form is fair. Her face is attractive, and corroborates her statement that she is of mixed Mexican and Indian origin. Her complexion is of a copper color, and her hair is slightly wavy. Her forehead is broad and her eyes wide apart and peculiarly fascinating with their fanatical luster. Her hands are small and well shaped. . . She proved a very fluent conversationalist. In her speech there is no trace of the florid style which almost always characterizes an African, but she showed that control of feelings for which the American Indian is noted (*New York Times*, October 17, 1886, 9).

¹¹ On the other hand, her biographer notes that Parsons participated in “more than one” extra-marital affair (Ashbaugh 1976, 201). Carolyn Ashbaugh also noted that Parsons “may have been prevented from marrying by laws forbidding miscegenation: if this was the case, she demanded what capitalist society denied her – marriage” (Ashbaugh 1976, 201). Thus attitude was different from Parson’s opposition to suffrage for women and for blacks, another institution in which she was barred from participating. In articles such as one entitled “The Negro: Let Him Leave Politics to the Politician and Prayer to the Preacher,” Parsons declared that voting was not an effective means of achieving meaningful political change and advised that rather than campaigning for suffrage rights, women and blacks should “join hands with those who are striving for economic freedom,” and engage in revolutionary activities (*Alarm*, April 3, 1886, 2).

The following day, however, the *New York Times* reverted to the more common contention that, despite her denials, Parsons was undoubtedly of African descent.

[S]he has a handsome oval face with crested eyebrows, a large, full, but well shaped mouth, showing a set of white, even teeth while speaking, and a softly rounded chin. The mahogany hue of the face, with its covering of crinkly black hair, and the large nostrils, convey the impression that some of her ancestors were of African birth. This impression was strengthened by a side view which revealed a depression of the bridge of the nose. The forehead is prominent and the head large. She has a symmetrical figure and is of about the medium height. She was dressed in black. She spoke in a positive way, in a full, clear voice that was heard with distinctness throughout the hall. The use of 'ere' for 'here,' 'years' for 'ears,' 'mo' for 'more' and like expressions gave evidence that her youth had been spent in the South (*New York Times*, October 18, 1886, 8).

The contrast in these physical descriptions of Parsons, suggesting the difficulty of judging someone's racial origins, not to mention her politics, on the basis of physical appearance and speech patterns, did not lessen the obsession with detailed observations of how anarchists looked and acted that aimed at distinguishing them from those who did not profess anarchist views.

In Parson's case, unlike those of some of the other individuals considered in previous chapters, her mixed status, when it was acknowledged, became assimilated into the Negro identity that was attributed to her by U.S. officials and capitalist reporters. One likely reason that her mixed ancestry did not receive more attention from these observers was because it did not include any claims of white ancestry.¹² Nor could Parsons pass for white on the basis of her appearance. Her racial mixture, therefore, if it was acknowledged at all, was interpreted as simply an attribute associated with her

¹² See Forbes 1993 on the lack of scholarly attention paid to people of mixed Indian and African descent.

coloredness. Indeed, in the prevailing racial discourses, coloredness was associated with mixture, just as whiteness was associated with purity. Parson's claims of mixture did not disrupt the colored category. Rather, they contributed to its association with moral inferiority.

Capitalist reporters tended to ignore Parson's denials of any African heritage or to disregard them even when they were acknowledged. The *Chicago Tribune*, for example, printed the following description of Parson's arrival at the courtroom where the Haymarket trial took place.

Mrs. Parsons, the colored wife of the Anarchist, arrived just at that moment and threaded her way to the prisoner's row, followed by her two children. Mrs. Parsons, it might be mentioned, objects to the term 'colored,' as signifying that she has Negro blood in her veins. She says her mother was a Mexican and her father was an Indian. But she is decidedly colored, just the same, and any ordinary observer would conclude that at least one of her parents was a Negro (*Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1886, 1).

It was not only contemporary commentators who insisted on characterizing Lucy Parsons as a woman of African descent. The first sentence of the preface to the only full-length biography of Parsons, published in 1976, begins, "Lucy Parsons was black" (Ashbaugh 1976, 6). Carolyn Ashbaugh, Parson's biographer, claimed, "Lucy Parsons internalized the racism of white society to the extent that she denied her own black ancestry" (Ashbaugh 1976, 66). Other historians have mentioned Parson's disputed, mixed ancestry and generally seem to have accepted the idea that at least some of Parson's ancestors were African in origin (see e.g. Avrich 1984). Yet while there is considerable evidence that Parsons "internalized the racism of white society," as her

biographer claimed, the evidence concerning her purported African ancestry is much skimpier (Ashbaugh 1976, 6). Indeed, these claims seem to be based almost entirely on Parson's appearance and on unsubstantiated rumors about her origins.

Parsons consistently and vehemently denied having any African ancestry. She insisted that her father was a "'civilized' Creek Indian" and that her mother was of indigenous, Mexican descent (Avrich 1984, 11). Given that she was orphaned at the age of three and raised by an uncle in rural Texas (according to her version of the story), it is quite possible that Lucy herself did not know the full details of her ancestry. Albert Parsons, Lucy's husband, also denied that she had any African ancestry and characterized her as a "Spanish Indian maiden" (Avrich 1984, 11). Lucy, however, never claimed that her Mexican heritage was Spanish but rather said that her ancestors were indigenous to Mexico (see e.g. *New York Times*, October 17, 1886, 9). At the same time, Lucy seemed to feel it was important to emphasize the "civilized" identity of her father. The association of civilization with her paternal ancestor reproduced dominant, gendered discourses that associated civilized qualities with the father and characterized the mother as more instinctual and emotional.

The challenge that Parsons posed as a person of mixed descent was different from those posed by other individuals of mixed descent considered in this study. Her racial identity per se did not cause particular controversy because U.S. officials and observers seemed to generally consider it unproblematic to ascribe her to a Negro or colored category, despite her resistance to these labels. What was more challenging, however,

was to reconcile Parson's racial status with the political power that she clearly enjoyed within the predominantly male, European American anarchist movement, and the social acceptance that she gained among fellow anarchists and socialists through her marriage to Albert Parsons. Lucy Parsons obviously was not a white man, but she assumed the same authority and exercised as much power as white men in certain political contexts. Her ability to transcend racial and gender barriers in order to gain a powerful, oppositional political voice clearly threatened conventional definitions of the sociopolitical order and reinforced the growing perception of the need to define the boundaries of nation and state in ideological as well as other, more obviously ascriptive terms.

American Soil: Capitalist Visions

U.S. capitalist reporters and officials attempted to draw clear distinctions not only between the bodies of capitalist Americans and anarchist foreigners but also between American and foreign soil. In addition to trying to associate anarchism with ascriptive traits that could be visually identified, U.S. officials and reporters argued that anarchism was a product of foreign soil and could not grow or develop in the United States. These arguments seemed to echo earlier theories that linked climatic zones to particular national temperaments and political systems (see e.g. Chaplin 1997). Officials and reporters deplored the mixed character of industrial cities where anarchism sometimes seemed to thrive and suggested that foreigners and foreign ideas had contaminated these cities, spoiling their all-American identity.

Many press members and other observers defined the very land that formed the territorial basis of the state as capitalist in character, i.e. as private property owned by predominantly European American citizens. Anarchists, on the other hand, asserted that this soil belonged to the American workers who had been robbed of what was naturally and rightfully theirs by capitalists. According to the *Alarm*, the anarchist newspaper edited by Albert Parsons, "Land is the prime factor in human existence, and the life, liberty and happiness of the people require that it in common with all other means of existence shall be placed at the disposal of the people for the free use of all" (*Alarm*, February 21, 1885, 2). The debate over anarchism was thus not only about differing visions of the desirable political and socioeconomic order, and what it meant to be an American citizen and member of the nation, but also about who owned the land included in the boundaries of the U.S. state and how that land was defined.

Most European Americans defined and defended the continent to which they claimed ownership not only as their country, but also as the property of individual citizens. They claimed that the land belonged to them because they and their ancestors had conquered and transformed the wilderness into private property through their labor, disregarding the presence of indigenous inhabitants who were often treated as a passive part of the landscape. Many European Americans believed they had a moral right to the land because they had turned a "vacant" continent into valuable property (Jehlen 1986, 20). The anarchist claim that property ownership was a form of robbery threatened the core values that defined the state, and capitalists rose to defend their vision of the land that formed its territorial foundation.

It is almost within the memory of men now living that the millions of square miles of rich farming land beyond the Allegheny Mountains have been reclaimed from the wilderness by the labor of those who now own them and till them, or who have transmitted them to the present owners. The value of this immense property four times as great as that of all the capital invested in many manufactures and producing every year as much as all the gold and silver mines of the country produce in 30 years, come from labor and labor only. It is the fruit of conquest, not of men, but of nature and stands the perpetual and invincible proof of the beneficence of the principle of property. From the products of the land, from their exchange, consumption, manufacture, have sprung all other forms of capital, industry and property. It is not to the men who own this property, who have *made* it, have seen their fathers make it, that the doctrine that property is robbery can be preached (*New York Times*, May 7, 1886, 4).

According to this editorial, the land on which the U.S. state was founded, derived its worth and identity from the fact that its citizens had *made* it into valuable private property through the application of their labor and their principles of liberal individualism. As one scholar asserted, the U.S. nation was founded on the "idea that the ethos of liberal individualism inheres in the American continent" (Jehlen 1986, 43).

Officials and reporters thus defined U.S. soil as embodying capitalist values in the form of private property and asserted that this capitalist, American soil simply could not grow anarchists. A typical editorial commented, "Socialism... is a plant of foreign growth and will not flourish on American soil" (*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, May 30, 1886). In an article entitled, "Anarchism Cannot Flourish Here," the *Chicago Tribune* echoed these sentiments.

There is no place in America for such a form of crime. It must be rooted out. The American atmosphere is not favorable to such a noxious growth as Anarchism (*Chicago Tribune*, June 4, 1886, 4).

Not only did editorialists describe American soil as unsuitable for anarchism – the atmosphere itself did not support its growth. The press drew a sharp contrast between the despotic, old world of Europe in which the vestiges of monarchy and feudalism might indeed nurture socialist doctrines, and the new world of America where capitalist democracy ensured economic opportunities for all citizens willing to work. It located this difference in the soil itself. Referring to American anarchists, the *New York Times* claimed:

These cutthroats are, to a man, of foreign birth and of foreign ideas. American soil does not grow such venomous reptiles (*New York Times*, May 5, 1886, 4).¹³

Not all members of the press, however, were equally confident that anarchism would simply wither away in the United States. Some editorialists suggested that uprooting and exterminating anarchy would require assistance from patriotic American citizens. In its first edition on May 3, 1886, the day before the Haymarket bombing, the *Seattle Daily Times* printed the following remarks.

The supreme duty of American citizens is to... blight from the grandest country on earth each recurring symptom of anarchy... [T]oday it is a question in America whether the seeds of sedition which have been transplanted from the soil of foreign countries shall be suffered to sprout. They will never bear fruit for that spirit of loyalty which has preserved the American flag unsullied neither wanes nor has weakened, but it is best to grub out the seed before the plant appears. To this end every citizen proud of his nation or adopted country should wield a patriotic hoe (*Seattle Daily Times*, May 3, 1886, 2).

¹³ In another article about anarchists, the *New York Times* sniffed:

It is not wonderful that Americans should find it difficult to believe in the existence of such a creature, for he is distinctly an exotic. He could not possibly have been produced on our soil and nurtured by institutions under which every man has an equal chance with every other (*New York Times*, November 13, 1888, 4).

While the capitalist press insisted that American soil could not support the growth of anarchism, it suggested simultaneously that anarchists were corrupting the newly industrialized U.S. cities and poisoning these environments. Mainstream discourses distinguished between a pure, ideological American environment in which anarchism could not grow, and mixed, contaminated environments containing lots of foreign, historical baggage in which anarchism flourished. Reporters and officials expressed concern about how anarchists contributed to the mixed character of the large, American cities where many recent immigrants lived and worked. They also depicted anarchists as products of these settings, claiming, for example, that they lived “in the midst of the most ignorant and uncouth classes of Chicago’s foreign-born population” (*Washington Post*, November 4, 1887, 1). According to Carl Smith, “the rhetorical jousting about foreignness expressed an uneasiness about what were perceived as the dangers of such a concentrated, mixed, and ever-changing society” (Smith 1995, 148).

Anarchism was perceived as one of the greatest dangers in this mix and a severe threat to the conventional, capitalist sociopolitical order. The *Chicago Tribune*, for example, compared Philadelphia, “with its homogenous law-and-order American population” to Chicago, which it described as “full of Anarchists and Communistic enemies of law and order” (*Chicago Tribune*, May 6, 1886, 4). It described American cities as “reservoirs for cast-off scum” from Europe and complained that they had become “dumping places and ports of refuge for a vicious, transported and Nihilistic assortment of villains whose hands are raised against government, law, society, property, industry, religion and civilization itself – Anarchists, dynamite assassins, and bomb-

throwers” (*Chicago Tribune*, May 8, 1886, 4). Furthermore, the paper characterized anarchists in the following manner.

Like rotten potatoes they spread infection among all the sound ones who are brought into contact with them. . . The rotten mass of European Socialism festering and reeking in American cities poisons the very air and spreads contagion far and wide (*Chicago Tribune*, May 8, 1886, 4).

The association of anarchists with “rotten potatoes” reinforces the link that observers sought to draw between anarchism and old, corrupt European institutions, which they contrasted with the young, healthy and progressive American nation and state.

The location of resistance to anarchism in American bodies and American soil suggested the emergence of a new definition of Americanism. Just as the association of capitalist principles with human bodies and land served to naturalize this ideology, it also transformed capitalism into a form of property itself. To be American became increasingly intertwined with buying into the ideology of capitalism. Americanism was a possession that one acquired not only through ascriptive traits such as whiteness but also through conformity to capitalist practices including participation in the capitalist system of production, consumption of the goods that capitalism produced, and embracing the American dream of ownership of private property. Just as whiteness represented the “normal,” and therefore, unmarked racial prerequisite for national membership, capitalism became the unmarked political status required for membership in the nation.

American Soil: Lucy Parson's Vision

Lucy Parsons challenged the capitalist definition of U.S. land as naturally destined to become private property and the characterization of anarchism as a foreign growth. On the contrary, according to Parsons, "American soil is the best adapted for the seeds of Anarchism to fruitify in" ("Anarchism" by Lucy Parsons in the *Liberator*, March 25, 1906, 2).

One way in which Parsons supported this assertion was by accepting the notion of anarchism as an ascriptive, bodily trait and linking it to her self-identity as an indigenous woman. As noted previously, Parsons rejected all assertions that her ancestors were the African slaves of European Americans and claimed instead that they had ancient ties to American soil and had welcomed the first Europeans to the North American continent.

I am one whose ancestors are indigenous to the soil of America. When Columbus first came in sight of the Western continent, my father's ancestors were there to give them a native greeting. When the conquering hosts of Cortez moved upon Mexico, my mother's ancestors were there to repel the invader; so that I represent the genuine American. (*Alarm*, December 8, 1888, 1)

By identifying herself as both an anarchist and an indigenous American, Parsons refuted the idea that anarchism was a foreign import that would not flourish on American soil. Rather, her remarks suggested that the principles of anarchism had a natural relationship to America just as she did, and that they represented a genuine American perspective. On the other hand, her position implied that capitalism not only did not inhere in the American continent, but was also a foreign economic and political system, imported by European Americans, and imposed on the American working class.

Turning the tables on the allegations of the capitalist press, Parsons claimed that it was the capitalists who were the true aliens in the United States. By turning rural people into urban wage laborers, Parsons asserted that capitalists were alienating U.S. citizens from their own land.

Organized labor has yet to learn that the real aliens in this country today are not those who are seeking by their labor to add to and increase its wealth, but the robber class who alienate even "American citizens" from the soil on which they were born, and huddle them into cities where they are compelled to compete in the desperate arena – the wage market – for a morsel to eat or a coarse garment to cover their forms, with a desperation that had no parallel among the gladiators of ancient Rome (*Freedom*, March 1, 1891, 8).

The real Americans, in Parsons's view, were the members of the working class for whom anarchism promised a better way of life. Capitalists, far from being the rightful owners and interpreters of American soil, were "aliens" in the sense that they alienated working class American citizens who had a legitimate claim to the land "from the soil on which they were born" and turned them into industrial wage earners. What threatened the identity of American soil, in Parson's view, was not the mixed national and racial character of the population that inhabited it, or the mixture of alternative political ideas that they expressed, but the dispossession of large portions of the U.S. citizenry by capitalists and a capitalist ideology founded on the principle of private property.

Parameters of Political Resistance

The challenges that Lucy Parsons and other anarchists posed to dominant, capitalist definitions of the nation and state in the late 19th century contributed to a rethinking and strengthening of national and state boundaries. They exposed prevailing assumptions

about the naturalness of specific political principles and led to the definition of political beliefs as ascriptive traits, natural products of particular soils, and criteria for fitness for membership in the nation and state.

In order to understand the relationship between the anarchists and the construction of the boundaries of nation and state, however, it is important to examine what they did not challenge as well as what they did. For example, while she vehemently opposed the capitalist system, Lucy Parsons, with rare exceptions, did not contest the racist or sexist aspects of conventional definitions of the nation and state. Had she done so, it is unlikely that she would have enjoyed the political prominence that she held in the anarchist movement. Not only did she refrain from challenging racism and sexism, however, Parsons actually promoted several of the discourses that were frequently employed to justify racist and sexist policies. These included the discourses of civilization, refinement and professional science.

Despite her reputation as one of the most violent, outspoken advocates of the destruction of capitalist society and the introduction of anarchy, Parsons did not really want to do away with most aspects of civilization. Rather, she wanted to increase access to the benefits of civilized society. She admired what she viewed as high culture and refinement and wanted to attain this way of life herself, as well as make it accessible to other members of the working class. Far from disdaining the trappings of civilization, Lucy wanted to be a lady (Ashbaugh 1976, 46). The sign over her door in Chicago read, "Mrs. A.R. Parsons, Fashionable Dressmaking," and one of her neighbors commented,

“Lucy was so well-bred and dignified that she commanded the respect of all with whom she came in contact” (quoted in Ashbaugh 1976, 46).

Parsons saw the anarchist movement as a stepping-stone toward furthering the progress of civilization through science and the introduction of a more egalitarian political system. She had no desire to destroy mainstream civilization itself. Rather, Parsons advocated violence as a means of destroying the barriers to the attractions of civilization for people who belonged to the working class (*Alarm*, August 3, 1885, 3).

Parsons and other anarchists generally adapted conventional discourses to serve very different purposes from those for which they were originally intended. For example, both anarchists and capitalists believed that self-government was a desirable goal but they gave it contrasting interpretations. Advocates of both perspectives contended that those who adhered to divergent political principles were unfit for self-government and membership in the nation. The capitalist *New York Times* declared, “To organize a ‘social revolution’ against all the institutions of a society he has... sought for himself shows a deliberate depravity that unfits a man for membership of any community, past, present, or future” (*New York Times*, November 12, 1887, 3). *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* echoed this theme, asserting, “Anarchism is a species of unreason, or mental incapacity, growing out of the egotistical effort of men who cannot provide for, support or govern themselves” (*Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, May 22, 1886, 210).

Thus, according to representatives of the capitalist press, anarchist beliefs were a sign of mental incapacity or illness, which, in turn, made one unfit for self-government. In yet

another way, anarchism became an ascriptive as well as ideological trait that placed one outside the boundaries of the nation. As we have seen in other cases such as those of Louis Riel and Robert Wilcox, accusations of insanity were a common means of discrediting people who espoused what those in positions of power perceived as threatening political positions.¹⁴

In response to capitalist assertions that anarchism rendered its adherents incapable of self-government, the anarchists offered their own definition of self-government. In contrast to prevailing views, they did not associate fitness for self-government with conformity to ascriptive criteria and possession of a commitment to the institutions of private property and white supremacy. Rather, from the anarchist perspective, fitness for self-government depended on one's willingness to live without the constraints of government and statute law organized to protect property rights.

Statute law is the assumption that mankind is unwilling or unfit to be free, and hence must have a ruler or governor, whose business it is to tell him what he must or must not, or what he shall or shall not do... Self-government is the reverse of all political government. Where the people rule, government dies. Left to themselves the people govern themselves, and government, political or otherwise, becomes unnecessary and impossible (*Alarm*, May 16, 1885, 2).

The anarchists thus adopted a literal definition of self-government in which people would take responsibility for their own lives and affairs outside the framework of an

¹⁴ Parsons responded to capitalist accusations that anarchism represented a type of "unreason" or "mental incapacity" by characterizing these accusations as part of a standard three-stage pattern of resistance to new political theories. According to Parsons, the first stage consisted of "derision," "ridicule," and assertions of insanity (*Liberator*, March 25, 1906, 2). In the second stage, advocates of the new theory were accused of criminality rather than insanity and were viewed as a "dangerous" threat to "'sacred' institutions" (*Liberator*, March 25, 1906, 2). If its advocates withstand the persecution accompanying this second stage, the theory might then become more widely investigated on its own merits and eventually accepted (*Liberator*, March 25, 1906, 2).

organized, capitalist government. According to the anarchists, this form of self-government represented a far more civilized and progressive approach than that offered by the capitalist system that was in place.

Despite their efforts to subvert conventional discourses, however, by speaking these languages, anarchists indicated their acceptance of some of their basic premises. For example, U.S. anarchists adopted the concept of the vacant continent in order to make the argument that institution of the principle of private property had taken the land away from its rightful owners – the laboring masses. In doing so, however, they accepted the notion of the land as new and unknown, unencumbered by prior histories and cultures, and unclaimed by indigenous inhabitants.

In its youth, its newness, its virgin soil, its trackless and unknown forests, there was room for expansion, 'elbow room' for all. But now the country is settled, or surveyed, which is the same thing; the demon private property has laid his pirate hand upon everything and claims it for his own... Workingmen of America, there are no institutions but those of slavery for the propertyless, the poor; no country save for the propertied, the rich (*Alarm*, April 4, 1885, 3).

U.S. anarchists did not dispute the vision of the American continent as empty prior to settlement by European Americans. What they disputed was the justice of the capitalist transformation of the land into private property, and the dominant understanding concerning to whom the settled continent belonged. Anarchists did not dispute the argument that humans were destined to conquer the land and "use" it for their own purposes (see *Alarm*, February 21, 1885, 2). They simply disagreed with capitalists about the socioeconomic context in which this human use of land should take place. For the capitalist majority, American land was pure and natural so long as it was preserved in the

form of private property belonging to law-abiding, capitalist citizens who met specific ascriptive criteria. For anarchists, the natural relation to the land was collective ownership by all citizens, particularly all members of the working class, without the institution of private property. Both capitalists and anarchists agreed on the moral and political virtues of appropriating and transforming the land in the service of progress and civilization. Anarchists accepted the notion of a progressive, European-dominated civilization but argued that this civilization would reach its greatest heights through implementation of a socialist rather than a capitalist logic.

The anarchist definition of American land led to a very ambiguous perspective on the role and fate of American Indians. On one hand, they contended, “The Indian has been ‘civilized’ out of existence and exterminated from the continent by the demon of ‘personal property’” (*Alarm*, November 8, 1884, 1). In other words, capitalism had destroyed the continent’s indigenous inhabitants. The anarchists argued, “Left to themselves, left to the exercise of free will, and personal liberty – anarchy – the red man would be alive and prospering today, dwelling in peace and fellowship with his Caucasian brother” (*Alarm*, November 8, 1884, 1). This statement suggests an inclusive definition of the ideal anarchist sociopolitical arrangement.

On the other hand, the anarchists frequently employed the same paternalistic attitudes toward and racist stereotypes of American Indians common in dominant discourses to make slightly different arguments. They asserted, for instance, “Government may be all right for Indians but for civilized people it is a curse, and a barrier to progress” (*Alarm*,

December 12, 1885, 3). In this context, civilization was not depicted as a negative, capitalist process but as a progressive, anarchist attribute that did not apply to Indians who required greater supervision. The article reinforced the racist implications of this statement by claiming, "We may return to the simplicity, freedom and equality of primitive man; we cannot go back to his ignorance and brutality if we would" (March 10, 1888, 3). Not only does this statement reflect internalization of dominant, racist discourses regarding indigenous peoples but also the attribution of romanticized, anarchist concepts to American Indians.

One of the clearest ways in which the anarchist movement's racial character was revealed was through the frequent comparisons that its members drew between chattel slavery and wage slavery. The basic argument they made was that wage slavery had replaced chattel slavery as simply a new variation of economic exploitation. Capitalists no longer owned slaves directly but continued to engage in exploitation through control of the wages of their employees. Although the anarchists insisted that the injustice was economic in character, they sometimes translated the distinction between chattel slavery and wage slavery into a contrast between black slavery vs. white slavery, thus appealing to the most basic fears of potential recruits by suggesting that while black people now had their freedom, white people were being enslaved.

In an article entitled "Slavery – White and Black," for example, the *Alarm* contended, "Black slaves never dreamed the power their ownership gave their master could help their cause, while white wage-slaves are ingeniously hood-winked into thinking they are

wielding a power, and asserting their freedom” (*Alarm*, March 20, 1886, 2). The intent of such statements was evidently to attract white workers into the anarchist camp by suggesting that their complicity with the capitalist system made them more captive than black slaves. It relied on underlying racist assumptions to convince white wage laborers of their foolishness in tolerating their own slavery while black slaves had achieved freedom. This notion became a recurrent theme in the anarchist press, particularly in the early years of the movement, and although there is no evidence that Lucy Parsons directly perpetrated the analogy between wage labor and white slavery, there is also no indication that she ever challenged it.

Thus, on a number of levels, racism lurked just below the surface of the anarchist movement, although it was perhaps not as malicious or overt as it was in mainstream society. Nevertheless, prominent anarchists, including Dyer D. Lum, the *Alarm*’s second editor appointed by Lucy’s husband, Albert Parsons, held profoundly racist views. Lucy’s biographer suggested that perhaps part of the reason Lum and Parsons ultimately had a falling out was due to Lum’s explicit racism (Ashbaugh 1976, 186-187).

Members of the anarchist movement, including Lucy Parsons, prided themselves on their inclusivity and emphasized their vision of “one common brotherhood” that would cut across ascriptive dividing lines such as religion and nationality (*Alarm*, December 8, 1888, 1). Parsons described her vision of an international, socialist, solidarity movement to the opening convention of the International Workers of the World.

[W]here the red flag has been raised whoever enroll themselves beneath that flag recognize the universal brotherhood of man, they recognize that the red current that flows through the veins of all humanity is identical, that the ideas of all humanity are identical; that those who raise the red flag, it matters not where, whether on the sunny plains of China, or on the sun-beaten hills of Africa, or on the far-off snow-capped shores of the North, or in Russia or in America – that they all belong to the human family and have an identity of interest (*Liberator*, September 24, 1905, 3).

Yet despite her declaration of an inclusive movement that united all members of the working class, Parsons was well aware that the anarchist movement was both politically divided and exclusive. While many anarchists made public statements in favor of racial and gender equality, for instance, they often continued to adhere to prevailing racist and sexist assumptions in their everyday lives.

To a certain extent, Lucy Parsons exposed the exclusive character of the anarchist movement through her ambiguous racial status and her gender. While she purposefully challenged capitalist society, however, she did not seek to challenge the norms of the anarchist movement or draw attention to her deviance from them. Parsons usually addressed herself to an explicitly male audience when making speeches for the movement, calling on her listeners to “Be men! Dare and do!” (*Alarm*, September 9, 1885, 4).

Parsons’ experiences suggest an important aspect of successful political resistance. Her political success depended as much on what she did not challenge as on what she did. By focusing her attacks on the injustices of the capitalist, economic system, assuming very conventional gender roles as a wife and mother, and deflecting attention from her

ambiguous, non-white racial status, she was able to gain considerable stature within a white, male-dominated labor movement.

Conclusion

The anarchist movement that developed in the United States in the late 19th century posed deliberate challenges to prevailing definitions of the nation and state. In particular, it challenged their capitalist character and their deep commitment to the principle of private property. U.S. officials and members of the dominant, capitalist press responded to these challenges by seeking to silence and marginalize anarchist voices. Through their pursuit of this goal, they began to redefine what it meant to be a member of the U.S. nation and state in at least two significant ways.

First, the dominant definition of Americanism became increasingly ideological as U.S. authorities and press members labeled anarchism a foreign doctrine and simultaneously strengthened the association between being American and being capitalist. If to be an anarchist meant to be a foreigner, to be truly American meant to possess a firm commitment to capitalist institutions and the principle of private property.

Second, U.S. authorities and press members seemed to feel uncomfortable with the invisibility and abstract character of this new, ideological definition of Americanism. They, therefore, sought ways to make visible the new boundaries of the property regime of Americanism by asserting that anarchists embodied not only foreign political doctrines but also negative ascriptive traits. In cartoons, editorials and reports of official activities,

they depicted anarchists as dark-skinned, long-haired, disorderly savages who drank excessively, were mentally incompetent, and transgressed social as well as political boundaries. These portrayals seemed intended to delineate an ascriptive as well as an ideological boundary between Americans and foreigners.

Lucy Parsons, a prominent U.S. anarchist of mixed descent, challenged these boundaries by asserting herself as an indigenous American whose anarchist principles formed an integral part of her American identity. Parsons exposed and defied both the ideological and ascriptive boundaries that capitalist officials sought to construct between those whom they deemed anarchist foreigners and capitalist Americans.

In addition, Parsons challenged the conventional notion that racially and nationally mixed industrial cities were fostering anarchism and thus corrupting and polluting American soil. By contrast, Parsons depicted anarchism as a political approach that was naturally suited to grow in American soil. The racial mixture and alternative political principles that capitalist officials sought to define as foreign became an integral and indigenous part of what it meant to be American, from Parson's perspective.

At the same time that Parsons offered radical challenges to prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation and state, however, she also conformed to many conventional assumptions. Parsons critiqued capitalism from within the racist and sexist parameters of the prevailing discourse of civilization rather than challenging these parameters as well. This strategy was probably instrumental in allowing her to develop a powerful political voice because, as we have seen in other cases, those who were cast outside the

boundaries of civilization were unable to make their voices heard at all. While capitalist officials and press members sought to push the anarchists outside those boundaries, Parsons and other anarchists found effective ways to resist those attempts by making their political challenges focused and selective and appropriating the discourse of civilization for their own purposes. Ultimately, the ideological and ascriptive challenges posed by Lucy Parsons contributed to the development of more restrictive definitions of both state citizenship and national membership, but also to the diverse mixture of political voices that contested these dominant definitions and made their own claims to American soil.

Conclusion

People and places perceived as racially mixed posed sharp challenges to prevailing definitions of the U.S. nation and state in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These challenges revealed hidden political consistencies and inconsistencies, prompted the reconstruction of existing logics of inclusion and exclusion, and inspired reconsiderations of what it meant to be American in the context of an expanding, industrializing state, and an increasingly diverse citizenry. In the face of the apparent threats of racial mixture, policymakers and other European American observers struggled to articulate rationales for the new boundaries they proposed to draw around the nation and state. As they grappled with political and legal cases involving controversial questions posed by people and places they viewed as racially mixed, U.S. officials and observers redefined the properties of Americanism through processes of contestation, cooperation and compromise.

The debates stimulated by cases concerning racial mixture such as those I have examined in this dissertation revealed strong links between seemingly incongruous universalistic and ascriptive principles, as well as unresolved discrepancies between the goals of territorial acquisition and preservation of white supremacy. An expanding commitment to the concept and institution of private property underlay the discussions of what territories were fit to be fully integrated into the state and which people were fit to become full members of the nation.

Cases involving what European Americans commonly perceived as racial mixture challenged conventional understandings of the U.S. nation and state in at least three basic ways. First, they challenged the assumption of distinct, discernible races that formed the basis of logics of inclusion and exclusion that guided so many political policies and practices. These race-based policies and practices, in turn, defined the boundaries of the nation and state. The presence of racially mixed people and territories forced U.S. authorities to clarify their definitions of race, explain how they distinguished among members of allegedly different races and justify why members of some races were supposedly more politically fit than others.

Second, racial mixture challenged the rigidity and the rationality of the boundaries between races whose existence U.S. officials presumed and worked diligently to preserve and strengthen. These efforts included implementing new laws and policies such as anti-miscegenation laws designed to keep races clearly separated and adopting more quantitative, scientific definitions of race. U.S. officials increasingly assigned people to mono-racial categories on the basis of an emerging logic of blood quantum that stipulated that any non-white ancestry was sufficient to make one non-white. According to this logic, races were not only separate but also unequal. Whiteness was associated with purity, homogeneity, and mental, physical and moral superiority. Membership in any other race was associated with impurity, mixture, and mental, physical and moral inferiority. Whiteness depended on conformity to and respect for the boundaries that defined race, nation and state. Non-whiteness challenged those boundaries. In particular, racially mixed people and places transgressed the racial boundaries that provided a

foundation for conventional definitions of nation and state, and exposed their constructed nature.

Third, cases involving racial mixture threatened the prevailing constructions of the U.S. nation and state as homogenous and singular institutions. Racial mixture implied multiplicity, a notion that was difficult, if not impossible to accommodate in a nation and state whose representatives defined it as mono-racial, monolingual, monotheistic, and committed to the principle of monogamy. While these qualities represented defining characteristics in many modern nation-states, they were given particular emphasis in the United States. The threat of multiplicity in these and other realms challenged important sociopolitical boundaries and suggested disloyalty and betrayal. It is interesting to note that the word “duplicity”, which literally means double or two-fold, has come to connote intentional deception within the English language. European American officials and observers rarely interpreted racial mixture as an isolated phenomenon. Instead, they associated it with the transgression of other sociopolitical boundaries through bilingualism, bi-nationalism, paganism or heathenism, bigamy, and other forms of duplicity. In this sense, the challenges posed by racial mixture formed part of a larger threat of multiplicity to the definition of the U.S. nation and state.

Land, Race, Nation and State

Each of the cases that I have discussed in the preceding chapters has revealed complex connections among European American understandings of land, race, nation and state. Many of these connections revolved around the ever-expanding concept of

property. What are the links that have emerged and what do they tell us about how responses to perceived threats of racial mixture revealed and revised definitions of the nation and state?

The mixed blood allotment cases involving Jane Waldron and Barney Traversee demonstrated the complex interplay among land ownership, race and definitions of political fitness. Mixed bloods challenged the mono-racial categories that underlay prevailing understandings of the nation and state. In their eagerness to expand the territorial boundaries of the state for white settlement, U.S. officials accepted mixed blood signatures on Indian treaties. This acceptance implied their definition of mixed bloods as Indians. According to the Dawes Act, Indians were eligible for land allotments on ceded reservation lands.

Granting land allotments to mixed bloods, however, was a controversial and contested process. Jane Waldron struggled to prove that she was an Indian in order to receive her allotment in a legal case that dragged on for many years. The controversies did not end once the allotments were granted. Rather, questions arose concerning who was competent enough to sell or lease their lands before the end of the conventional 25-year trust period. Barney Traversee, a man of mixed descent, argued first that he was Indian and then that he was white in a convoluted legal effort to obtain the right to relinquish a portion of his allotment. Cases such as his vividly demonstrate the ascriptive, racialized underpinnings of concepts such as political competence that were

commonly employed to determine which citizens were eligible for the full rights and responsibilities associated with national membership, and which were not.

Analysis of the mixed blood allotment cases provides evidence that U.S. authorities adopted a policy of partial assimilation toward mixed blood Indians, granting them U.S. citizenship as a means of more effectively managing them and controlling their lives, but denying them full national membership on the basis of race. The authorities implemented this inconsistent and perhaps unplanned policy through reference to ambiguous concepts such as political competence that effectively combined universalistic and ascriptive criteria. Both the more liberal notion of political competence connected to individual property rights and the more republican association of competence with fulfillment of responsibilities toward the larger community relied on racialized assumptions concerning who was eligible for these rights and responsibilities. U.S. policymakers implemented their universalistic political principles only among members of the nation whom they deemed politically fit for such privileges on the basis of race and other ascriptive criteria.

While the mixed blood allotment cases exposed a frequently unacknowledged coexistence and even consistency between purportedly universalistic political principles and practices based on ascriptive criteria, the next two cases that I examined demonstrated a growing conflict between the desires of many U.S. policymakers to expand the territorial boundaries of the state and their simultaneous commitment to preserve not only the white character of the nation but, more importantly, the institutions

of white supremacy. Both of these cases concerned questions regarding the annexation of mixed race territories.

U.S. attitudes toward Louis Riel and the Northwest Territories revealed the racialized limits of both the state and the nation. The decision not to annex the Northwest Territories, a contiguous territory with a sizeable white population seemed to be based on three primary factors: a. the desire not to provoke friendly Anglo powers, b. the large Metis population in the region, and c. perhaps most importantly, the charismatic Metis leadership that dominated the Territories.

Not only were policymakers ultimately unwilling to extend the territorial boundaries of the U.S. state to include the Northwest Territories, they were also unwilling to extend the boundaries of the nation to include their Metis leader, Louis Riel, despite his U.S. citizenship and his white appearance. U.S. observers exhibited a certain tolerance toward the Metis leader so long as he pursued his protests against the Canadian government on the Canadian side of the border although the level of this tolerance depended on how Riel was racially defined. Riel consistently referred to himself as a Metis, but U.S. observers were unable to assimilate this mixed identity into their mono-racial framework. Despite their frequent references to Riel as a half-breed, they categorized him either as an Indian, in which case they construed him as a primitive savage whose political goals were illegitimate and unworthy of consideration by a civilized governments such as Canada; or as a French-Canadian, in which case they acknowledged the possibility that Riel might have legitimate political grievances. In neither case, however, were members of the U.S.

press forthcoming about Riel's status as a U.S. citizen and they certainly did not treat him as a member of the nation. Riel's racially mixed identity was undoubtedly a major factor in the U.S. government's refusal to intervene on his behalf when he was tried and executed by the Canadian government.

The attitudes and policies that U.S. officials and members of the press adopted toward Riel and the Metis demonstrated the importance they placed on preserving a homogenous state in which both whiteness and white supremacy prevailed, and a racially pure nation, untainted by racially mixed citizens who appeared even more threatening if they were able to pass as white. Preserving their property in whiteness proved more important than acquiring additional property in land. Protecting the institutions of white supremacy from challenges by an assertive Metis political leader emerged as a greater priority than expanding the territorial boundaries of the state.

Hawaiian annexation, on the other hand, presented a case in which U.S. policymakers sought to have their cake and eat it too, white frosting and all. Hawaii was a non-contiguous territory with a very large non-white majority, two factors that opponents of annexation emphasized repeatedly. On the other hand, it had certain features that rendered it more eligible for annexation than the Northwest Territories in the minds of many U.S. officials. First, a small elite consisting of white men of U.S. descent politically and economically dominated Hawaii. Second, supporters of annexation portrayed Hawaii as in imminent danger of domination by Japan. Third, the ultimate decision to annex Hawaii took place during an era in which the concept of overseas

territorial expansion was becoming accepted as part of the U.S. destiny by many observers and politicians. Fourth, the denial of U.S. citizenship to Asians, the largest racially defined group in Hawaii, was unquestioned by virtually all policymakers.

Hawaii's incorporation into the United States as a mixed race territory revealed deep tensions between the goal of expanding the territorial boundaries of the state and increasing its property in land, and the insistence on preserving the exclusive boundaries of the nation that protected its property in whiteness and white supremacy. The U.S. government managed these conflicting aims by treating Hawaii much as it treated mixed blood citizens. Hawaii became partially assimilated into the United States. On one hand, Congress formally annexed Hawaii and granted it a form of government that mirrored the governments granted to other formal U.S. Territories in most major respects. On the other hand, Congress refused to consider Hawaii an integral part of the United States and withheld the promise of statehood that generally accompanied the granting of territorial status in other cases. In other words, Congress allowed Hawaii to be equally governed by the United States but refused to consider the possibility of its equal participation in that government.

The debates about the new government for Hawaii revealed that the main reason for this distinction was Hawaii's status as a mixed race territory. Congressmen interpreted the territory of Hawaii as a mixed race body of land that could be evaluated in terms of the blood quantum of its population, just as U.S. authorities treated people of European and American Indian descent as possessing mixed race bodies containing varying

amounts of white and Indian blood. In both cases, fitness for self-government was heavily dependent on the proportion of white, American blood that the territorial body or individual human body possessed.

The incorporation of Hawaii into the United States raised new questions concerning the definition of what it meant to be American. The definition of the U.S. state could no longer be linked to the North American continent, disrupting the belief that the political principles that defined what it meant to be American inhered in the land itself. These principles now had to be separated from the continent and transported to a new location. The definition of Americanism, I have argued, became increasingly disconnected from physical land and material bodies, and became an abstract, invisible individual possession that included commitments to the institutions of private property and white supremacy. To be American and particularly to be a member of the U.S. nation implied an ideological commitment to private property and white supremacy.

This ideological aspect of Americanism appeared in discussions surrounding Robert Wilcox's campaign for and service as Hawaii's first Congressional Delegate. As a representative of the Home Rule Party that he established, Wilcox challenged the dominant system of two party politics in the United States and the definitions of Americanism associated with these capitalist, white-controlled parties. In addition, Wilcox challenged the institutions of white supremacy by advocating statehood for Hawaii and full national membership for native Hawaiian citizens.

My final case study considering the challenges posed by Lucy Parsons and other late 19th century anarchists demonstrated additional ways in which both the ideological and ascriptive dimensions of Americanism were coming to be defined during this period of tremendous political, economic and cultural change. Politicians and members of the press decried the mixed industrial cities in which not only members of different races and nationalities, but members of different political persuasions came into close contact and influenced each other. Indeed, there seemed to be an underlying assumption that this mixture itself was partially responsible for the spread of anarchist and socialist doctrines. By contrast, capitalist editorialists contended that American soil was incapable of producing anarchists, suggesting not only that all anarchists were foreigners but also that the mixed cities in which anarchism flourished were foreign territorial growths in the midst of America. Industrialization, immigration, and radical political ideas had somehow corrupted the urban landscapes, rendering them un-American and compromising the boundaries of the state.

Meanwhile, Lucy Parsons both revealed and resisted prevailing ideological and ascriptive definitions of the U.S. nation through her mixed race status and her self-identity as both an anarchist and an indigenous American. She defied capitalist portrayals of her as both politically and racially foreign by emphasizing her American identity not only by law and birth, but also by virtue of the fact that her ancestors had made their home on the North American continent for countless generations.

Parsons challenged the attempts of U.S. press members and political observers to designate anarchists as ascriptively foreign by characterizing them not only as foreign-born but also as racially other despite their predominantly European backgrounds. As Americanism became an increasingly abstract, invisible, ideological form of property possessed by individual members of the nation, U.S. political officials and observers sought to clarify the boundaries of this property regime by providing it with theoretically visible, ascriptive markers. The anxiety surrounding the efforts to depict anarchism as an ascriptive trait was fuelled by the fact that the vast majority of anarchists were of European descent and indistinguishable from other members of the white, European American population. Lucy Parsons confounded this project by flaunting both her anarchism and her indigenous American ancestry while at the same time appearing visibly non-white.

What these cases demonstrate is that in the aftermath of slavery and the continental frontier, during a period of tremendous industrial, demographic and territorial expansion, the definition of what it meant to be American became dislocated. The previous notions of an American state anchored in the North American continent and an American nation reflected in visually distinguishable white, male, capitalist, faces became untenable. In the context of a growing territorial state and citizenry, what it meant to be American had to be defined more explicitly and more abstractly. Common sense definitions no longer sufficed and often clashed with legal and political realities. Americanism no longer depended on ownership of property in the form of land. Rather, it became a form of property in and of itself. To be American, as an individual member of the nation or a

territorial member of the state, meant in large part, to possess a commitment to the institutions of private property and white supremacy that served as the ideological foundations of the nation and state.

Body Language and Ascriptive Criteria for Membership in Nation and State

In all of the cases that I have considered in this dissertation, the debates about how to respond to the challenges posed by racial mixture to definitions of the nation and state included discussions of both individuals and territories as mixed race bodies. These biological interpretations served to project naturalized political principles, prejudices and visions onto people and places in attempts to argue for their inclusion in or exclusion from the U.S. nation or state.

Body language was not restricted to U.S. policymakers and political officials, however. Mixed race political activists included frequent references to their own bodies in order to prove the naturalness of their sociopolitical positions and assert their eligibility for inclusion in the nation and state. Louis Riel naturalized his bi-national status by comparing his possession of two homelands to his possession of two hands and two sides of his heads (*The Queen vs. Louis Riel* 1886, 159). Robert Wilcox associated speaking two languages and being part of the two cultures that they represented with having two parents (*Home Rule Republican*, November 13, 1901, 1). Lucy Parsons described herself as an anarchist from head to toe and simultaneously claimed to be an indigenous American, linking her political beliefs to ancestral roots in American soil that predated the arrival of Europeans and capitalist European ideologies (*New York Times*,

October 17, 1886, 9). All three of these mixed race political activists challenged the naturalness of European American definitions of the nation, the state, and the racialized divisions upon which they were based.

Throughout this dissertation, I have focused on race as the main ascriptive axis along which changing definitions of nation and state were based. Each case that I have studied, however, has demonstrated that race intersected in complex and significant ways with other ascriptive and behavioral criteria, including gender, language, education, religion, class, nationality, physical and mental health, and alcohol consumption. While an in-depth analysis of the contributions that each of these criteria has made to definitions of the nation and state is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge the intersections that exist and the fact that these criteria both influence and are influenced by understandings of race. Furthermore, the fluctuating roles played by these various criteria in defining the nation and state, suggest how complex, tenuous and contextual those definitions are. Defining the boundaries of the nation and state was a continual, contested and negotiated process that took place among a variety of constituencies in diverse contexts. The ascriptive criteria that came into play fluctuated from one context to the next, and although certain patterns emerged from these definitional processes, there were always inconsistencies and exceptions.

U.S. policymakers and observers often associated failure to conform to ascriptive norms in one arena with the transgression of other ascriptive boundaries. For example, the experiences of both Jane Waldron and Lucy Parsons demonstrate that one way in

which U.S. officials and observers marginalized those who did not fit into conventional mono-racial categories or political frameworks was by associating them with unconventional gender roles. In the course of her legal battles, Waldron became a head of family, a designation usually reserved for men. Capitalist reporters made frequent references to Parsons' allegedly unfeminine characteristics. References to gender were employed in a different way in Congressional debates about the future government of Hawaii in which Congressmen presented gendered visions of the territory in order to legitimate their particular goals for its political future.

These examples show how people deployed references to ascriptive criteria and norms both to strengthen allegations of marginality and to justify particular definitions of the nation and state. In general, U.S. policymakers and observers privileged homogeneity, purity and settlement over diversity, mixture and what they perceived as uncontrolled movement. In this sense, as we have noted, speaking multiple languages or possessing multiple nationalities represented threats to the nation and state. In a similar fashion, engaging in turbulent behavior, whether it consisted of drinking alcohol, proclaiming unconventional political views, or refusing to adopt a settled, agricultural way of life threatened European American propriety and sociopolitical norms and demonstrated ineligibility for membership in the nation.

Limits of Political Discourse

The striking interweaving of racialized assumptions with political positions throughout the cases that I have examined shows that the integration of ascriptive criteria

in definitions of the nation and state took place across the full political spectrum. Not only did liberal and republican approaches incorporate both universalistic and particularistic aspects, but even the most radical political activists abided by conventional, ascriptive norms. Racist assumptions were expressed not only by white U.S. officials but also by mixed race political activists who were often the targets of such racism. In other words, it appeared virtually impossible to speak outside of a racialized and racist discourse in the turn of the 20th century United States. Thus, responses to the challenges posed by racial mixture show not only that universalistic and particularistic principles frequently accompanied and complemented each other, but also that racialized perspectives permeated the entire political landscape.

Anarchists, for example, played on European American racist fears by expressing their opposition to the capitalist wage labor system in terms of attacks on white slavery. Fears of white slavery had preoccupied the popular imagination for decades, spurring on the movement to abolish chattel slavery as many European Americans became disturbed and uneasy by the increasing lightening of the slave population as a result of racial mixture. Now anarchists equated wage slavery and white slavery, arguing that while blacks had achieved emancipation from chattel slavery, members of the white working class were still in bondage. The frequent references to white slavery both reinforced the white character of the anarchist movement despite its calls for racial unity and furthered racism by ironically chiding white workers for not insisting on the same freedom allegedly enjoyed by blacks. Thus, while on one hand the anarchist movement represented a radical challenge to the capitalist establishment and its oppression of the

working class, on the other hand, it not only subscribed to, but also reinforced conventional racist assumptions about eligibility for full membership in the nation.

Even Lucy Parsons, an anarchist of mixed descent frequently described as a Negro, internalized the racist parameters of the anarchist movement and offered no overt challenge to them. Rather, she sought to distance herself from discussions about her own racial identity and rarely mentioned race in her political speeches and articles. On the few occasions that she did, Parsons interpreted racism strictly as a function of class oppression. Although Parsons herself did not seem to employ the language of white slavery, neither did she challenge it. Furthermore, she deflected attention from internal conflicts within the movement that might have been caused in part by disagreements about issues of race in order to maintain political unity and her own position of leadership

Anarchists were not the only political radicals who internalized the racist dimensions of European American society. While fighting the racism directed against the Metis and Indian populations by European American policymakers on one hand, Louis Riel also offered to assist U.S. government officials in implementing their racist policies toward Indians, and berated the Metis for failing to adopt a settled, European American way of life. Furthermore, when addressing Anglo audiences, he adopted the pejorative European American term, half-breed, to describe himself.

What these examples demonstrate is that racism permeated all political discourse in the United States at the turn of the 20th century. No political representative or activist, no

matter how radical or marginal, was able to speak outside of a racialized discourse. In every version and every vision, race played a crucial role in the definition of nation and state. Racially mixed people and places exposed the centrality of racism in political discourse but they were incapable of extinguishing it.

Contributions to Theories of Nation and State

The insights that this study has provided into the processes of defining the nation and state have a number of important implications for contemporary theories of nationhood and statehood in political science and other social science disciplines. First, the results of this study suggest the inadequacy of a multiple traditions analysis of citizenship and nationhood based on discrete, ideologically defined approaches such as liberalism, republicanism, and ascriptivism (see e.g. Smith 1997). This latter type of analysis masks the interdependencies among such ideological approaches as well as their consistencies and inconsistencies that mark the limits of political discourse. These aspects of the definitional process can only be accessed through a historically driven methodology that examines the ways in which multiple discourses have been employed in defining the nation and state in practical, everyday contexts.

Second, my study suggests the importance of examining how the nation and state are defined through the application of general theories and the implementation of policies in specific, controversial cases that emerge at the local level. It is insufficient to base one's analysis of nationhood and statehood on elite proclamations or the passage of abstract laws and policies. Rather, it is necessary to consider these proclamations in conjunction

with an examination of official practices and to analyze laws and policies in terms of how they are implemented, challenged, and changed at the local level. As Joel Migdal has noted, the official image of the state as an integrated, coherent whole committed to one set of principles contrasts with its inconsistent practices, reflecting diverse and often seemingly contradictory values (Migdal 2001).

Third, this study indicates that critical, new perspectives can be gained by analyzing the processes of defining the nation and state at their social, political, and geographical margins. By investigating marginal cases involving people and places that occupy an ambiguous relationship to the nation and state, it is possible to analyze how government officials, members of the press, and other political observers struggle to define the boundaries of their nation and state in the face of challenges that reveal inconsistencies and gaps that are generally smoothed over and ignored. By focusing on those people and places that fall between the cracks of conventional categories, it is possible to begin untangling the logics of inclusion and exclusion through which the categories themselves are constructed.

Fourth, the micro-empirical focus that I have adopted in this study has allowed me to consider the processes of defining nation and state in terms of complex and contested constellations of ideas that emerged from historical debates about specific, practical cases, rather than from contemporary political theories. Government authorities, reporters, and other observers discussed concepts such as fitness for self-government, private property, and white supremacy at length as they struggled to resolve cases

involving racial mixture at the turn of the 20th century. By contrast, they made only occasional, passing references to the abstract theories of liberalism and republicanism. I have attempted to unravel the processes by which these historical actors defined their nation and state by focusing on the constellations of ideas that dominated their thinking and the discursive patterns that shaped their worldview, rather than by attempting to categorize these processes in terms of theoretical frameworks that did not necessarily have any direct relevance to the lives or political views of those involved in them.

Finally, this dissertation has suggested the utility that can be gained by considering nationhood and statehood from within the same theoretical framework. One of the major conclusions that I have reached in this dissertation is that policymakers, press members and others used similar conceptual constructs to define the territorial boundaries of the state and the sociopolitical boundaries of the nation. Notions of political fitness, self-government, property and race played crucial roles in the definitions of both of these institutions. People and places were interpreted in culturally and ideologically similar ways.

Most theories have focused either on statehood, such as the state and society literature, or on citizenship and nationhood. By maintaining this distinction, it is impossible to recognize or grasp the conceptual connections that have historically linked definitions of nation and state. More recent approaches such as the state in society perspective suggest new ways in which the analysis of nation and state can be combined through a focus on interactions between diverse constituencies that serve, in different

contexts, to reaffirm, resist, and reconstruct both the sociopolitical boundaries of the nation and the territorial boundaries of the state (see e.g. Migdal 2001). It is through local as well as national narrative processes and everyday practices that the meanings of both nation and state emerge. The framework that I have adopted allows scholars to gain both a broader perspective of the general themes that link definitions of nation and state and a sharper insight into the inconsistencies and points of contestation within these thematic parameters.

Comparative Dimensions

This study has focused on four very specific political and legal cases involving challenges posed by people and places perceived as racially mixed in the United States at the turn of the 20th century. Despite its micro-focus, however, the conceptual constellations and the logics of inclusion and exclusion that it has revealed offer a starting point for examination of similar issues across time and space. Over a century of profound changes has taken place since the debates that I have discussed in these pages. Yet despite these changes, many of the same issues that prompted intense controversy among U.S. policymakers and press members over a hundred years ago still resonate in the United States today.

Members of a new generation of young, mixed race adults, born in the wake of the Civil Rights movement and the legalization of interracial marriage in the 1960s, have begun to demand political recognition of their multiracial heritage. Their controversial movement has contributed to dire warnings from the mainstream media about the

browning of America and the impending disappearance of America's white majority (see e.g. "The New Face of Race" in *Newsweek*, September 18, 2000, 38). It has also prompted protests from members of minority mono-racial political groups who argue that a positive mixed race identity is untenable in the racist environment of the United States and who fear that their own political power will be eroded if mixed race people begin to depart from the mono-racial minority movements that have historically represented them.

One of the most common mainstream reactions to the contemporary multiracial movement has been to treat it as an unprecedented phenomenon in U.S. history, a new demographic and political development that has suddenly emerged at the end of the 20th century. Part of the purpose of this study is to dispel such notions and to demonstrate the ways in which the intermixture of peoples that has taken place throughout history and throughout the world has been alternately exaggerated and hidden, but always constructed and categorized to serve particular political purposes. While state policies and practices have indeed influenced the degree of interaction among peoples defined as racially distinct, they have never succeeded in preventing such interactions entirely. Racially mixed people thus continue to challenge conventional definitions of a U.S. nation and state founded on the premise of distinct races as they have throughout the country's history.

Racially mixed places also continue to pose similar challenges. The Hawaiian Sovereignty movement has gained strength and recognition since the 1960s, reopening the debate about Hawaiian annexation and its implications for indigenous citizens that

began over 100 years ago (see Meller and Lee 1997). Many people of Native Hawaiian descent feel they have never achieved acceptance as full members of the nation let alone the right to self-determination. Their sovereignty movement prompted a formal apology from the U.S. government on the centennial of the 1893 overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii (U.S. Public Law 103-150, 103rd Cong., Joint Res. 19, Nov. 23, 1993). It has also inspired recent calls by U.S. government officials to grant Native Hawaiians “self-determination over their own affairs within the framework of Federal law” (Report from Committee on Indian Affairs accompanying S. 2899, 106th Cong., 2nd Sess., Sept. 27, 2000). One of the more controversial aspects of U.S. government policy toward Native Hawaiians has been the restriction of federal benefits based on blood quantum, with the stipulation that recipients must have at least 50% Native Hawaiian ancestry (Meller and Lee 1997).

Other political and legal movements promoting the rights of indigenous peoples in the United States have also gained strength in recent years, including efforts to regain land rights and recognition from federal and state governments as official tribes. In addition, many people have begun researching their genealogies via the Internet, reconstructing the identities of and organizing reunions for members of mixed race indigenous populations such as the Melungeons (see e.g. *Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 1997, B1).

The implications of this study go beyond the continuing challenges posed by the issue of racial mixture in the United States, however. They suggest that important insights into the construction of definitions of nation and state in self-proclaimed multiethnic

democracies can be gained through analysis of debates surrounding the experiences and status of any marginalized ethnic minority that occupies an ambiguous sociopolitical position. Groups that are neither fully included in nor fully excluded from membership in the nation and state expose and challenge the boundaries of those entities and the processes through which those boundaries are constructed and maintained. They reveal consistencies between seemingly contradictory universalistic and particularistic political principles and inconsistencies among other political motives whose undemocratic aspects state officials try to minimize or hide.

Second generation North African immigrants in France and similar immigrant populations throughout Europe have posed enormous challenges to the conventional boundaries of European nations and states, prompting significant shifts in the political landscape whose implications are only beginning to emerge. The ambiguous status of the Bedouin in Israel, a formerly nomadic, indigenous Arab population, highlights the conundrums in Israel's claim to be both the home of the Jewish nation and a democratic state. While the tensions within Israel's self-definition are particularly acute, indigenous peoples pose similar challenges in other countries founded by European settlers. Indeed, in every state claiming to be a multiethnic democracy, such ambiguously situated populations exist, challenging the public promises of universal equality and revealing the hidden logics of inclusion and exclusion that ultimately define the nation and state.

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 - M.A. in International Studies, 1993
- Brown University, Providence, RI
- B.A. in Political Science & Middle East Studies, 1990
- Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel
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- FELLOWSHIPS & HONORS:**
- *Fulbright Student Award for dissertation research in Israel, 2001-2002*
 - *Lady Davis Doctoral Fellowship for dissertation research in Israel, 2001-2002*
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International Studies Instructor: Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Fall 1995. *Taught undergraduate International Studies foreign language trailer entirely in French. Received outstanding student evaluations.*

Research Assistant: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, January-December 1990. *Collected and analyzed information for faculty research projects from international sources including newspapers and government publications. Organized materials and conducted inventory of resources for research projects on U.S. foreign policies and Israeli national security.*

PUBLICATIONS: Basson, L. (Forthcoming). Challenging Boundaries and Belongings: "Mixed Blood" Allotment Disputes at the Turn of the 20th Century. In Joel Migdal (ed.), *State, Society and the Formation of Identity*. To be published by Cambridge University Press.

Basson, L. (1995). Les Bedouins du Neguev et L'Etat d'Israel: une politique evolutive. *Maghreb-Machrek*, 147, 149-165. (Translated from English: Negev Bedouin society and the Israeli state: The transformation of policy).

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Basson, L. (1998). Review of the book *As Nomadism Ends: The Israeli Bedouin of the Negev*, 1997, by Avinoam Meir. *The Professional Geographer*, vol. 50, no. 1, 158-159.

Basson, L. (1997). Review of the book *Israel's Changing Society: Population, Ethnicity, and Development*, 1996, by Calvin Goldscheider. *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, vol. 15, no. 4, 128-130.

PRESENTATIONS: Basson, L. (December 2001). *Challenging the Boundaries of State and Nation: U.S. Politics of Racial Mixture at the Turn of the 20th Century*. Presentation to Faculty Seminar sponsored by Department of Politics and Government, Ben Gurion University, Beer Sheva, Israel.

Basson, L. (July 1999). "Mixed-Blood Indians" and Membership in the U.S. Nation: Late Nineteenth Century Politics of Race, Property and Mixed Descent. Paper presented at Boundaries and Belonging Workshop, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

Basson, L. (March 1999). *Forging a Nation, Forgetting the Metis: The Myth of Difference and the Politics of Mixed Descent*. Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association, Seattle, WA.

Basson, L. (March 1996). *Redefining Membership in the French Nation and State: Franco-Maghrebians and the Question of Identity*. Paper presented at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Association, San Francisco, CA.

Basson, L. (October 1995). *Redefining Membership in the Nation-State: Second Generation North African Immigrants in France*. Paper presented at the 1995 Annual Conference of the Pacific Northwest Political Science Association, Bellingham, WA.