



TRANS EXPLOITS

TRANS OF COLOR CULTURES &
TECHNOLOGIES IN MOVEMENT

JIAN NEO
CHEN



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ANIMA Critical Race Studies Otherwise
A series edited by Mel Y. Chen and Jasbir K. Puar

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TRANS EXPLOITS

Trans of Color Cultures and Technologies in Movement

JIAN NEO CHEN

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INTRODUCTION

Racial Trans Technologies

They used to do that to us all the time, just come at the bar and the lights would go on and everybody would just stream out, . . . you knew that's what the routine was and it was just a night that it simply wasn't gonna happen. You know, . . . it's a feeling that you get like when you all go to a movie and see something together and everybody ah's and gasps at the same time? *That's the feeling*. You just knew. Everyone just looked at one another and sat down. *Not leaving. Not going anywhere*. —MISS MAJOR GRIFFIN-GRACY on the 1969 Stonewall Rebellion from *MAJOR!* (2015, dir. Annalise Ophelian and StormMiguel Florez)

Here on the gender borders at the close of the twentieth century, with the faltering of phallogocentric hegemony and the bumptious appearance of heteroglossic origin accounts, we find the epistemologies of white male medical practice, the rage of radical feminist theories and the chaos of lived gendered experience meeting on the battlefield of the transsexual body: a hotly contested site of cultural inscription, a meaning machine for the production of ideal type. —SANDY STONE, “The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto” (1987)

Time magazine's June 9, 2014, issue features actress Laverne Cox on the cover, looking boldly at the reader/viewer in a tall, elegant stance. While portraits often appear on *Time*'s covers, Cox's image is distinctive in its stature. The crown of her head appears above *Time*'s logo and her head and neck overtake and stand in for *m* in *t-i-m-e*. Instead of a close-up shot of Cox's face, the photo captures her full figure from head to toe, filling the entire space of the cover from top to bottom. The portrait not only claims to represent Cox

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FIGURE 1.1. *Time* magazine's "The Transgender Tipping Point" cover issue (June 9, 2014).

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as a figure but stages her visually as a body to be encountered. It also interrupts *t-i-m-e* to become an integral part of time. Cox's image announces the "transgender tipping point" as the moment when trans people obtain just enough critical mass to tip over the dominant majority.¹ Drawing from sociological, biological, and technological popular theories, the concept of the "tipping point" attempts to absorb the gains won by trans justice movements into a "free" market populist vision of social change in which the particular interests of a minority group circulate just enough and under the right conditions to overtake or even "infect" the majority. While this concept may seem to validate the power of the few to change the whole, it actually cancels out the struggles, courage, labor, and creativity of social justice movement building to instead credit what is believed to be automated natural laws internal to American populism.

Additionally, the issue's cover story, "America's Transition" by Katy Steinmetz, highlights life stories of trans people but diminishes the complexity of their lives to translate them into signs for progress in medical science, cultural self-expression through the Internet and social media, and state-sponsored laws and policies. The article ultimately attempts to fold the intersecting trans struggles that have made these advancements possible into the time and space of a nation-state that supposedly has transcended the "frontiers" of racism, sexism, and more recently homophobia (with the then-imminent federal legalization of same-sex marriage) and is now ready to conquer the new frontier of transphobia. *Time's* transgender issue reveals not only the technical administering of civil rights to deactivate social movements but also the managed harnessing of civil rights to advance the internal and external frontiers of American empire. We can view the magazine cover's insistence on capturing the full image of Laverne Cox from head to toe, in contrast to *Time's* usual close-up cover portraits, as exploiting the overwritten hyper-visibility of Black trans embodiment to mark American civil progress—and to renew a claim on the racially gendered Black body for the continued expansionism of the settler colonial nation-state. Cox's studied crossed stance, however, seems to offer a visual impasse in response to *Time's* demands.

Trans Exploits: Trans of Color Cultures and Technologies in Movement describes and theorizes the displaced emergences of trans of color cultural expression and social movement building through performance, film/video, literature, and digital media by the second decade of the twenty-first century. Approximately fifty years after state-managed civil rights reforms and two

decades after white-dominated trans movements became organized in the 1990s, trans of color cultures and movements surface at the crossings between subcultural modes of self-determined representation and dominant regimes of visibility. Through close engagement with the work of artists, scholars, and activists, the book produces visual and perceptual strategies for analyzing and amplifying the liminal internal/external, private/public, sense/thought aesthetics of trans of color embodiments. I argue that these aesthetic practices address and attempt to rework subjective and social orders of (cis)gender dominance and the technologies and histories of racial and colonial gendering that have established binary gender/sex as one of the primary faultlines for securing and differentiating the national body of the white settler U.S. state and civil society. *Trans Exploits* explores—and assembles potential relationships between—the cultural practices and imaginings created by trans and gender nonconforming Asian, Black, Indigenous, and Latinx peoples in transnational locations incorporated by the U.S. empire inside and outside the U.S. national body and territories.

Trans of Color Displacements

In this book, I use *trans* in addition to *transgender* to potentially reorient transgender studies, cultures, and social identities toward a detachment from—and disruption of—the Western, racially constituted white gender/sex system that continues to root gender social formation. As Paul B. Preciado has argued, far from intervening in naturalized biological and visual regimes of sex, *gender* as a category was created by U.S. psych-medical industries by the 1950s to re-entrench binary sex, especially through forced gender assignment surgery and biochemical treatments on intersex people. However, the foundational U.S. histories of racialized gendering and sexualization that trans of color cultures remember and embody speak to the limitations of only critiquing and resisting gender as it has been prescribed and regulated through Western science, without attention to the deep entanglements between Western rationality, liberal governance through the nation-state form, and the different modes of colonization and racism on which liberal governance relies. Engaging with trans of color cultural workers and organizers, queer feminist of color and queer of color critiques, and women of color and transnational feminisms, I use trans of color as a set of counterimaginaries and analytics that mobilize potential points of solidarity and kinship between those who experience embodiment as a form of racial gender displacement

and subjugation within radically different yet *interrelated* transnational U.S. histories and systems of genocide, captivity, colonization, and imperialism. Trans of color expressions and practices use the *surplus* that constitutes racial gender embodiment as the material for social struggle, reconstruction, and transformation. In addition to the hope of enlivening trans of color and other solidarities, my work aims to contribute to creating revised lexicons for perceiving and understanding trans of color and trans bodies and experiences—lexicons that acknowledge and describe the trans of color and trans politics and social labor of intervening in and reconstructing gender. The cocreation of these lexicons is challenging not only because of conflicting understandings of transgender communities and identities that are still emerging, but also and primarily, I would argue, because the gender/sex system continues to fundamentally structure the social and territorial body of U.S. neoliberal civil society at the scale of nature.

I use *trans* in connection with Miss Major Griffin-Gracy's frequent use of the term along with *transgender* in her public talks; her use, it seems to me serves, less to mark a stable identity than to describe and bring together those who share experiences and (otherwise undocumented) histories of devaluation by—and resistance against—gender policing, racism, and enforced poverty. Miss Major mobilizes *trans* and *transgender* to shatter the common-sense supremacy claimed by cisgender reality, to humanize gender variant and nonconforming people, and to keep *trans* and *transgender* adaptive and ungovernable as tools for gender liberation.² Additionally, Susan Stryker, Paisley Currah, and Lisa Jean Moore emphasize the relational possibilities of *trans* in *transgender* when the hyphenated status of *trans-* as a prefix is used to open up *trans* to other connections and meanings besides the suffix *gender* (2008). My use of *trans* is also aligned with the open-ended inclusiveness of *trans** in bringing together multiple gender nonconforming and variant identities and expressions, including *nonbinary*, *agender*, *gender queer*, *gender fluid*, and *gender free*, and those yet to self-name.

My discussion of trans of color cultures seeks to contribute to emerging U.S. transgender studies and cultural life, while potentially intervening in and expanding their subjects, approaches, and politics of knowledge and cultural production as they become more visible within dominant society. As described by Susan Stryker, transgender studies is “concerned with anything that disrupts, denaturalizes, rearticulates, and makes visible the normative linkages we generally assume to exist between the biological specificity of the sexually differentiated human body, the social roles and statuses that a

particular form of body is expected to occupy, the subjectively experienced relationship between a gendered sense of self and social expectations of gender-role performance, and the cultural mechanisms that work to sustain or thwart specific configurations of gendered personhood” (2006, 3). The academic field emerged in the 1990s in connection with transgender movement building and a politicized social identity that included all people marginalized or oppressed based on deviance from social norms of gendered embodiment. This broad definition of transgender identity and political community drew from Leslie Feinberg’s popularized activist work, Allucquère Rosanne (Sandy) Stone’s critical manifesto (1996) against the renaturalizing of binary gender/sex by versions of second-wave feminism, activism around Nancy Jean Burkholder’s expulsion from the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival, and other shifts and emergences in popular culture, academia, and activism (Stryker 2006, 4–5). Additionally, Stryker suggests that transgender studies appeared within the larger historical context of the “disintegration of the Soviet Union, the end of the cold war, the rise of the United States as a unipolar superpower, the development of the European Union as the first multinational state, and the elaboration of new global forms of capital” (8).

Stryker’s expansive and politicized situating of the emergence of transgender studies and self-identified transgender communities works against what was already the semi-institutionalizing of transgender social identity and movement building through white Euro-American binary frameworks of gender, sex, and sexuality by the beginning of the twenty-first century. The majority of the first transgender-identified organizations formed in U.S. urban centers by the 1990s, especially those with 501(c)(3) status, were founded and accessed by white transgender people. These organizations and the broader movements they helped to activate tended to focus on transgender struggles with single-issue focuses on gender identity oppression and gender transition. Thus, many of these first organizations were male-to-female (MtF) or female-to-male (FtM) support groups geared toward helping members to navigate the pathologized complexities of transgender identification and embodiment, while privileging narratives of identity and bodily *transition* from biologically assigned gender to self-determined gender *in alignment with the white gender binary under the management of psycho-medical professionals*. Many of the first organizations were also oriented toward obtaining legal recognition, protection, and rights for transgender people. While legal advocacy is an important aspect of transgender activism, the legal frameworks adopted by these organizations often could not address the experi-

ences of trans people of color who struggled with racist and classist forms of anti-trans cis-hetero-patriarchy. These legal frameworks also often presumed the possibility and desirability of a productive relationship with the U.S. state without addressing the impact of state divestment, policing, imprisonment, militarization, and direct and administrative violence on the lives of low- and survival-income trans people of color and immigrant communities. The single-issue agendas set by the predominantly visible white leadership of the “first wave” of transgender community organizations and transgender movements in the 1990s muted the work of earlier trans of color activists such as Christopher Lee, Bamby Salcedo, Janetta Johnson, Emi Koyama, Chandi Moore, Pauline Park, Imani Henry, Ignacio Rivera, Alex Lee, Pablo Espinoza, and Chino Mei Beck Scott-Chung, while further displacing the founding trans of color community building of Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, Stormé DeLarverie, and Tamara Ching.

Trans of color cultures, social embodiments, and movement building contributed to the emergence of politicized and culturally mobilized U.S. transgender identity in the 1990s. Yet their experiences of interlocking oppression and cultural and political lives were sidelined by the more linear and one-dimensional gender identity-focused narratives of white-dominant transgender movements and communities. Trans people of color not only survived and opposed white cis-hetero-patriarchal settler society and state regimes. They created ways to thrive and build kinship at the edges of transgender, queer, women’s, immigrant, ethnic, indigenous, and racial communities shaped by ongoing histories of subjugation—communities that often perceived them as *internal* threats to social fabrics already under attack. Trans people of color did not—and still do not—appear as a materialized coalitional identity bringing together trans Native, Black, Latinx, Asian, Arab, mixed-race, and other racialized American peoples. In contrast to *people of color*, which emerged in the mid-1950s as a term that mobilized political solidarity between racialized and colonized peoples based on nationalisms repurposed from Western European models of the nation-state, *trans of color*, *trans women/femmes of color*, *trans feminist of color*, *trans people of color*, and *racial trans* imagine affinities based on cultural memories and experiences radically dislocated from the times and spaces of nation-states and nationalisms (Wright 1956).

The transiting of gender by trans people of color has been shaped by white settler colonial histories and technologies of racial gender and sexual formation (HoSang, LaBennett, and Pulido 2012; Omi and Winant 1994). This

gender shifting also draws from reassembled cosmologies and lineages of embodiment, relation, desire, and belonging that exceed what can be extinguished by these histories and technologies. Returning to historical accounts of Hernando De Soto's 1540 expedition through Indigenous Southeast territories, Qwo-Li Driskill has argued that European colonization occurred through successive attempts that relied not only on shared information on geography, Indigenous nations, and resources but also on "mapping European gender and sexuality onto Indigenous nations and bodies" (2017, 49). Driskill remembers and reimagines a third *asegi* Cherokee queer and Two-Spirit history that inflicts chaos on colonial binary gender systems through a "re-storying" of the Lady of Cofitachequi, who was kidnapped and forced to guide De Soto through Cherokee Southeast territory (2017, 3–20, 39–100). C. Riley Snorton has tracked historical moments when the queer excess of black masculine sexuality has been perceived and managed as public crises within the visual regimes of U.S. anti-Black racial capitalism (2014, 1–36). Through the figure of the plantation overseer, who is charged with watching over, punishing, and extracting labor from slaves, Snorton provides a rendering of Michel Foucault's panopticon that can account for the rationalized forms of surveillance and control exercised over black bodies within contemporary society and culture (2014, 37–66). Marcia Ochoa has delimited and revised U.S.-based concepts and theories of gender, race, and nation through an analysis of Venezuela's national construction of femininity through its mass-mediated transnational beauty pageant industry. Through queer diasporic ethnographic practices that shift identities and methods within different geopolitical contexts between the U.S. and Latin America, she describes the uses of the symbolic resources of the beauty pageant by *transformistas*, who were assigned male at birth, to materialize embodied femininity and to become women in Venezuela (2014, 1–58, 155–200). Ochoa's migration between different systems and locations of gender knowledge production puts pressure on U.S. understandings of transgender and gender that do not address the racial, indigenous, and cisgender hierarchies mobilized through gender within European colonial legacies and their modernization in Latin Americas within and adjacent to the U.S. Developing ethnographic approaches that emphasize migration over settlement in the moving oceanic spaces and times between nation-states, Kale Fajardo has offered a critical account of Filipino seamen who provide much of the ship labor needed to transport 90 percent of the world's commodities in the twenty-first century. His research details the queer complexity of their working class masculini-

ties, which remain available to nonheteronormative intimacies that include tomboys, counter to the Philippine neoliberal state's efforts to produce exportable hypermasculine heteronormative national subjects and U.S. colonial histories of engendering Filipino and other Asian migration for labor extraction (2011, 1–76, 148–76).

Each of these groundbreaking approaches to gender variant and sexual histories, geopolitics, and social embodiments traces the centrality of gender and sexuality to the diverging modes and histories of settler colonialism, white supremacist racism, territorialism, and imperialism that constitute the U.S. national and territorial body and state inside/outside of Indigenous territories, and Latin Americas, the Black transatlantic, and the Indigenous and Asian transpacific. They also address the mediating role that gender and sexuality continue to play in the neoliberal restructuring and continuation of these modes and histories of subjugation within colonies, plantations, and territories turned democracies and free markets.

Contemporary Technologies of Racial Gendering

Trans of color cultures and social movements emerge at points of convergence and displacement between dominant culture and society and dispossessed countercultures and communities by the second decade of the twenty-first century, following fifty years of state-managed civil rights reforms in response to mass movements for racial, gender, sexual, economic, migrant, and decolonial justice. While these reforms enabled the limited entry of women, communities of color, and immigrants and refugees into domains of American civil society, they failed to directly address systemic social structures and cultures of cis-hetero-patriarchy, white settler colonialism, and capitalism. Federal civil rights reforms, including the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, in addition to the extension of the constitutional rights of citizenship to include women, people of color, and immigrants, have provided the legal scaffolding that social justice movements have used toward broader demands for systemic transformation. Yet these reforms in and of themselves have only provided incremental protections against what these laws treat as private acts of discrimination, with the burden of redress resting on those impacted. Nonetheless, national civil rights reforms marked a formal restructuring of the U.S. nation-state from apartheid to neoliberal attempts to incorporate deviantly gendered, sexual,

indigenous, and racialized communities as multicultural minorities. During this moment of restructuring, the racially engendering ideologies of the Black matriarch, Latinx culture of poverty, and Asian model minority were mobilized through national discourse and social policy to *privatize* the logics of systemic subjugation and the responsibility for their impacts within families of color.

The U.S. Department of Labor's notorious 1965 Moynihan Report identifies the "matriarchal structure" of the Black family as the root cause for ongoing socioeconomic inequality between Black and white Americans despite state-legislated civil rights protections. The report authored by Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan under President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration attributes the "deterioration of the Negro [*sic*] family" to its matriarchal structure, which "because it is out of line with the rest of American society, seriously retards the progress of the group as a whole, and imposes a crushing burden on the Negro male, and, in consequence, on a great many Negro women as well" (1965, 29). In a series of imposed substitutions, correlations, and internalizations, it recodes systemic racial dispossession into deracinated socioeconomic disparities between Black and white populations that originate in the failure of low-income Black families in particular to reproduce the patriarchal model of the white gender and sexually normative middle-class household. This failure is diagnosed as a "tangle of pathology" internal to the Black family structure, namely the Black mother's usurping of what would be otherwise the Black father's patriarchal position of power (Moynihan 1965, 29). The Moynihan Report, therefore, naturalizes patriarchy as the *structure* of family necessary not only for socioeconomic advancement but ultimately for normal existence and participation in civil society: "Ours is a society which presumes male leadership in private and public affairs" (1965, 29). By establishing patriarchy as the required structure for social normality, the report inscribes the dominance of the adult married man, as father, as ruling patriarch over the women, children, and other family members and the patrilineal transmission of this dominance from father to son as the internal domestic order for the nation-state. In doing so, the report ties masculinity to reproductive heterosexuality and patricentered descent and sociality.

The report's Black matriarch figures the Black family as the pathological antithesis of the cis-hetero-patriarchal structure of white civil society and attempts to erase and overwrite the trans and queer forms of embodiment, sexuality, and kinship lived and transmitted within Black womanhood, femme-

ness, masculinities, and genders outside of the lack and failure that the Black matriarch supposedly represents. As Hortense Spillers has argued, the myth of the African American matriarchate elides the histories through which African peoples were forcibly degendered and reduced to sensuous “flesh” and their kinship relationships destroyed, beginning with the fifteenth-century Atlantic slave trade (Spillers 2003, 203–29). While the Moynihan report refers to chattel slavery and Jim Crow, these histories are always subsumed within a concern for the weak Black male figure in the matrifocal Black household, which the report identifies as the only remaining sign and effect of structural racism in the post–civil rights era. Far from being a discrete policy proposal whose credibility could be merely discounted, Roderick Ferguson has identified the Moynihan Report as a “genealogical node” for new ideological alliances between liberalism, Black nationalism, civil rights, and neoconservatives consolidated through an attack on nonheteronormative Black female-headed households as depleting national culture and capital (2004, 110–37). The web of discourses and political and cultural consensus building that the report helped to create has continued to energize state rationales, cultural ideologies, and public debates under the Nixon administration in the 1970s and beyond, including the report’s recent referencing in then-Senator Barack Obama’s political biography *The Audacity of Hope* (Geary 2015, 1–12; Obama 2006, 254).

The flexible alliance of discourses and state and social blocs that the Moynihan Report helped to build converged around the internal diagnosis of the deviant gendering of families of color—and the queer social structures this engendering created—as the primary barrier to national racial assimilation as a potentially successful ethnic and economic class. The Moynihan Report drew from and validated anthropologist Oscar Lewis’s “culture of poverty” thesis, which first appeared in Lewis’s ethnographic reporting on the urban poor in Mexico in *Five Families: Mexican Case Studies in the Culture of Poverty* (1959). This thesis was further developed and circulated in Lewis’s widely published studies in 1966 and 1967 on low-income Puerto Ricans in New York City and San Juan, funded partly by the University of Illinois and the Social Security and Welfare Administrations under President Lyndon B. Johnson (Lewis, *The Culture and La Vida* 1966; Motley 1967). For Lewis and his team of researchers, the culture of poverty describes strategies developed by urban poor communities under Western capitalism in response to the effects of rapid industrialization, including economic and social marginalization, the replacement of extended kinship and lineage systems with the

nuclear reproductive family, and dominant upper-class individualistic values. These strategies, which are also described as symptoms that deter participation in national culture, include disengagement from dominant society and its institutions, social disorganization, unmarried mother-centered households, and individual fatalistic and inferiority complexes. Lewis's method of study focuses on the family because it is considered an intermediary "small social system" between national and class cultural values and between the community and the individual: "It helps us get beyond form and structure to the realities of human life, or . . . it puts flesh and blood on the skeleton (Lewis 1959, 3). In the studies of Mexican and Puerto Rican families, the family is what both houses and distorts the cultural strategies of the poor, especially the gender structures that produce "a high incidence of weak ego structure, orality, and confusion of sexual identification, all reflecting maternal deprivation," "widespread belief in male superiority," and "among the men a strong preoccupation with *machismo*, their masculinity" (Lewis 1966, 23).³

By identifying the cultural strategies used by Mexican and Puerto Rican urban underclasses, Lewis's studies treat poverty in Western capitalist nations as a feature of classed social inequality rather than a product of "natural" differences between "underdeveloped" indigenous or rural economies and urban modernity. Lewis argues that the culture of poverty cuts across racial, ethnic, national, and regional differences, countering the idea that the "high incidence of common-law marriage and of households headed by women" is somehow "distinctive of Negro [sic] family life in this country" (1959, 2; 1966, 19–20). He suggests that the culture of poverty may even host the potential of revolutionary change. Yet, what provides Lewis with a generalizable *culture* of poverty and class analysis are indigenous, racial, and ethnic systems of kinship, gender, and sexuality that exceed the patriarchal, heterosexual, and cismasculine social structures of Western capitalist nation-states. Lewis pathologizes these systems and positions them temporally as remnants of premodern life, even as he uses them to identify a subcultural class within Western capitalism and national cultures. In doing so, Lewis's culture of poverty ideology renaturalizes cisgender, heterosexuality, and patriarchy as the symbolic and material social order for modern life under Western capitalist nation-states, including the potential resistances described as entrapped within reactionary gender kinship relationships. It attempts to assimilate and further erase and displace the decolonial indigenous, racial, and ethnic temporalities of gender kinship that live outside and

inside the social orders of the U.S. nation-state. Gloria Anzaldúa has used the myth of Coyolxauhqui, the dismembered Aztec goddess of the moon who symbolizes a conquered people, a sacrifice made to conquerors, and a traitor to her ruling mother and brothers, to remember the shifting gender positions and temporalities that underlie continuing histories of Anglo and Spanish colonization and hetero-patriarchal nationalism in the contemporary U.S. after 9/11 (Anzaldúa 2015; Blake 2008, 13–69; Umberger 1996, 85–108). These decolonial organizations of reality and sociality enable the translations and erasures that occur between local and transnational scales in Lewis’s cultural class analysis. Examining the intimate dynamics of Puerto Rico’s colonial occupation as an unincorporated territory and “domestic dependent” of the U.S., Juana María Rodríguez has argued for the possibility of mobilizing queer gestures of sovereignty that work through the inner spheres of psychic embodiment, sexuality, and kinship to produce social bonds that de-authorize the settler state (2014, 1–28, 69–98).

The now commonsense Asian model minority myth initiated by sociologist William Petersen’s 1966 *New York Times* article, “Success Story, Japanese-American Style,” continues the racially gendered pathologizing cultural strategies of the Moynihan Report and Lewis’s culture of poverty—but with a positivist twist. Petersen argues that Japanese Americans are an exceptional “ethnic minority” that has overcome their historical experiences of discrimination, which at its extreme included forced relocation from the West Coast, internment, and labor during World War II, to become successful law-abiding middle-class citizens, in contrast to Black, Native, Mexican, Chinese, and Filipino Americans (1966, 40–41). He traces this success to the modern religious achievement-oriented ethic transmitted through the Japanese family, which he likens to the “Protestant ethic” (41). This cultural transmission relies especially on the “husband-father[’s]” authority in the Japanese family, although his authority has no material support: “Each artificial restriction on the [first generation] issei—that they could not become citizens, could not own land, could not represent the camp population to the administrators—meant that the [second generation] nisei had to assume adult roles early in life, while yet remaining subject to parental control that by American standards was extremely onerous” (Petersen 1966, 41). Similar to the myths of the Black and Latinx matriarchal families, the myth of the model Japanese patriarchal family hosts a perverse racial gendering that distorts the *structure* of the self, family, and community. Whereas the Black matriarch’s masculinized femininity displaces the dominance of Black men as heads of house-

holds, the purely symbolic or empty masculinity of first-generation Japanese men implicitly renders the Japanese women and the Japanese American children in the family passively compliant to authority, which for Petersen is a concern when it involves the nontransmission of power and resources (which have been stripped from the Japanese father) from father to son. Petersen's article repeats the Moynihan Report's description of the Black family as a "problem" minority, while newly placing Japanese Americans as the "model" counterpoint to Black Americans (1966, 43). Despite their attributed discipline and achievement, however, Japanese Americans remain foreign domestics preserving links to an "alien culture" that inhibits individual autonomy. On the other hand, Petersen claims Black Americans as native "daughter[s] of the American Revolution," if only to call attention to their orphan refugee dependency—marked as feminine—on white Americans for patronage (43). The 1966 *U.S. News and World Report's* "Success Story of One Minority Group in U.S." and other public accounts extend Petersen's "model" analysis to other Asian groups. This report already begins to account for new waves of "alien Chinese from Hong Kong and Formosa [Taiwan]," whose immigration has been facilitated by the liberalized 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act.

As the least elaborated, least attuned to class differences, and seemingly least directly related to state policy of the three public accounts of racialized groups in the mid-1960s, the Asian model minority ideology relies the most explicitly on scientific positivism's claim to truth as self-verifying fact. Although Peterson and *U.S. News* base their arguments on the *figural* interpretation of statistics that are admittedly "not very satisfactory," their cultural production of scientific truth is occluded by the very symbols they supposedly report (rather than interpret): "Only four sansei were among the 779 arrested in the Berkeley student riots . . . One, the daughter of a man who 20 years ago was an officer of a Communist front, is no more a symbol of generational revolt than the more publicized Bettina Aptheker" (Peterson 1996). The numeric symbols must remain pure signifiers that do not transcend their instrumentalizing to signify insignificance, docility, and non-representability. The perversely positive coding of the Asian as a deracinated ethnic minority whose inherent ability to assimilate surpasses that of the European ethnic immigrant settler signals the neoliberal reorganization—rather than a reversal—of previous state and social regimes of anti-Asian racism. As Iyko Day has argued, the land dispossession, removal, incarceration, and forced labor of people of Japanese descent in Canada and the U.S. during World War II was

not a final event that concluded the history of anti-Asian exclusion as much as a transition point in which Japanese North Americans were translated from their earlier personification as alien disembodied labor abstract value into ideal surplus laborers within domestic territories and racial hierarchies “native” to settler colonialism (2016, 1–40, 115–50). The Asian model minority myth accompanies the liberalization of immigration laws marked by the 1965 Immigration Act, 1975 Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act, 1980 Refugee Act, 1982 Amerasian Immigration Act, and 1987 Amerasian Homecoming Act. Identifying continuities instead of departures between preliberalized immigration policies, such as the 1875 Page Law barring the entry of Chinese women (suspected of being prostitutes), and postliberalized immigration, Jodi Kim has read post-1965 legislation and immigration as “symptomatic of U.S. imperial Cold War presence in Asia and gendered racial formations both ‘here’ in the United States and over ‘there’ in Asia” (2010, 19–20). The positive representation of Asians by the mid-twentieth century produces a transparent visibility that screens out the possibility of perceiving the negating forms of state and social force that continue to secure the heterogeneous foreignness of Asians to define the boundaries of the U.S. nation-state. This positive screen also uses the migrant exteriority of Asians, as a racial grouping that has no native claim to the U.S. and the Americas, that has not been nativized within the national imaginary, and that did not gain the right of naturalized citizenry until the 1940s, to structure and mediate relations within the white settler colonial racial hierarchy.

The three state-sponsored myths not only divested the white settler U.S. state and civil society from responsibility for restorative justice, while transferring these responsibilities onto communities of color, indigenous peoples, women, migrants, LGBT people, people living with disabilities, and low-income people, during the moment when the state claimed to have abolished systemic subjugation through civil rights reforms. Beyond a more general leftist critique of neoliberalism, I want to suggest that these liberalized recodings renewed white supremacist settler colonial systems foundational to the nation-state through reformulated technologies of racial gendering. Through the pathologizing (mis)recognition of gender structures of kinship and sexuality in Black, Latinx, and Asian families within the terms of the cis-heteropatriarchal white social order, the state addresses communities of color anew as part of the national body, rather than absolutely alien to it. At the same time, the state establishes the gender and sexually normative middle-class family and the individuated collective form of subjectivity and sociality it

reproduces as the social contract by which communities of color must abide to participate in white civil society.

Gender as a perception—or sensuous cultural interpretation—of bodily material at the threshold between the self and social world, is the target for policing, regulation, and rehabilitation in the negative and negating attempt to incorporate communities of color into the national body through cis-heterosexual social contract. The three myths use the unfixable identities of racial femininities and masculinities to assign affective hierarchies of social value including the criminal and civil, sick and productive, perverse and moral, and foreign and native. These affective orders help to mobilize state and social policies that create and intensify differentials in power between women and men and also gender differentiation itself based on naturalized binary female/male sex within communities of color. They entrench gender as socially prescribed structure, role, and identity, including establishing *cisgender* identity as the “natural” basis for subjectivity. Recognizing the changing, diverging, and sometimes contentious terms and definitions that continue to be created related to trans identities, I tenuously describe dominant *cisgender* identity as having a generally continuous subjective sense of gender embodiment stabilized through identification with gender assigned at birth (based on the interpretation of sex) and with the symbolic and social location provided by this identification.⁴ This description attempts to highlight both the temporal subjective and spatial social dimensions that produce the ontological “I am a man (because I am perceived/assigned as male)” of *cisgender* identity, while signaling the fragility and ambivalence of *cisgender* identity as a structure of subjectivity. These racial gender myths and policies also reproduce internal power differentials that subjugate queers, survival or low-income people, migrants (especially undocumented and refugee), those with disabilities, and those who fail or refuse to perform respectable normality.

Trans Embodiments within/against

U.S. Racial Captivity and Settler Colonialism and Empire

The post–civil rights recoding of race and systemic white supremacy through the racial gender ideologies of Moynihan’s Black matriarch, Lewis’s Latinx culture of poverty, and Peterson’s Asian model minority helped to activate the neoliberal restructuring of the settler U.S. state and civil society to minimally incorporate previously externalized communities within the national imaginary. This partial inclusion relied on the adoption of cis-hetero-

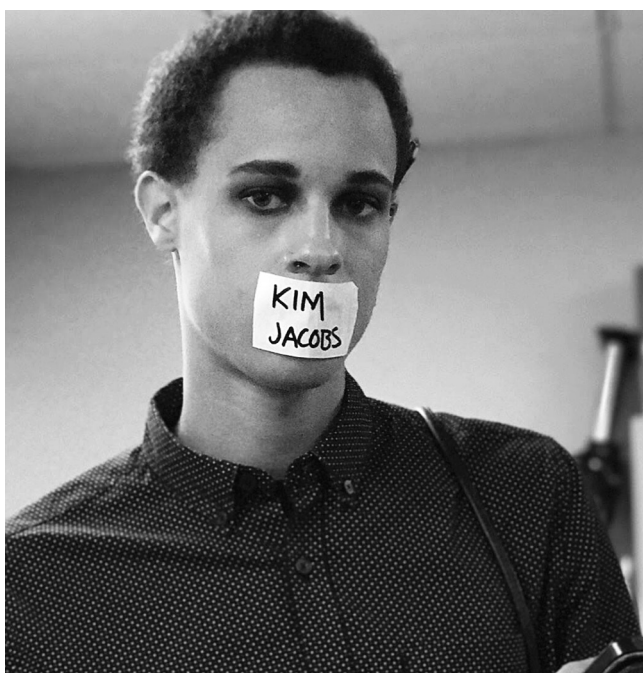
patriarchal gender subject formation and social structures that would create and strengthen internal differentials in power and identity in ways that would diminish the possibility of material and symbolic social transformation. These power and identity differentials privatized within families and communities of color furthered the state's renewal of founding corporeal racial economies of anti-Black captivity, settler dispossession of Indigenous lands and nations, territorial occupation and control of Latinx Americas, and anti-Asian imperial expansion and containment under rationalized systems of rule that differentially distribute the necessities for survival, safety, livelihood, and social livability—or life and death themselves—in civil society (Haritaworn, Kuntsman, Posocco 2014; Spade 2011).

The prison industrial complex (PIC) that emerges by the early 1970s is a systemic continuation of the anti-Black chattel slavery and racial capitalism that enabled the establishment and development of the U.S. white settler political economy and its disembodied rights-bearing subject (Robinson 1983, 101–66). As Angela Davis and Michelle Alexander have argued, the PIC is a more recent incarnation of postslavery southern Black Codes and penal systems, including convict leasing, developed to reinstitutionalize slavery's conditions, ensure the incapacitated labor needed to modernize the American South and North, and restrict the possibilities of Black freedom to maintain white civil society (Davis 2003, 84–104; Alexander 2012, 20–58). Although convict leasing ended by the 1940s, a renewed era of anti-Black incarceration and policing was initiated by the Nixon administration's "law and order" regime by the late 1960s as a state response to movements for racial, gender, sexual, and decolonial justice. This regime of anti-Black criminalization, which Ruthie Gilmore has called the U.S. "domestic military state" or "military Keynesianism," harnessed the wealth and technologies developed through transnational military expansion and imperialism during World War II and the Cold War (2007, 87–127). Gilmore's analysis of the racial and militarized underpinnings of the welfare state and its war on poverty intervenes in critiques of neoliberalism that focus only on economic deregulation and the weakened state, state divestment from social needs, self-regulating individualism, and deindustrialized global capital. The PIC advances the neoliberal reconstruction of white supremacy through seemingly race and gender neutral, or even anti-racist and anti-sexist, value systems that rationalize the killing, policing, and containment of Black, Brown, and Native populations considered criminal, nonproductive, alien, and primitive—and therefore disposable (Melamed 2011, 1–49; Rodriguez 2005).

The necro/biopolitical administrative rule upheld by the PIC produces the racially, sexually, and gender differentiated distribution of death by targeting, exposure, and extraction of life-sustaining resources (Mbembe 2003; Puar 2007, 1–36). Dean Spade has situated the growth of the PIC within neoliberal policies and legal systems that criminalize to entrench the racial wealth divide, while also administering “care” through the unequal distribution of resources such as food, housing, transportation, employment, public safety, public health, education, and immigration (2011, 50–72, 73–93). The racialized, sexualized, and trans/homophobic targeting of survival- and low-income trans women of color by the police and the PIC for killing, sexual violence, and deadening in cages works alongside the withholding of resources from trans women of color through life-sustaining administrative systems, such as trans-affirming medical care, outside and within the PIC to increase the vulnerability of trans women of color to violence and death. Additionally, the maldistribution of death and life provide the differentially negating and/or sustaining bonds through which the state attempts to dematerialize social bodies and relationships and reconstitute them as groups or “populations” within hierarchies of social value and viability. The prioritizing of gay and lesbian marriage rights, protection for gay and lesbian military service, anti-gay and lesbian hate crime legislation, and corporate driven Pride celebrations by mainstream white upper-class-led organizations continues to pull resources and focus away from issues impacting LGBT communities of color and low-income LGBT communities, such as poverty, unemployment, homelessness, gentrification, state violence, sexual violence, health care, disability access, and community-based safety. It also continues to draw greater dividends of life-sustaining resources and protection from death and violence for privileged LGBT populations—and to participate in the maldistribution of death—through the (fragile and regulating) adoption of cis-homonormativity and cis-homonationalism in social contract with the state (Duggan 2003; Puar 2007, 2013). As Treva Ellison has suggested, legal reforms focused on gender and sexual injury and identity in the 1990s, such as the anti-gay and lesbian hate crimes and Violence against Women portions of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, participate in the neoliberal nation-state’s “representational mode” of appropriating cultural difference while strengthening the anti-Black devaluation institutionalized through the PIC (2016, 323–45). Also, Jin Haritaworn has shored up the ways in which queer and transgender cultures and political organizing, even in their most progressive and radical forms, can make claims to

injury, space, and protection through white structures of feeling that rely on the racialization and alienation of queer and trans people of color and communities of color (2015, 84–124). The brutal police arrest and jailing of Black trans and queer protesters, the Black Pride 4, during the June 2017 Pride march in Columbus, Ohio, highlights glaring differences in power and entitlement to state and community protection and safety within LGBT communities based on race, class, and gender identity. The Black Pride 4—Wriply Bennet, Kendall Denton, Ashley Braxton, and Deandre Miles—were part of a peaceful action involving ten protesters during the march to bring attention to the acquittal of the Minnesota police officer who killed Philando Castile, violence against and erasure of Black and Brown queer and trans people, and the fourteen reported murders of trans women of color by the first half of 2017. Yet they were targeted by the police and their attack was largely condoned and sometimes literally applauded by the predominantly white attenders and organizers of Columbus Pride. The Black Pride 4 together with Black Queer and Intersectional Coalition (BQIC), a coalition of Black queer, trans, and intersex people devoted to “fighting for a world where Black LGBTQ+ people from all backgrounds can thrive,” are working to educate and mobilize communities on the ongoing local history of police violence and to call for accountability within the LGBT community for addressing racism, along with homophobia and transphobia.⁵

As a current manifestation of anti-Black captivity, the PIC is connected to the different systems of spatial and temporal control and containment effected by contemporary expansions of settler colonialism, imperialism, and racialization. The PIC’s institutional location and criminalizing logic extend beyond corporate- and state-profiting prisons and jails to include what Eric Stanley and Nat Smith describe as a growing network of incarceration, policing, and surveillance that includes immigrant centers, juvenile justice facilities, county jails, military jails, holding rooms, courtrooms, sheriff’s offices, and psychiatric institutions that enforce racial, sexual, and gender normalization (Stanley and Smith 2011). The era of Native self-determination announced by the Nixon administration in the 1970s reversed the U.S. government’s 1953 termination policy, which withdrew federal recognition of tribes, converted tribal reservations from trust status to private ownership, and relocated tribal citizens from reservations to city centers, and the government’s general drive toward terminating Native nations (Bruyneel 2007, 123–70; Rifkin 2012). As suggested by Mark Rifkin, this shift in state discourse toward recognition signals a transition into state-administrated forms



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FIGURES 1.2–1.5. Black Pride 4: Deandre Miles (*top left*), Wriply Bennet (*top right*), Ashley Braxton (*bottom left*), Kendall Denton (*bottom right*). Photos by Kendall Denton. Courtesy of Black Pride 4.

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of self-determination that continue to deny, rather than support, the “changing force field of lived relations” of Native political sovereignty (2012). The granting of self-determination can be viewed as part of the settler state’s cycle of connecting assimilative recognition with terminating annexation, as exemplified in the forcible removal of Natives from their lands in the 1820s and 1830s during a period of treaty-making that recognized Native nations as independent foreign nations based on their ability to conform to the political model of a centralized state (Rifkin 2015). Focusing on moral systems of ethnic cleansing aimed at assimilating Navajo cultures of matrilineal kinship, polygamy, and nonbinary gender following the military conquest of the Navajo in 1863, Jennifer Nez Denetdale calls attention to the heteropatriarchal force and violence of settler colonial tactics of assimilation (2017, 69–98).

Rather than overturning previous racial bans on immigration, the 1965 Immigration Act rationalized racialized immigration controls. Its categories of sanctioned migration based on family reunification, classes and sectors of work, and immigration status rely on the selection of cis-hetero-reproductive families, exceptional occupations, mind/body-abled workers in demand, and economically rational and moral immigrants (versus undocumented, refugee, sex workers, people who use drugs), instead of racialized categories of nationality and ethnicity. The 1965 Act’s equal allotment of immigration slots to Western and Eastern Hemispheres actually placed restrictions on Western Hemisphere immigration for the first time, aimed at stemming Latinx immigration from the southern Americas and Caribbean (Ngai 2014). It relied on the infrastructure of policing, detention, and deportation established by U.S. Border Patrol at the U.S.-Mexico border facilitated by the U.S. government’s Bracero Program from 1941 to 1964. The Bracero Program selectively recruited Mexican men for contractual seasonal agricultural labor while rendering other migrants, including women and children, and those without or falling out of contracts illegal. As Kelly Lytle Hernandez (2010) has discussed, state discourse and the Border Patrol’s localized law enforcement during the program produced the figure of the alien worker as a state target in ways that retained connections to the figure of the enemy alien during World War II, which was shaped by perceptions of the Japanese Americans removed and interned by Border Patrol. The image of the Mexican alien worker also adopted aspects of the figure of Black criminal under new drug-related law enforcement mandates in the 1950s (Hernandez 2010). Moreover, as Jenna Loyd and Alison Mountz (2018) have argued, the current vast system of migrant detention and deportation by Immigration and Customs En-

forcement (ICE), established as an agency within the Department of Homeland Security in 2002, and border deterrence by Border Patrol can be traced to U.S. Cold War efforts to contain Haitian and Cuban asylum seekers during the late 1970s and 1980s under the Carter and Reagan administrations. After 9/11, the second Bush administration's 2002 Homeland Security Act, following the Clinton administration's 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, ties state counterterrorism measures targeting the figures of the Arab and Muslim alien terrorist to the federal and local anti- Black and Latinx police and carceral network (Macías-Rojas 2018).

The 1965 Immigration Act's positive image of immigration also indicated a higher level of rationalized control over Indigenous and Asian migration from the Pacific Islands and South, Southeast, and Northeast Asian regions. The U.S. Armed Forces is the largest and most richly funded, technologically equipped, and specialized military in the world. Its Pacific region Unified Combatant Command, which was established in 1947, is the oldest and vastest (in size and geographic area) of U.S. military commands. With its recent expansion and renaming to include the South Asian region under the Trump administration, the Indo-Pacific Command now covers over 50 percent of the Earth's surface spanning the east coast of Africa, through the Asian regions, to the west coasts of North, Central, and South America.⁶ The enormous U.S. military presence in the Pacific is the result of the continued legacy of U.S. imperialism and colonial occupation, readapting the strategies of settler imperialism and colonialism and racial captivity developed within the contiguous continental territorial body of the U.S. nation-state. The overseas annexations of the Hawai'i islands (1898), the Philippines (1898), Guam (1898), Samoa (1899), and the Northern Mariana Islands (1947) in the Pacific and Puerto Rico (1898) and the Virgin Islands (1916) in the Atlantic and their divergent forms of administered governance (as incorporated, unincorporated, and trust territories), followed the white settler territorial incorporation of continental lands taken from Indigenous nations through conquest, removal, and allotment. These oceanic territories provided bases, resources, and models for U.S. military operations, economic extraction, and administrative rule during World War II and the Cold War, enabling the direct or indirect infiltration of Japan (after its final defeat through the use of nuclear weapons), Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and Malaysia to contain communism and the then-U.S.S.R. and China. The Immigration Act's rationale controls, which allotted 6 percent of immigration slots per hemisphere to refugees, could not adequately account for the waves of migrants displaced by U.S.

wars in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, who began to be held in U.S. military camps in Guam, the Philippines, and the U.S. in 1975, based on amendments to the 1965 Act. Mimi Thi Nguyen has described the temporal dimensions of the Vietnamese refugee's racialization within liberal U.S. state and dominant cultural discourses as a transitory figure of arrested development that necessarily produces war as rescue and refuge as rehabilitation (2012, 33–82).

The twenty-first century trans of color embodiments, subcultures, and social movements highlighted in *Trans Exploits* emerge through their displacement from the privatized internal affects and “public” social systems and ideologies of racial and settler colonial and imperial rule reproduced by the neoliberal U.S. nation-state. These subjective and social systems use racial (cis)gendering in particular to dematerialize and bind bodies and social relationships to the rationalized violence and power of the white supremacist state and civil society coestablished through ongoing anti-Black captivity, Indigenous dispossession through settlement, territorial occupation and containment of bordering Latinx Americas, and extraterritorial occupation of Asias, and expulsion of Asians. The book's methods and approaches draw most heavily on the socially and personally reflective intersectional analysis of women of color and transnational feminisms and the critical imaginations of queer feminist and queer of color, especially queer women and femme of color, cultural and literary theories and practices. These growing bodies of work shape my understandings of differentiated gradients of power and identity and the political possibilities of socially embodied feeling and affinities. I also engage with post-Marxist and psychoanalytic continental philosophy as it continues to be used in critical race and ethnic studies; gender and sexuality studies; and literary, film, performance, and digital media studies for contemporary theories of Western subject and nation-state formation.

In particular, I rely on Michel Foucault's biopolitical genealogies of state and social power under Western liberal democracies, as they energize his other genealogies of the state and civil society based on disciplinary and discursive normalization.⁷ In *Security, Territory, Population* (2007), Foucault's description of the security power that enables the emergence of the modern state in the eighteenth century provides a theory of embodied collectivity through the biological or organismic concept of population, settlement through the concept of territory to which the population is spatially tied, and productive and reproductive civil society. The power of the state—and the state itself—are generated through rational management of the survival of the population at points of necessity where need and nature meet and

respond to each other. In turn, population is created through its seemingly natural internal relationship to the state as necessity, which is the product of a form of rationalized (rather than overtly coercive) state force. Foucault briefly refers to state rule at the level of necessity as a kind of normalization: “we have here something that starts from the normal and makes use of certain distributions considered to be, if you like, more normal than the others, or at any rate more favorable than the others. These distributions will serve as the norm. The norm is an interplay of differential normalities (2007, 63).” The state tied to the population through security works through such a high degree of rationalization that it not only allows for deviations from the norm, or “differential normalities.” It can make the “interplay” and “distribution,” or the differential relationships between them, productive.

The deaths of Roxana Hernandez, who died under ICE detention in a private federal prison for men in New Mexico in May 2018; Jennifer Laude, who was killed in the Philippines by a U.S. Marine based there in October 2014; and Kayla Moore, who was killed by Berkeley police during a mental health crisis in California in February 2013 call for accountability from the officers and the police and military bodies to which they belong. They also call for responses to these acts of violence as expressions of state violence continuous with—and foundational to—the liberal democracy that is the U.S. settler nation-state. U.S. prison, federal and local policing, and military networks, which surpass all countries in size, brutality and lethality, funding, and mobility, are part of a state and social infrastructure that has made dematerializing, deadening, and confining racially gendered social bodies the precondition for the rights of white civil society. This same infrastructure forms the foundation of the cis-hetero-patriarchal family that represents the settled private body of the republic.

Although small in number, trans women of color and trans of color organizers, cultural workers, and communities living within differentials in power and identity that dispossess them and make them targets of state and interpersonal violence have been working to transform differentials into interdependent relationships and shared resources. Jennicet Gutiérrez and Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement, whose work I discuss in more detail in the conclusion, have called local and national attention to the detention, imprisonment, and deportation of undocumented Latinx LGBT immigrants, especially trans women, by ICE and the prison network. Gutiérrez and Familia intervene in more mainstream immigrant rights movements, which have focused primarily on legal reforms that divide communities be-



FIGURE 1.6. TGI Justice family, San Francisco Trans March (June 23, 2017).
Photo by the author.

tween “good” immigrants viewed as deserving pathways to full citizenship and “bad” immigrants seen as acceptable targets of immigration policing. Using the model of the united “familia,” they build alliances within and outside Latinx communities to make the criminalization and abuse faced by undocumented Latinx trans women and trans and queer liberation issues that are integral to immigrant and racial justice movements.

TGI Justice Project and their Executive Director Janetta Johnson are building a local and national movement for gender racial justice and self-determination that centers on trans, gender variant, and intersex (TGI) survivors of prisons, jails, and detention centers, especially low-income trans women of color. TGI Justice recognizes and elevates the leadership of currently and formerly incarcerated TGI people and takes seriously the need to provide familial networks and resources for survival, resilience, and resistance. In addressing the growing reported number of trans women of color murdered each year, most of them Black trans women, Johnson and TGI Justice call on community members to share responsibility for ending transphobia and violence against Black trans women:



FIGURE 1.7. Miss Major Griffin-Gracy from *MAJOR!* (2015). Film still courtesy of Annalise Ophelian and StormMiguel Florez.

Eliminating transphobia, and stopping the violence perpetrated against Black trans women in particular, requires each of us to be daring enough to reflect on how we have all contributed to it, and to be mindful of how we have, whether we are aware of it or not, given rise to an environment in which transgender people are in danger doing everyday activities like walking down the street, going to work, or having a cup of coffee. It requires educators to begin teaching lessons on the history of transgender people, for legislators to take seriously their job to protect every single person they claim to represent, and for everyday people to intervene when witnessing violence against trans people.⁸

Also, TGI Justice has asked the city of San Francisco, where the group is based in the Tenderloin, to begin giving some of the profits it reaps from LGBT-related cultural life and tourism back to the low-income trans communities responsible for making the city an LGBT haven. Trans movement mother and Stonewall 1969 veteran Miss Major Griffin-Gracy, who was the former Executive Director of TGI Justice, continues her forty years of organizing for gender and racial liberation and prisoner justice—one relationship and one conversation at a time—at age seventy-six.

Chapters Ahead

Chapter 1, “Cultures: Performing Racial Trans Senses,” focuses on the aesthetics, cultural imaginings, and political potential of twenty-first-century trans Asian American multimedia performance. Yozmit’s trans performance of femininity plays with the body’s surfaces to deconstruct and rework binary cisgender and its relation to sex. Wu Tsang works across networked mediums and cultural economies to describe the tensions and affinities that enable trans solidarities in struggle. Zavé Martohardjono’s performances stage their queer racial nonbinary embodiment as a nexus of displaced diasporic transmissions shaped by multiple histories of colonization and cultural consumption. The chapter describes and theorizes racially trans embodied practices, which intervene in state and social regimes of sense that have sought to extinguish and control the multiplicity of Asian American genders. It explores connections between emerging trans Asian American cultures and more established queer and feminist cultural critiques and histories.

Chapter 2, “Networks: TRANScoding Biogenetics and Orgasm in the Transnational Digital Economy,” investigates the technological infrastructure that has networked different media, biological, and cultural forms in a transnational economy dominated by U.S. state capitalism. It focuses on the racially trans embodied digital art of Taiwan-born, gender queer digital nomad Cheang Shu Lea. In particular, the chapter engages with Cheang’s postporn digital film *I.K.U.* (2000), which is a rip-off of Ridley Scott’s analog film *Blade Runner* (1982), and *I.K.U.*’s sequel *UKI* (2009–14), a live video performance and online game. *I.K.U.* and *UKI* produce interactive experiences of the embodied racial, gendered, and sexed cultural labor that supports the digitally powered transnational economy.

Chapter 3, “Memory: The Times and Territories of Trans Woman of Color Becoming,” addresses the literary, popular, and political impact of Janet Mock’s first widely circulated trans woman of color memoir *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love and So Much More* (2014). The chapter discusses the potential interventions of popular literary memoir and memoir criticism on classed conceptions of literature in relationship to Mock’s ambivalent repurposing of memoir and other dominant forms of cultural representation. It highlights Mock’s embedding of her personal stories of trans self-realization within collective Black and Native Hawaiian cultural memory on the fortified Pacific and Atlantic borders of the U.S. state and national body.

Chapter 4, “Movement: Trans and Gender Nonconforming Digital Activisms and U.S. Transnational Empire,” assembles three modes of trans and gender nonconforming cultural activism using digital technologies in different countries and regions of the world. Johannesburg-based lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) human rights group Iranti-org uses digital media to document the intimate and state violence targeting Black South African gender nonconforming lesbians in Black townships. Bangkok-based Thai *kathoey* digital filmmaker Tanwarin Sukkhapsit produces independent and commercial films that feature *kathoey* storylines, characters, and actresses/actors. U.S. West Coast–based Latina queer transfemme media theorist, artist, and activist micha cárdenas mixes and repurposes digital media and virtual reality to address the survival needs and livelihoods of trans women of color and migrants of color in the Americas. Each of these trans and gender nonconforming activists exploit digital technologies against their dominant uses to intervene in transnational expansions of U.S. governance and finance, Hollywood, and state violence.

The concluding chapter, “Trans Voice in the House,” revisits undocumented Chicanx/Latinx trans organizer Jennicet Gutiérrez’s interruption of then president Barack Obama during his LGBT Pride speech at the White House in June 2015. As shown in the online YouTube videos documenting the event, Gutiérrez’s presence and voice called attention to the daily torture, detention, and deportation of trans women, most of whom are Latinx women from Mexico and Central America, while revealing the racial gender and sexual histories of embodiment and sense that shape differential relationships to public/private U.S. citizenship and state rule. The chapter discusses the Trump and prior administrations’ antimigrant policies and their fortification of the U.S.-Mexico and other national borders as attempts to control the multiple territories and identities that continue to survive and thrive within the colonial geographies of the Americas.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. See Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point* (2006).
2. I am referring, for instance, to Miss Major's more recent live talks at the book launch for *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility* (2017), edited by Tourmaline (Reina Gossett), Eric Stanley, and Johanna Burton, on February 2, 2018, at the New Museum in New York City and at her keynote screening of *MAJOR!* (2015) at the Queer Places, Practices, and Lives Symposium III at the Ohio State University in Columbus, on May 13, 2017.
3. This quote is drawn from *La Vida* (1966). A similar passage can be found in *Five Families* (1959): "In two of the families, the Gómez and the Gutiérrez, the wives have a great deal of influence and use it, although even here they show some subservience to their husbands. It is interesting that in one of these families the husband is impotent and in the other the husband has mild homosexual tendencies. This suggests that in the strongly male-oriented Mexican culture only men who are aging, impotent, homosexual, or "bewitched" are unable to carry out the authoritarian role of the husband" (Lewis 1959, 17).
4. My description draws from Susan Stryker's definition in *Transgender History* (2008) and Julia Serano's provisional and updated discussion in <http://juliaserano.blogspot.com/2014/12/julia-seranos-compendium-on-cisgender.html>, accessed April 24, 2018.
5. See BQIC Facebook page, accessed April 24, 2018, https://www.facebook.com/pg/blackqueercolumbus/about/?ref=page_internal; Black Pride 4 homepage, accessed April 24, 2018, <https://blackpride4.wordpress.com/>. See also Erica Thompson, "Community Feature: Black Pride 4 Inspire Community to Examine Pride, Protest and Police Response," *Columbus Alive*, June 28, 2017, <http://www.columbusalive.com/entertainment/20170628/community-feature-black-pride-4-inspire-community-to-examine-pride-protest-and-police-response>; Encarnacion Pyle, "Protesters Express Anger at Stonewall over Treatment, Pride Parade Arrest," *Columbus Dispatch*, July 18, 2017, <http://www.dispatch.com/news/20170718/protesters-express-anger-at-stonewall-over-treatment-pride-parade-arrest>.

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6. See the U.S. Department of Defense's website for information on the different regions of unified combatant command, accessed April 28, 2018, <https://www.defense.gov/>.

7. The post-9/11 moment has brought a renewed focus on social theorist Michel Foucault's notion of biopolitics in American academic and intellectual communities, especially with the publication of English translations of Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France from 1975 to 1979 in *"Society Must Be Defended"* (2003); *Security, Territory, Population* (2007); and *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2008). My discussion of Foucault's biopolitics focuses on his analysis of the security state, preceding his more systematic discussion of *governance* and *governmentality*. His public lectures on biopolitics coincide with his three print publications entitled *The History of Sexuality* (1978).

8. See Janetta Johnson and the TGI Justice family, "Expanding Black Trans Safety: An Open Letter to Our Beloved Community," TGI Justice, blog, March 13, 2017, <http://www.tgijp.org/blog/blacktranssafety>.

ONE. CULTURES

1. See Mel Baggs's blog for updates on hir activism and advocacy and hir self-description, accessed June 28, 2018, <https://ballastexistenz.wordpress.com/>. Baggs identifies as genderless and uses sie/hir, xe/xyr/xem, ze/zer/zem, ze/hir pronouns; accessed June 28, 2018, <https://genderneutralpronoun.wordpress.com/tag/sie-and-hir/>.

2. Also refer to the Autism Society's information and advocacy on DSM-5, accessed July 2, 2018, <http://www.autism-society.org/what-is/diagnosis/diagnostic-classifications/> and <http://www.autism-society.org/releases/autism-society-responds-to-approved-dsm-5-autism-definition/>.

3. See Lucas Crawford's discussion of this recoding of "gender identity disorder" to "gender dysphoria" in the DSM, which he has described as the lodging of gender affect in the "hermetically sealed interiors of the self, psyche, soul, or mind" (2015, 166).

4. See Eve Sedgwick's analysis of the depathologizing of homosexuality in the DSM and in psych-medical institutions as a redistribution of pathology toward gender variance in "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay" (1991).

5. Refer to Leti Volpp's vital work on the gendered cultural and political ramifications of anti-Asian policies and laws in "Divesting Citizenship" (2005) and other work.

6. For more in-depth discussions of the politics and aesthetics of mimesis within Western histories of modernity and enlightenment, see Walter Benjamin's "Doctrine of the Similar" (1933), Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (2002), Michael Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (1993), Homi Bhabha's "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse" (1994), and Rey Chow's "Sacrifice, Mimesis, and the Theorizing of Victimhood (A Speculative Essay)" (2006).

7. Zavé's website info: <http://zavemartohardjono.com/> for description of work and portfolio, as well as links to articles discussing their artwork and activism.

8. In *Stunning Males and Powerful Females: Gender and Tradition in East Javanese*