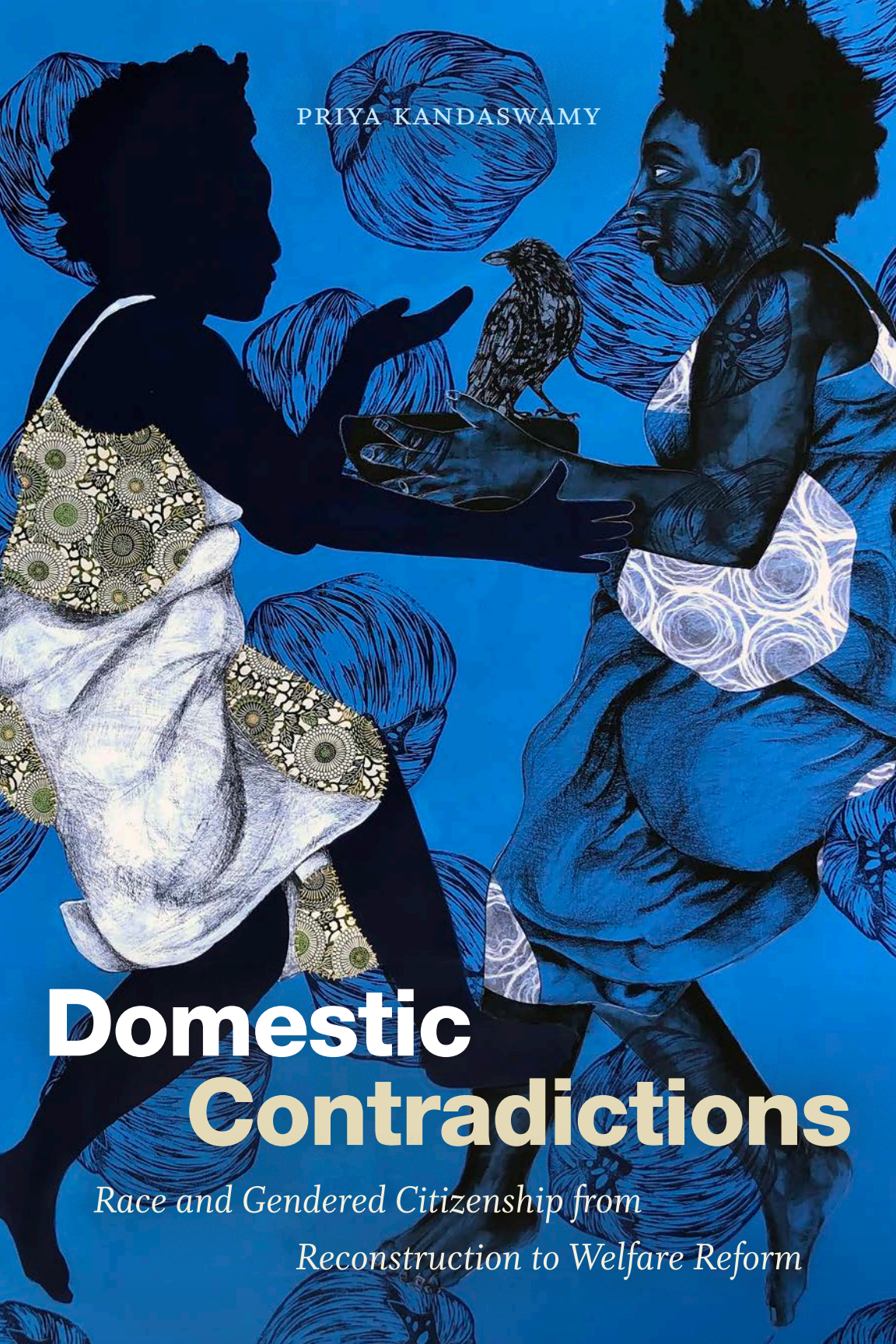

PRIYA KANDASWAMY

Domestic Contradictions

Race and Gendered Citizenship from Reconstruction to Welfare Reform

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ONE

Welfare Reform and the Afterlife of Slavery

> The central idea is that of the palimpsest—a parchment that has been inscribed two or three times, the previous text having been imperfectly erased and remaining therefore still partly visible. . . . The idea of the "new" structured through the "old" scrambled, palimpsestic character of time, both jettisons the truncated distance of linear time and dislodges the impulse for incommensurability, which the ideology of distance creates. It thus rescrambles the "here and now" and the "then and there" to a "here and there" and a "then and now," and makes visible what Payal Banerjee calls the ideological traffic between and among formations that are otherwise positioned as dissimilar.
>
> —**M. Jacqui Alexander**, *Pedagogies of Crossing* (2006)

On August 22, 1996, President Bill Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), concluding a protracted struggle to "end welfare as we know it."[1] A watershed moment in U.S. history, the law instituted the most dramatic transformation in the welfare state since the New Deal. It ended the federal entitlement to Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and replaced it with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), a state block grant program in which assistance would be time limited, contingent on work, and subject to a range of stricter eligibility requirements. At the signing, Lillie Harden, an African American single mother and former welfare recipient from North Little Rock, introduced President Clinton. Harden was one of only two Black women in a sea of white male politicians, and her story was deployed as evidence of the potential successes the new law might bear.[2] After she

was laid off from her job in the early 1980s, Harden had participated in Arkansas's Project Success, an experimental welfare-to-work program that served as a prototype for the federal law. She told the audience how the program had enabled her to leave the welfare rolls and begin work as a cook to support her family. Harden spoke of how leaving welfare and modeling hard work for her children led to their educational achievement, marriage, and familial stability, breaking what was often described by sociologists and policy makers as an intergenerational cycle of poverty.[3]

When Clinton took the stage, he described his first encounter with Harden at a governor's meeting on welfare-to-work programs ten years earlier. Clinton recounted their conversation as follows:

> I said, "Lillie, what's the best thing about being off welfare?" And she looked me straight in the eye and said, "When my boy goes to school, and they say what does your mama do for a living, he can give an answer." I have never forgotten that. And when I saw the success that she's had in the past 10 years—I can tell you, you've had a bigger impact on me than I've had on you. And I thank you for the power of your example, for your family's. And for all of America, thank you very much.[4]

Clinton went on to praise the new law as an opportunity for "overcoming the flaws of the welfare system for the people who are trapped on it," as a way of replacing "a never ending cycle of welfare" with "the dignity, the power, and the ethic of work." With these changes, he argued, welfare would from now on be as it was intended, "a second chance, not a way of life."[5] Echoing the public discourse about welfare reform that dominated the 1980s and 1990s, these comments situated welfare rather than economic inequality as the problem to be solved.[6] Welfare was seen not as an economic support for low-income families but rather as a barrier to economic advancement that fostered dependency and degraded family values. Escaping welfare was the key to both assimilation and freedom, and the clearest pathway out was through low-wage work.

Harden's presence at this historic moment signified not only her accomplishments but also the threat of what she might have become without the push to work, a threat most famously embodied in the mythical figure of the welfare queen. An invention of the Reagan era, the welfare queen was imagined as a Black woman who lived large off hardworking white taxpayers. She personified everything that was supposedly wrong with welfare. She had too much sex and too many children, consumed too much, and was pathologically dependent on the government to support these bad

habits, which she in turn passed to her children. A queer figure, the welfare queen was the racialized and gendered embodiment of the excesses associated with public assistance, a quintessential sign of what was wrong with big government. Despite a strategically color-blind language of welfare reform, Harden's own body communicated as much as the story that she told and that was told about her. Her welfare-to-work success story was significant because it demonstrated that the unruly dangers her Black female body posed to the nation could be domesticated through forced labor.

However, the positioning of Harden as an example for other similarly situated women also revealed significant tensions within the law itself. Notably, PRWORA first and foremost framed its mission as protecting and preserving the heteronormative family to protect and preserve the nation. The law opened with the proclamation that "marriage is the foundation of a successful society," its preamble is littered with references to the horrors of teenage pregnancy and female-headed households, and its passage was linked to a promise that restructuring the welfare system would restore the nation to its original family values.[7] This framing resonated strongly with a history of maternalist federal and local policies that organized welfare provision through the family wage and linked public assistance for women specifically to their work as mothers of future citizens. At the same time, this framing was also a poor fit for describing the changes that the law institutionalized. Certainly, marriage-promotion programs and penalties for teenage mothers were part of the law, and the law reinforced marriage as an institution simply in the ways that it punished single mothers. However, the strong emphasis on moving recipients from welfare to work diverged significantly from earlier social welfare policy that sought to protect women from the degradation of wage labor so that they could devote their time to raising future citizens. Rather, the "power of Harden's example" was in the reframing of good mothering for working-class women as not the work of raising children but rather the modeling of disciplined labor and economic self-sufficiency for future generations. In a society that frequently fixates on the need to protect and nurture an abstract figure of the child and despite the law's own obsessive rhetorical concern for the plight of children not in two-parent heteronormative households, it is notable that the implicit message of the policies enacted by the law is that impoverished children do not need care as much as they need role models in labor discipline.[8] The actual labor of mothering is not only not recognized but also rewritten as participation in the low-wage labor market. Highlighting the futures the law

imagines for these children and their mothers, George W. Bush underscored this point when he declared at the 2002 reauthorization of PRWORA that "a work requirement isn't punishment. A work requirement is part of liberation in our society."[9]

The signing of PRWORA took place on the White House lawn against the backdrop of American flags and a placard that read "A New Beginning: Welfare to Work." However, despite the continual framing of this moment as the start of something new, this book is interested in making visible the "seething presence" of the past at this particular historical juncture.[10] Following Avery Gordon's incitement to attend to ghosts, I examine how another story haunted this scene. This is a story about a fraught transition between slavery and freedom, about the paradoxes that have structured the meaning of Black women's citizenship since emancipation, and about how race, gender, and sexuality have been a persistent force in shaping the meaning of public assistance in the United States. Rather than view Black women's citizenship as incomplete or as a not yet fully realized version of white citizenship, I am interested in the theory of citizenship that emerges from Black women's experiences navigating the contradictions that have defined their subordinated position within the nation. To highlight this understanding of citizenship, this project reexamines the restructuring of the welfare state at the end of the twentieth century by juxtaposing the discourse about welfare reform with the conflicts that marked the Freedmen's Bureau's efforts to incorporate newly emancipated populations into the institutions of citizenship in the aftermath of the Civil War. The Freedmen's Bureau was established to restore social and economic order and mediate the transition from being property to being citizens for freedpeople. Like advocates of welfare reform, bureau officials addressed vast systemic inequalities through the promotion of individual responsibility. Like the threat posed by the welfare queen, the threat of vagrancy among freedpeople loomed large in the postemancipation national imagination and became a primary problem that bureau officials sought to address through both the promotion of marriage and forced labor.

The tensions between promoting marriage and forcing women to work that characterized welfare reform echoed this earlier moment in U.S. history in a way that M. Jacqui Alexander might call palimpsestic.[11] These resonances demonstrate the ways that the contradictions among a range of state interests are displaced onto Black women's bodies and the central role that the reform, surveillance, policing, and punishment of those bodies have played in producing the appearance of state power

as coherent despite its many fractures. Highlighting the ways that state efforts to promote marriage and enforce labor discipline in the late 1990s reiterated the dynamics of this earlier moment, I draw attention to important historical continuities in how sexual economy, racial liberalism, and national identity have been articulated in the spectacle of making Black women work outside of the home. Relocating the Freedmen's Bureau as a central institution in U.S. welfare history demonstrates the contradictory ways in which discourses of domesticity and forced labor converge in efforts to regulate Black women's bodies, thereby challenging the belief that women's citizenship has been defined primarily by domestic confinement and that the compulsion to work has been most strongly enforced on men.

While most feminist histories of the U.S. welfare state begin with the development of mothers' pensions during the Progressive Era, this project focuses on the Freedmen's Bureau because the anxieties and questions that were central to late twentieth-century debates about welfare policy resonate strongly with those that emerged in debates about the bureau.[12] For example, questions about how to make the newly emancipated into good citizen subjects and how to encourage them to enter particular kinds of low-wage work surfaced alongside and were often expressed in terms of deep anxieties about promoting dependency, giving aid to undeserving populations, cultivating the ideals of domesticity within the Black family, and expanding the reach of the federal government. As one of the first federal-level Americanization programs, the Freedmen's Bureau demonstrates how the desire to maintain Black subjugation despite formal emancipation was a driving force in the development of state practices that employed gendered discourses of domesticity to regulate Black workers. Although the Freedmen's Bureau did not specifically target single mothers and was not a direct institutional antecedent to AFDC in the same way that mothers' pensions were, examining the techniques of government employed by the Freedmen's Bureau in response to the crisis of Reconstruction offers important insights into the ways that state practices have both shaped and been shaped by a racialized-gendered understanding of domestic space.

In analyzing the linkages between these two historical moments and centering Black women's history with the welfare state, this book makes three significant contributions. First, by turning to the Reconstruction era, I argue for a rethinking of gendered citizenship as a modality of enforcing racial subjugation. I conceptualize citizenship as consisting of both an

imposed legal relationship that defines rights and obligations associated with belonging in the nation-state and a dynamic process through which the meaning of that legal relationship is negotiated and struggled over. While citizenship has often been thought of as securing universal membership within the nation, this project views citizenship as a technology for producing differentiated state subjects. What citizenship has meant in practice for different groups has varied tremendously. These differences, however, are often understood as exclusions from citizenship or signs of a promise that has not yet been fully realized. In contrast, this project challenges progressive, liberal narratives that position full citizenship at the end of a path toward equality for marginalized groups by engaging with the ways that citizenship functions as a vehicle for domination. Rather than viewing the newly emancipated as excluded from full citizenship, this project highlights the ways that legal inclusion into citizenship reiterated their subordination and curtailed the ways that they could practice freedom. Similarly, the targeting of Black women as welfare queens focused on their perceived failures to live up to citizenship ideals and the demand that they be held accountable by enforcing an obligation to work that was not imposed on other citizens. Attention to these differentiated ways that citizenship functions challenges liberal beliefs that citizenship could be universal if particular barriers were overcome. This project instead argues for a relational understanding of citizenship in which the meanings of citizenship are defined not just against those who are not citizens but also through constructed differences within the category of citizenship.[13]

Throughout the book I show how gender plays a fundamental role in naturalizing unequal forms of citizenship. More traditional engagements with gendered citizenship have focused on how the rights and obligations of citizenship have been stratified along gender lines, drawing attention to the inequalities between masculine and feminine constructions of citizenship. For example, dominant feminist histories emphasize the role that maternalist social movements played in laying the foundation for a bifurcated welfare state that defined benefits for male workers as entitlements and benefits for dependent mothers as charity.[14] These historical accounts describe the ways that Progressive Era maternalists' deployment of a discourse of domesticity that exalted motherhood and emphasized women's natural difference from men worked to forge a pathway for women into the state while simultaneously institutionalizing principles of gendered citizenship that reproduced their subordination. While many scholars have shown how maternalism was not simply a gendered project but rather was deeply

engaged in the production of racial hierarchies, my project takes a different approach by turning to another historical moment altogether.[15] Situating the Freedmen's Bureau within feminist welfare history identifies the experiences of Black women with state regulation and coercion as a central thread in the development of social welfare programs and thereby challenges the assumption that the dominant thematics that define women's relationship to the domestic sphere and to the welfare state are inclusion, protection, maintenance of the family wage, and the cultivation of idealized motherhood.

By turning to the Freedmen's Bureau, *Domestic Contradictions* posits an alternative way of theorizing gendered citizenship as grounded in, rather than separable from, social relations of race and class. By mapping roles associated with the heteropatriarchal family onto membership within the nation-state, gendered constructions of citizenship naturalized a hierarchical ordering of difference. While this secured the subordination of women and children to men, gender also became a reference point for naturalizing other hierarchies.[16] Because normative gender was white, gender embedded race into citizenship in ways that persisted long after explicit racial exclusions were lifted. Entering institutions of citizenship entailed demonstrating one's deservingness by performing normative gender roles. However, Black people often found that regardless of their performance, their Blackness persistently marked them as deficient in some way. For Black women, gendered citizenship required embodying a femininity that was often in stark contradiction with the requirement that they work outside the home and with the sexualized meanings ascribed to Blackness. Because Black people were denied reparations for slavery, a family wage, the right to privacy, the right to familial autonomy, and any form of state support, heteropatriarchal gender roles were materially difficult for them to achieve. As a result, gendered citizenship worked to situate Black women as perpetually deficient and undeserving in ways that rationalized a wide range of reform and surveillance projects. Notably, these projects expanded and transformed state apparatuses by constituting gender as a terrain of cultural reform and obscuring the material supports that enabled white citizens to more easily achieve heteropatriarchal ideals of the family. In this context, figures like the domestic worker during the Reconstruction era and the workfare worker in the late twentieth century emerged as alternate tropes of gendered citizenship for Black women. While these figures remained entrenched in the cultural language of domesticity and motherhood, they simultaneously justified austerity toward Black families

and demanded that Black women direct their labor away from their own children and communities.

The second contribution this project makes by turning to the Freedmen's Bureau is to build on and elaborate feminist theorizations of how domestic space has been constituted in the history of the U.S. welfare state. Within dominant feminist histories of the welfare state, the point is often made that maternalists both transcended the boundaries of the domestic sphere by making political demands on the state and reinscribed those boundaries by asserting motherhood and care of the home as women's natural vocation.[17] This argument rests on a conception of domestic space as the singular, static, internal, and private space of the familial home, a gendered sphere of confinement that entrance into politics necessarily transcends, even when domesticity is itself constructed as the basis for political power. Throughout the chapters that follow, I argue that this limited way of thinking about domestic space derives from a methodology that assumes the domestic to be simply a gendered construction through which men dominate women. In contrast to the white female subjects of histories of maternalism, Black feminist scholarship highlights that the domestic lives of Black women have rarely been private. Rather, as was clearly demonstrated in the display of Harden's personal life at the PRWORA signing, the domestic sphere that Black women inhabit is often a highly visible space that is the subject of public debate and state surveillance. Given that domestic spaces are constructed differently for differently racialized populations, the question of theoretical importance becomes not how to transcend the boundaries of domesticity but rather how power operates in the production of different kinds of domestic space for differently racialized and gendered subjects.

Throughout this book I engage the ways that the concept of domesticity and the spaces associated with it simultaneously invoke three interrelated meanings of the term *domestic*, all of which have been operative in the building of the U.S. welfare state. In its first sense, *the domestic* signifies the internal realm of the nation. Managing the poor, regulating racialized populations, and ensuring national well-being are major functions of welfare institutions and key components of *domestic policy*. In its second sense, *the domestic* signifies the internal realm of the household, and welfare apparatuses have often focused their attention on the regulation of family life in the *domestic sphere* as a means of addressing poverty and social upheaval.[18] Finally, the term *domestic* also references the *domestic worker*, whose labor

is a precondition for the production of both of the above spaces.[19] Historically, the practices of welfare institutions have prioritized ensuring not only that some women perform domestic labor in their own homes but that other women remain available as a low-wage reproductive labor force. While these three meanings of *the domestic* are usually separated in common parlance, drawing attention to their interconnectedness reveals the reciprocal processes through which the making of the state and the making of families have historically been intertwined. Looking at these three connotations of *the domestic* together highlights how the language of domesticity, often invoked in efforts to build and transform welfare institutions, produced and reproduced overlapping meanings of the home as a simultaneously national place, familial place, and workplace.[20]

Grounding my analysis in Black feminist engagements with domesticity and the related concepts of privacy, surveillance, and gendered labor, I am particularly interested in how these multiple meanings of *the domestic* link racial subordination to differential access to a private sphere. As discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the home has been a central site of struggle for Black women. Although frequently denied privacy and surveilled within the home, Black women have also constructed home spaces as important sites of abolitionist practice. In addition, while frequently demonized in public discourse as bad mothers and irresponsible homemakers, Black women have also been expected to care for white children and maintain white homes as domestic workers. Taking into account these different registers of meaning, I argue for a more situated concept of domesticity. I do this by looking at how ideas of domestic space have been invoked in moments of crisis in order to further various state-building projects and at how these state practices simultaneously produce and regulate norms around the family in their efforts to secure racial and gendered hierarchies. By turning to the case of the Freedmen's Bureau to illustrate the contradictory ways discourses of domesticity were employed in efforts to regulate newly emancipated people in the Reconstruction South, I hope to suggest an alternative genealogy of domesticity that is grounded in Black women's experiences. I am interested in highlighting how attention to the postemancipation moment might enable a more nuanced reading of gendered stratification within the U.S. welfare state as a simultaneously racialized process.

Finally, through a grounded analysis of the Freedmen's Bureau's and PRWORA's efforts to promote marriage and forced labor, this project dem-

onstrates the multiple ways in which state power and the heteronormative family are mutually constitutive. As demonstrated in the next chapter, these two historical moments offer powerful examples of how the state produces the heteronormative family as a seemingly natural organization of kinship and how naturalized ideas of the family simultaneously reinforce state power. In highlighting a reciprocal relationship between the making of state power and the making of heteronormativity, my analysis brings a queer approach to the history of the welfare state and points to the ways that destabilizing heteronormativity potentially destabilizes state power as well. Inspired by Cathy Cohen's conception of queer as a potentially coalitional category and her specific naming of the welfare queen as a queer figure, this project makes visible the multiple structures of domination that are articulated through the welfare state's emphasis on heteronormativity.[21] In the chapters that follow, I explore how constructions like the vagrant and the welfare queen in their refusals of settlement, marriage, conventional gender roles, and contractual forms of labor point toward queer possibilities that have been marginalized by a heteronormative vision of history. In doing so, I hope to also queer history by adopting methods and analyses that denaturalize liberal narratives of progress that tie history to the nation-state.

Throughout the project I approach the heteronormative family as itself a particularly dense site for the articulation of race, gender, sexuality, and class and show how discourses about domesticity and family values enabled the state to navigate multiple, sometimes contradictory investments in structures of domination while still appearing to be a coherent, unified entity. In the context of welfare policy, I argue the family has functioned simultaneously as the basis for rights claims and as a mechanism for the privatization of responsibility. The examples engaged throughout this book show that this dual meaning of the family in political discourse has been foundational to the development of racialized and gendered stratification within the welfare state. While the next chapter elaborates my theoretical arguments about state power, in what remains of this chapter, I provide a brief overview of the historical context of the Freedmen's Bureau to illustrate its continued relevance to U.S. welfare state history. After providing a general discussion of the bureau's history, I turn more specifically to the role that marriage and forced labor played in the bureau's efforts to make freedpeople into citizens and to the methodological approaches that inform my research.

The Freedmen's Bureau and the Management of Citizenship

As one of the first federal welfare institutions, the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands was charged with reinstating order and reestablishing federal authority in the aftermath of the Civil War. The formal end of slavery had produced a profound crisis not only in the racialized economic system of production in the South but also in the very meaning of citizenship, national identity, and the concept of freedom itself. While certainly not the only actor in the struggles that ensued, the Freedmen's Bureau was an important arena in which struggles to redefine these terms took place and, even in its brief existence, had a lasting impact on how racial subjugation and the ideas of citizenship, nationhood, and freedom that accompanied it were reinvented. A highly controversial institution in its time, the bureau potentially represented a dramatic expansion of federal power to intervene on behalf of freedpeople in southern states. This potential, however, was quickly curtailed by the bureau's temporary status and limited funding. Using remarkably similar rhetoric to the antiwelfare discourse of the late twentieth century, critics of the bureau painted it as an example of a federal government that was overreaching its constitutional bounds to redistribute resources to lazy and undeserving Black people at the expense of hardworking white taxpayers. These thinly veiled racist attacks on the bureau, along with bureau officials' own narrow understandings of what constituted freedom for the recently emancipated, structured much of the work in which the bureau engaged. As a result, claims to land redistribution and guarantees of political equality receded just as struggles to enforce labor discipline and normative family structure took center stage. More than a century later, efforts to restructure the welfare system would focus on anxieties about work and marriage rather than racialized economic inequality in a way that bore a striking resemblance to these attempts to control the transition from slavery to freedom.

Emancipation was simultaneously a moment of crisis in the existing social order and an opportunity for a different kind of life for people of African descent in the United States. However, freedom was not simply an abstract and universal state of being that the formerly enslaved entered after emancipation. Rather, the meaning of freedom had been constructed out of particular social relations, and as those social relations were transformed, the construct of freedom became a site of struggle. As Orlando Patterson argues, liberal ideas of freedom gained their meaning in and

through slavery, defined as a social relation of domination characterized by the slave's social death and dishonored status.[22] In centering social death in the definition of slavery, Patterson highlights how slavery was more than a labor relation. Enslaved people were stripped of kinship and could not engage independently in legally recognized relationships with others. Therefore, after emancipation, state recognition and regulation of kinship became central to efforts to make freedpeople into potential citizens. However, while legal recognition of kinship offered protections for freedpeople in theory, the use of heteropatriarchal marriage as the hegemonic mechanism of defining kinship simultaneously narrowed the possible ways that freedom could be practiced and articulated citizenship to gender and sexual norms that were racialized as white.[23]

In the United States, slavery was constituted as a racial system, with Blackness coming to be both the legal and social marker of enslavability.[24] While emancipation brought the legal institution of slavery to an end, it did not undo the "fatal couplings of power and difference" that had legitimated the practice of slavery.[25] This was most evident in the way that the question of whether Black people possessed the capacity to be citizens animated Reconstruction policy. From the more explicitly racist conviction that Blackness signified an inherent deficiency in character to the more liberal position that the dehumanizing effects of slavery had trapped Black people in an immature state, the lingering association of Blackness with enslavability tarnished their capacity to be full citizens in the eyes of most white people. Notably, these racial anxieties were frequently articulated in the language of gender and sexuality. To become a citizen meant to adopt the heteronormative gender roles associated with citizenship, such as masculine independence and feminine dependency. As discussed throughout the following chapters, Blackness, with its associations with sexual and gender deviancy, presented a persistent barrier to this kind of assimilation.

Ultimately, because citizenship and freedom had been defined against slavery and Blackness had come to be the primary marker of slave status, emancipation presented something of a contradiction. What did it mean to be both Black and formally free when freedom had in many ways gained its meaning in opposition to Black existence? In the years following the Civil War, Black and white people grappled with this question both in their everyday practices and in their efforts to shape federal policy. Black communities crafted their own definitions of freedom that emphasized the importance of landownership, autonomy from whites, freedom of mobility, and the enjoyment of their lives, all of which had been denied them

under slavery.[26] In practice, freedom was exercised in a multiplicity of ways. Among other things, freedpeople fought for the right to settle and cultivate their own lands, for greater community power through the vote, and for the right to move freely in search of family members they had been forcibly separated from or better prospects for their futures.[27] For freedwomen, freedom also offered the possibility of no longer working in the fields and instead directing their labor exclusively toward their own communities and families. While, as discussed in chapter 4, white onlookers often understood this practice as laziness or an ostentatious effort to "play the lady," these efforts represented an important challenge to the reproductive economy of slavery that had denied Black women access to ties with their children specifically and to the fruits of their reproductive labor more generally.[28] In addition, as Tera Hunter notes, freedpeople's visions of freedom were fundamentally structured by the desire to own one's own body; for Black women, the context of the sexual violence that had pervaded slavery made claims to control over and pleasure in one's own body all that much more significant.[29]

While in the short term Black communities realized some aspects of this broad vision of freedom, over time the terms of Black freedom became increasingly constrained. As W. E. B. Du Bois wrote of Reconstruction, "The slave went free; stood for a brief moment in the sun; then moved back again toward slavery."[30] The Freedmen's Bureau played a key role in shaping this transition, and the interconnected rubrics of free labor and domesticity were key elements through which the meaning of freedom was rearticulated. The Freedmen's Bureau had its origins in freedmen's aid societies, nongovernmental organizations founded to assist the newly emancipated. In response to the scale and scope of the social and economic crises that the Civil War wrought, Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau in March 1865 as a temporary division of the War Department with Major General Oliver Otis Howard as its first commissioner. The bureau was initially authorized to operate for one year and was allocated no specific funding. Eventually, its lifetime was extended to six years, and some federal funds were designated to support its operations. The bureau's temporary status and its location in the War Department reflected concerns about the potentially negative effects of federal paternalism toward freedpeople. These concerns were most frequently expressed as a belief that federal assistance to freedpeople would undermine their work ethic and as an anxiety that the bureau potentially represented an overreach of federal powers in relation to individual states. These institutional limitations were

a serious challenge for bureau officials and had a profound effect on the way the bureau approached its mission. Because it initially had no independent funding, the bureau was highly dependent on the War Department. Its position within the War Department defined the bureau as a temporary military operation rather than a large-scale effort at redistribution or even relief provision. In addition, as part of the War Department, the bureau was subject to presidential oversight and control, a factor that proved to be a serious impediment during the Johnson administration.[31]

The bureau was charged with reestablishing order in the South and shepherding the transition out of slavery for freedpeople. What this actually meant, however, remained an area of great struggle over the course of the institution's life. The bureau's responsibilities included introducing a free labor system to the South, registering marriages, establishing schools, providing aid to the destitute, adjudicating disputes, and ensuring fair legal proceedings for freedpeople. While its formal title suggested that managing abandoned lands was within its purview, the question of land redistribution haunted the bureau's efforts. Freedpeople expected that the bureau would provide them with land, a promise that was never fulfilled. Initially, General Howard tried to allocate some confiscated Confederate lands to freedpeople, but these efforts were ultimately undermined by President Andrew Johnson's restoration of most Confederate land to its former owners. Johnson's vision of Reconstruction greatly undermined the potentially redistributive impacts of the bureau. Johnson not only vehemently opposed federal guarantees of rights for freedpeople but also sought to secure his own reelection by procuring favor with impoverished whites in the South while pardoning much of the Confederate elite. Johnson favored the quick reintegration of southern states into the union and supported southern states in their creation of Black Codes that excluded Black people from political participation, curtailed their mobility, confined them to highly exploitative labor conditions, and denied them basic civil rights. Johnson's overt racism combined with his direct oversight of the bureau curtailed the scope of bureau activities and set the South on a path toward Reconstruction that did not include a transformation in the racial order.

In February 1866, at the close of the bureau's first year, President Johnson vetoed a bill to extend the bureau's life. Johnson cited many of the same themes that would animate antiwelfare discourse in the late twentieth century as the rationale for his veto. These themes included the necessity for fiscal conservatism, fear at the prospect of a growing federal bureaucracy that might prove an obstacle to individual rights, and an

insistence that self-help, not federal assistance, was the key to freedpeople's economic advancement.[32] Johnson argued that with the end of the war, an institution like the bureau was unconstitutional because it exceeded the legitimate peacetime powers of the federal government. In a twist of logic, he reframed the bureau as a threat to rather than a protector of civil rights. According to Johnson, for white citizens, the expansion of federal power threatened individual liberty. For freedpeople, however, the threat to freedom lay in pauperization. Johnson argued that the bureau would simply replace slaveholders as a new kind of master, thereby undermining the independence and self-sufficiency that characterized freedom. In Johnson's eyes, emancipation was over, and protection from the federal government was contrary to the ideals of freedom. Instead, freedpeople needed to work and support themselves without public assistance.[33] A direct assault on freedpeople's claims to reparations and land redistribution, Johnson's position reframed any form of federal assistance or intervention as a threat to the freedom and character of freedpeople.

However, just as Johnson was trying to dismantle the bureau, the proliferation of Black Codes and racial violence in the South that Johnson had sanctioned also produced an increased demand for federal intervention on behalf of Black people, both by freedpeople themselves and by Radical Republicans in the North. After much political struggle, the life of the bureau was extended in the summer of 1866, with Congress overriding Johnson's veto. At this point, Congress also allocated some funding to the bureau as part of an effort to exert more congressional power over Reconstruction. Radical Republicans supported a stronger role for the federal government in the protection of the rights of freedpeople. However, their vision of Reconstruction also excluded land redistribution, focusing instead on Reconstruction as a civic project. Grounded in a strong belief in free labor ideology and their own political objectives of Republicanizing the South, Radical Republicans saw the bureau as a tool for achieving civil and political equality. They sought to create a strong national state that would guarantee Black suffrage, civil rights, and equal economic opportunity within the confines of a free labor economy.[34] While in many ways Radical Republicans were more sympathetic to the plight of freedpeople than Johnson was, they also did not see the bureau's mission as redistributive and believed that public assistance was contrary to the goal of cultivating Republican ideals of citizenship. During the period of increased congressional control, the relief-provision activities of the bureau actually declined dramatically. As time passed, the bureau's mission became understood as less about ameliorating

the effects of the economic devastation the war had wrought and more about cultivating economic independence and putting freedpeople back to work. The categories of people who were seen as deserving of assistance shrank dramatically, and by October 1866 only orphans, the elderly, the disabled, the sick, and family members of a Union solder remained eligible for bureau aid.[35]

The Freedmen's Bureau was a site of great conflict over the entirety of its life. Anxieties that the bureau paved the way for excessive federal power while providing special privileges to freedpeople at the expense of white taxpayers dramatically limited the scope of its activities. The bureau was always intended to be a temporary institution, and no permanent, free-standing institution was ever created to address the lasting injustices of slavery. When the bureau's operations ceased in 1872, Reconstruction remained incomplete. The growing power of the Ku Klux Klan in the South, the system of Black Codes designed to keep Black labor in its place, and the ascendancy of a sharecropping system signified that Reconstruction would give way to the reinvented regime of racial terror that was the Jim Crow South. Scholars from W. E. B. Du Bois to Angela Davis have noted the lasting consequences of Reconstruction's failures. The proliferation of Black Codes throughout the South rendered Black people criminals who through chain gangs and convict lease systems were put back to work in slavery-like conditions. Jim Crow segregation denied Black people access to public spaces and to the political and civil rights they had gained in the period immediately after the Civil War, thereby entrenching a racial dictatorship that would not be undone until the civil rights movement.[36] While connections have been made between the failed project of Reconstruction and the development of the modern criminal justice system or the persistence of racial segregation into the contemporary period, less attention has been paid to the ways that anxieties from the Reconstruction era continue to shape how public assistance is conceptualized.

While the bureau had many successes, most notably supporting the formation of public schools for Black communities in the South, and many freedpeople were able to use the service offered by the bureau to their own advantage, for histories of the welfare state the bureau is an early and powerful example of the ways the articulations of anti-Black racism and hegemonic constructions of gender and sexuality operated to eclipse class solidarity and undermine potentially redistributive practices. This project focuses specifically on two practices of the bureau that illustrate these articulations of race, gender, and sexuality particularly well, the promotion

of both marriage and contractual labor relations. Relief provision was by far the most controversial part of the bureau's mission, and much like in the case of welfare reform, marriage and forced labor emerged as two primary strategies for enforcing state austerity. While the Freedmen's Bureau had little choice but to provide federal relief to the formerly enslaved given the devastation and massive dislocation produced by the war, this practice provoked anxieties about the possibilities of creating a class of people permanently dependent on government support. The idea that providing material assistance to Black people would promote "pauperization" and "demoralization" surfaced repeatedly in debates about the Freedmen's Bureau.[37] Based on the idea that real freedom required self-sufficiency and adherence to a masculine ideal of independence, the Freedmen's Bureau asserted that "no greater harm can be done to the negro, than supporting those who can support themselves."[38] Prefiguring twentieth-century neoliberal discourse about welfare reform, the Freedmen's Bureau defined its purpose as not to "create a race of paupers or to encourage idleness" but rather, as the Virginia Freedmen's Bureau's assistant commissioner, Orlando Brown, argued, "to make the Freedmen into a self-supporting class of free laborers, who shall understand the necessity of steady employment and the responsibility of providing for themselves and [their] families."[39]

Marriage figured centrally in bureau efforts to transform freedpeople into properly gendered citizens who were organized into self-sufficient households. Drawing on strains of abolitionist discourse that located the primary ills of slavery in the denial of the right to marriage, bureau officials emphasized the civilizing functions of marriage and saw entrance into the institution as a fundamental precondition of citizenship. As discussed in greater detail in chapter 3, bureau officers did far more than simply issue marriage certificates. They actively promoted marriage among freedpeople as part of their efforts to stamp out practices like living together, having multiple sexual relationships, and organizing kinship in ways that did not neatly align with the heteropatriarchal nuclear family. Bureau officials used marriage as a means of promoting both sexual discipline and stable, settled, self-sufficient household economies. They frequently held people to the legal terms of marriage and strongly encouraged freedpeople to take up the gendered roles and responsibilities associated with marriage, as these were intimately connected to gendered constructions of citizenship. Bureau officials strongly emphasized the need for freedmen to be independent heads of households who could provide for their dependents. In this way, marriage rationalized austerity and displaced claims for reparations

by locating the blame for freedpeople's economic hardships not in the legacy of slavery but rather within the Black family. In sharp contrast to the welfare programs of the Progressive Era and New Deal, which invested resources in sustaining white families, marriage emerged as a mechanism of privatizing responsibility for Black communities' well-being. These practices sowed the seeds for the continued use of marriage as a scaffolding for the construction of a racially stratified welfare state in the twentieth century.

In addition to promoting marriage, the bureau also saw cultivating labor discipline as a key mechanism of promoting self-sufficiency. The bureau was charged with overseeing the transition to a free labor system in the South. As the possibilities for land redistribution were eclipsed, this increasingly meant that freedpeople were expected to enter contractual labor arrangements with white employers, often on the same plantations or under similar conditions to those in which they had been enslaved. The bureau encouraged entry into long-term labor contracts and supervised the execution of these contracts in southern states; coupled with vagrancy laws, the labor contract emerged as a key mechanism through which freedom became characterized by disciplined and responsible labor. Bureau officers emphasized the need for freedpeople to demonstrate their deservingness of freedom by showing the nation that they could abide by contracts and, in doing so, implicitly defined meaningful work as work that was visible, measurable, and controlled by white employers. Eliminating vagrancy—characterized as one of slavery's lingering effects—was central to the mission of the bureau, and cultivating freedom came to be defined as cultivating the self-disciplined worker who abided by a contract.

Despite the bureau's emphasis on marriage and the cultivation of gendered ideas of citizenship that emphasized female dependency and domestic confinement, bureau officers expected freedwomen to enter into labor contracts. This presented fundamental contradictions for freedwomen. On the one hand, they were expected to conform to feminine ideals of citizenship. On the other hand, when freedwomen attempted to redirect their labor toward their own families, they were accused of vagrancy or "playing the lady." Chapter 4 explores the role that domestic labor played in mediating these gendered contradictions. While the vast majority of labor contracts the bureau supervised were agricultural, the bureau also directed freedwomen to take up domestic work in white homes by enforcing domestic workers' contracts, creating industrial schools to train freedwomen in domestic skills, and transporting freedwomen north to regions where there

was a high demand for domestic workers. Relatively neglected in the history of the bureau, the experiences of domestic workers both complicate liberal constructions of contractual freedom by drawing attention to the gendered nature of contracts and demonstrate how for Black women the subordinated domestic worker rather than the mother became a model of idealized feminine citizenship.

The bureau's emphasis on marriage and work reflected norms of gendered citizenship and beliefs that were shared by both its opponents and its supporters. While there was a vast range of political opinion among white people about the work of the Freedmen's Bureau, this project is primarily interested in the gendered definition of normative citizenship that these perspectives shared. As Katherine Franke has pointed out, "African Americans did not enter civil society on their own terms and accompanied by their own values, but rather did so on the non-negotiable terms set by the dominant culture."[40] Regardless of white people's position on the bureau, a central tenet of white political discourse was that freedpeople needed to adapt to dominant constructions of citizenship that fundamentally excluded them and not the other way around. While Radical Republicans and southern planters may have disagreed about freedpeople's capacities to assimilate to dominant norms, they both maintained the value of norms that had been constructed through white supremacist logics. In the eyes of the nation, if freedpeople were unsuccessful at becoming citizens, it would be because they themselves had failed, not because of the impossibility of the standards to which they were held.

Heteronormativity functioned as a linchpin of the nonnegotiable terms of citizenship in that it linked labor discipline, sexual discipline, and state austerity through the construct of the self-sufficient and stable household. The push toward both marriage and contractual labor relations can also be understood as a mechanism by which claims to redistribution and reparation were made unintelligible by relocating responsibility in the aftermath of slavery onto the shoulders of freedpeople themselves. This was a fundamental part of what Saidiya Hartman describes as the transition from "the pained and minimally sensate existence of the slave to the burdened individuality of the responsible and encumbered freedperson."[41] As Hartman argues, the emphasis on responsibility as the hallmark of liberal individuality erased the nation's responsibility for addressing the violence of slavery and the continued marginalization of Black people and instead required that freedpeople continually demonstrate their deservingness of freedom.[42] To be free came to mean to be responsible for oneself; in the words

of Hartman, "fundamentally, to be responsible was to be blameworthy."[43] In this way, race structured the balance between citizenship's rights and responsibilities. White citizenship entitled one to liberties, protections, and material benefits, whereas Black citizenship was primarily understood as a question of fulfilling obligations and demonstrating deservingness. In interrogating the practices of the Freedmen's Bureau, this project argues that the heteronormative family has been a central mechanism for elaborating this racialized structure of citizenship.

Between Reconstruction and Welfare Reform

My objective in this project is not simply to revise already existing histories of the U.S. welfare state. Instead, in centering struggles over the meaning of citizenship for Black women, I seek to shrink the ideological distance between historical moments in order to illustrate how the unresolved problematic of incorporating Black people into institutions of citizenship that were constitutively defined against Blackness continued to haunt welfare politics in the late twentieth century. In thinking about the persistence of Black inequality in the United States, mainstream scholarship has adopted one of two stances. Scholars either locate the source of continued inequality in Black culture itself or suggest that social reforms to remedy racism have not gone far enough. In contrast, this project interrogates the construction of citizenship itself as a limit on the possibility of equality and freedom. As such, I do not so much look at how groups have been excluded from citizenship but instead seek to complicate the dichotomy between exclusion and inclusion.

The hegemonic narrative that casts slavery as in the past and the post–civil rights United States as a postracial society produces an ideological distance between the conflicts and contradictions that structured emancipation and the neoliberal restructuring of the U.S. welfare state at the end of the twentieth century. Building on an understanding of history that takes seriously how what Avery Gordon calls haunting troubles linear ideas of progress, this project draws attention to continuities in how anti-Black racism structures U.S. ideas of citizenship and belonging from Reconstruction into the present.[44] In particular, turning to the Reconstruction era suggests some of the ways that anti-Black racism inheres in the terms of liberal and neoliberal discourse and makes visible the racial history of what is often seen as a race-neutral vocabulary of citizenship. In addition to

targeting Black women, welfare reform was an attack on immigrants, teenage parents, and in reality the entire working class. This project highlights both the specificity and expansiveness of anti-Black racism by showing how the racialized and gendered discourses about citizenship that developed in the postemancipatory moment were employed to cast an increasingly wide net of social stratification in the U.S. welfare state.

The analytic framework of this book is deeply indebted to M. Jacqui Alexander's use of the palimpsest as a metaphor for rethinking the relationship between historical moments. Alexander argues that modernity relies on a linear conception of time in order to produce an artificial division between the "then and there" and the "here and now."[45] These divisions construct present and past as mutually exclusive and locate racial difference as of a different space and time. Tied to the dichotomous construction of tradition and modernity that Alexander critiques, the idea of progress naturalizes a particular organization of space and time in which the West constructs itself as more advanced or forward in time compared to a Third World that is rendered as traditional, backward, and of the past. As discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, heteronormativity, a key signifier of civilization, plays an integral role in locating different racialized groups within this linear trajectory. In invoking the palimpsest, Alexander develops a methodological approach that "scrambles" hegemonic constructions of space and time in order to reveal the interconnectedness of historical moments and locations that are usually understood as distinct. By juxtaposing seemingly disparate events, this method highlights the imperfect erasures of racialized and gendered violence that link seemingly separate historical moments.[46]

In the U.S. context, slavery often functioned as the "then and there" of national history against which the "here and now" of multicultural, colorblind democracy of the late twentieth century was contrasted. For the United States to define itself as a modern, progressive global force, slavery had to be understood as a closed chapter in the nation's history. Both U.S. imperial projects abroad and domestic forms of settler colonialism and racial violence rely on a liberal narrative of racial progress that consigns slavery to a past that is over and done with, an artifact of a backward southern economy that was overcome by federal intervention and the modernizing forces of northern industry. In contrast, emancipation, understood as a monumental event in a march toward increasing equality, represents a victory of liberal democratic ideals over a tarnished past. This understanding rewrites national history such that slavery is represented as inconsistent with the nation's constitutional values, and emancipation is seen as a step toward

actualizing the founding vision of a nation built on freedom, equality, and democracy. This historical narrative not only obscures slavery's continued centrality to the building of the U.S. nation but also naturalizes a linear idea of progress that places racism in the past. Rather than seeing emancipation as the end of slavery, it is better understood as a transition between different modes of subjection or as marking the beginning of what Hartman calls the "afterlife of slavery." Hartman describes the afterlife of slavery as the continued effects of the "ranking of life" that slavery instituted, "skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment."[47] These effects are understood not just as a legacy of slavery but rather as a continuing system of anti-Black racism grounded in the same systems of knowledge and power that enabled slavery. The afterlife of slavery is an ongoing production, and this book highlights welfare policy as one significant site in that production.

This project is particularly concerned with the role the heteronormative family plays in the afterlife of slavery. Notably, there has been a sociological and political fixation on the Black family in efforts to understand the persistence of Black inequality in the United States. Surfacing both in Reconstruction-era debates about Black people's capacity for citizenship and in late twentieth-century efforts to explain Black economic inequality, discourses about the dysfunctionality of the Black family have a central place in public discussion of racial difference. Liberals of both these periods held that one of slavery's primary harms was that it kept Black people from developing heteronormative families; they argued that nonnormative Black genders and sexualities were signs of the damage that slavery had wrought on the Black psyche. Seen as backward compared to the dichotomously gendered, liberal, free subject, Black nonnormative genders and sexualities became a sign of Black bodies' former enslavability. Structural inequality attached itself to the Black body and became understood not as an external oppressive force but rather as inhering within the body itself, most notably in the ways that gender and sexuality were embodied. In this way, the Black body can be seen as a kind of palimpsest inasmuch as the imperfect erasures of the slavery system shape how that body is read within the dominant consciousness. For example, the image of the welfare queen reiterated the optics of slavery and its immediate aftermath in its construction of Black female welfare recipients as overly sexual, emasculating, unfeminine, undisciplined, and needing to be controlled. Indeed, both Reconstruction-era discourse and the assault on the welfare system in the late twentieth century consistently pathologized individuals for trying

to survive amid tremendous structural violence, and this pathologization was most frequently articulated in the language of gender and sexuality. In both cases, heteronormativity functioned as a way of privatizing inequality and reiterating individual responsibility in a context in which Blackness marked one as undeserving of assistance and perpetually in need of reform.

Methodologically, recognizing these intricate relationships between distant historical moments offers an important challenge for history, a discipline that rests on and reproduces a naturalized, linear organization of time. The very distinctiveness of history as a discipline lies in an understanding of the past as over, knowable in the present only through a process of excavation. Central to nation-building projects, history erects borders around national identity as well as between past and present. By troubling these borders, this project seeks to dislodge liberal narratives of progress as an organizing principle of U.S. history. My point in drawing attention to the relationship between these different moments is not so much to simply assert their similarity but rather to engage in a historical analysis that makes visible the ways in which the ideological landscape of welfare politics has been animated by the afterlife of slavery.

This book asks how the incomplete project of Reconstruction shaped the categories that were deployed in the restructuring of the welfare state at the end of the twentieth century. Rather than look at history as a linear progression of events, I approach history in terms of shifting terrains of possibility, asking how past social relations structure the possibilities that materialize in the present. In approaching history from this vantage point, I focus on the ways in which struggles to regulate the genders and sexualities of freedpeople circumscribe the meanings of citizenship in more recent years. As such, this project is centrally concerned with language. As Stuart Hall argues, "Language is the medium *par excellence* through which things are 'represented' in thought and thus the medium in which ideology is generated and transformed."[48] In other words, the language of citizenship employed during these periods enabled certain interpretations of social relations and foreclosed others. In turning to the Reconstruction era, this project asks how the language of citizenship upholds racial and gender stratification even as it is the primary language through which ideas of equality and freedom are articulated. This is particularly relevant in the context of color-blind discourse as it makes visible the ways in which race and gender live in the terms the state uses even when those terms actively obscure their racialized and gendered histories.

This project also gestures toward the possibilities that were not realized in the Reconstruction era by highlighting abject figures of freedom. Ways of embodying freedom that exceeded the confines of liberal terms have largely been written out of the archive, yet, I argue, these figures still haunt the political scene. In turning to the archive, I am interested both in the processes by which a particular vision of heteronormative, liberal personhood became naturalized as the ends of emancipation and in the traces of queer figures that this vision rendered ghostly. Following Anjali Arondekar's injunction that our approach to the archive move from "fact-finding" to "fact-reading," I view the archive not as a repository of information but rather as an active force that structures narratives of national belonging and normative personhood.[49] As Arondekar writes, "The possibility of such readings lies in productively juxtaposing the archive's fiction effects (the archive as a system of representation) alongside its truth effects (the archive as material with 'real' consequences)—not as incommensurate, but as antagonistically constitutive of each other."[50] Particularly with regard to the national archive, I take this to mean that rather than approach the archive as either being a repository of truth or telling just one story among many others, it is necessary to recognize the archive as producing narratives that carry the material force of state power. Throughout this project, therefore, I am less concerned with discovering what really happened than with understanding how a particular interpretation of social relations came to have the power to constitute the real. In addition, I am interested in the experiences and social phenomena that cannot be encapsulated by that interpretation. Understanding what is not there to be as important as what is there in the archive, this project asks how evidence is constituted as such and how we account for the experiences that the construct of evidence excludes.

Relying on archival sources presents particular challenges for understanding and representing the agency of freedpeople in the face of the structural obstacles that were placed between them and citizenship rights. As the available records recount history from the perspective of state officials, they offer only a distorted view of freedpeople's agency and the forms of resistance they may have practiced in response to efforts to limit the meaning of freedom. However, while it is difficult to reconstruct a coherent story of freedpeople's agency from the archive, I argue throughout the book that the Freedmen's Bureau's efforts to promote marriage and work must be understood as a response to freedpeople's desires and efforts to direct their energies elsewhere. Taking up Saba Mahmood's caution that

agency not be conflated with resistance but rather be understood "within the grammar of concepts within which it resides," I argue that the effort to make freedpeople into proper liberal subjects was an effort to constitute their agency in ways that could be more easily controlled by the state.[51] Rather than view figures like the vagrant and the welfare queen as simply resistant, I argue that they make visible ways of practicing agency that do not align with liberal subjectivity. Efforts to criminalize vagrancy operated by framing vagrancy as a vestige of slavery that was contrary to freedom. These efforts might be understood as trying to erase the possibility of alternate conceptions of desire, subjectivity, personhood, and freedom altogether.

The vast majority of my research is drawn from the archives of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands contained within the U.S. National Archives. The collections contain bureaucratic records of everyday activities as well as reports and reflections from bureau officers, marriage and labor contracts issued by the bureau, and records of disputes between freedpeople and white Southerners that the bureau mediated. These records primarily catalog the perceptions and investments of bureau officials in relation to the bureau's larger mission, restoring order in the South and integrating freedpeople into systems of free labor and gendered constructions of citizenship. The narrative that emerges from these records resonates strongly with national investments in the idea of racial progress and obscures the complex ways in which racial structures of domination were reinvented rather than destroyed in the post–Civil War era. These records make visible the processes through which heteronormativity was produced as a mechanism by which freedpeople were incorporated into citizenship in subordinating ways and as a means of naturalizing state power. They show how liberal constructions of freedom were naturalized and how other ways of expressing freedom were erased by naming them as something else, such as vagrancy, crime, sexual deviancy, or vestiges of an enslaved past.

While these records offer useful insights into the relationship between state building and the construction of the heteronormative family as a basis for citizenship, they provide very little information about how freedpeople actually experienced the bureau's practices and understood its work in the transition from slavery to freedom. Because the records tell the story entirely from the perspective of the state, it is important to recognize and explore this absence as an important site of knowledge. By drawing attention to this absence, this project seeks to denaturalize the state's story as

the only story and instead highlight traces of other narratives that the archive actively obscures. Rather than attempt to retrieve marginalized experiences from the archive, a process that invariably reproduces the terms and constraints of dominant discourse, I seek instead to show how state institutions work to realize certain possibilities and erase others. Exploring the absences of the archive points us to a consideration of the possibilities of a particular historical moment that remained unrealized. The hope is that engagement with these foreclosed historical possibilities might spur a broader imagination of the possibilities available in the present.

Overview of Chapters

This book moves between two historical moments in order to make visible the relationship between them. For this reason, it is not a purely chronological history but rather a historical excavation of discourses about work and marriage that developed in the Reconstruction era and that continue to haunt the late twentieth century. The next chapter elaborates the theoretical arguments that frame the book by establishing the ways that state power and the heteronormative family are mutually constitutive. I focus on three different aspects of the relationship between the state and family. First, I examine how familial metaphors ground state sovereignty by offering a model of "hierarchy within unity."[52] Pointing to the ways that the state models itself after the family, I show how naturalizing the heteropatriarchal family simultaneously naturalizes the state and vice versa. Second, I look at how the heteronormative family operates as a tool of conquest that links Native genocide and the dehumanization of Black people. Locating the welfare state as a structure of settler colonialism, I argue that the policing of vagrancy emerges as an effort to suppress forms of Black freedom that challenged settler ways of life. Finally, building on Black feminist theorizations of domesticity, I challenge the liberal constructions of public and private as separate spheres. Instead, I note the ways that the boundary between public and private is dynamic and shaped by racial as well as gender hierarchies. Pointing to the different ways that private and public have been constructed in relation to different populations, I argue that the production of a boundary between the two is constitutive of state power.

Chapters 3 and 4 form the heart of the book. Drawing on original archival research about the Freedmen's Bureau, these chapters document the bureau's efforts to contain Black freedom through marriage promotion and

forced labor. Chapter 3 looks specifically at the role that marriage played in the transition from slavery to freedom. For whites, marriage grounded masculine citizenship in ideas of independence and privacy that were the basis for claims to political rights while, at the same time, defining women's citizenship through ideas of dependency and domesticity that warranted both subordination and protection. In contrast, this chapter argues that, for freedpeople, marriage and gendered constructions of citizenship became the basis for privatizing responsibility for the lasting harms of slavery, enforcing economic and social obligations, and rationalizing public surveillance. By linking African American citizenship to heteronormativity, marriage erased other ways of organizing kinship and practicing sexuality. Alternative sexualities became understood not just as deviant but as a residue of slavery that could not be contemporaneous with the free subject, a theme that would resurface virulently in the antiwelfare discourse of the late twentieth century. Much as in welfare reform, bureau officers saw marriage as a means of combating vagrancy in that it promoted settlement as the norm, emphasized the importance of moral reform, and shifted financial responsibility for the well-being of freedpeople from the federal government onto male heads of household. For freedwomen, the emphasis on adhering to domestic norms that accompanied the push toward marriage was often in blatant contradiction with the demand that they work outside the home. Given these contradictions, gendered citizenship did not serve as a basis for protection but rather positioned freedwomen as perpetually in need of reform. The chapter concludes by turning to examples of freedwomen who refused or subverted the institution of marriage to elucidate alternative understandings of belonging, kinship, and domestic space that existed among freedpeople.

Chapter 4 delves deeper into the contradictions that gendered ideas of citizenship produced for freedwomen by focusing on the domestic worker as a central figure through which Black women's citizenship was defined during the Reconstruction era. In locating the welfare state's origins in Progressive Era maternalist movements, feminist scholarship has emphasized the centrality of motherhood to gendered constructions of citizenship. In contrast, Freedmen's Bureau officials frequently viewed freedwomen's efforts to withdraw from the labor force and direct their labor toward their own families as indulgence, laziness, and an effort to "play the lady." In this context, the chapter argues that the figure of the domestic worker played a key role in mediating the contradictions inherent in gendered ideas of citizenship that idealized domesticity in a context where freedwomen were

still forced to work outside the home. Analyzing long-term labor contracts for domestic workers that were registered with the bureau in the South as well as bureau efforts to recruit and train freedwomen to serve as domestic workers in northern cities, the chapter shows how domestic work was framed not just as an economic opportunity but also as a mechanism for instilling normative sexuality, cultivating the desired qualities of female citizens, and preserving the nation. Frequently contrasted with the vagrant figure of the prostitute, the domestic worker offered a model of feminine citizenship that invoked the cultural characteristics of motherhood without a simultaneous regard for the well-being of Black children.

The final chapter of the book explores how the discourses and state practices developed to contain vagrancy in the Reconstruction era haunt twentieth-century welfare history. The chapter begins by reading the history of the Progressive Era, the New Deal, and the welfare rights movement in relation to the history detailed in chapters 3 and 4. I argue that juxtaposing the practices of the Freedmen's Bureau with the welfare state that emerged in the twentieth century reveals the ways that the heteronormative family has functioned to secure racial inequality. While during Reconstruction the family was a mechanism of privatizing responsibility for Black families, welfare programs that were designed to cultivate and serve white families offered state support. As welfare rights organizing challenged racial barriers and won greater access to AFDC for Black women, public sentiment toward welfare receipt shifted. In the post–civil rights era, anxieties about Black citizenship from the Reconstruction era resurfaced, and the vagrant reemerged in the figure of the welfare queen, as a threat to be contained. Like the Freedmen's Bureau before it, welfare reform posited marriage promotion and forced labor as a pathway from the dependency of welfare receipt to independence and full liberal personhood. Similar to the figure of the domestic worker during the Reconstruction era, the workfare worker invoked gendered ideas of citizenship grounded in motherhood while directing women's labor away from the care of their own children. Demonstrating the lingering afterlife of the racially stratified concepts of citizenship forged during Reconstruction, the chapter highlights the ways that the language of gender and sexuality continued to signify racial difference despite the formal color blindness of antiwelfare discourse.

Notes

Chapter 1. Welfare Reform

1 The promise to "end welfare as we know it" was a cornerstone of Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign, and this often-repeated phrase became synonymous with the project of welfare reform in the mid-nineties. The shift from the language of ending poverty to the language of ending welfare was the culmination of decades of antiwelfare politics and encapsulates the significance of the transformations the law instituted.

2 Only two other women were onstage at the signing of the law: Janet Ferrel, a white former AFDC recipient from West Virginia, and Penelope Howard, a Black former AFDC recipient from Delaware. Neither of these women spoke at the ceremony, but they were referred to in Clinton's speech, along with Harden, as examples of the successes of welfare-to-work programs.

3 Lillie Harden, "Introductory Remarks at the Signing of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act," August 22, 1996, available at http://www.c-span.org/video/?74541-1/welfare-reform-bill-signing.

4 Clinton, "Remarks on Signing," 2:1325.

5 Clinton, "Remarks on Signing," 2:1325.

6 Many progressive scholars avoid the term *welfare reform*, choosing instead to use terminology like *welfare deform* that highlights the negative impacts of PRWORA. While I agree with these scholars regarding the negative impacts of the law, throughout this book I use the terminology of *welfare reform* in order to emphasize the power of reformist strategies to strengthen oppressive institutions. Building on the work of abolitionist scholars like Angela Davis and Ruth Wilson Gilmore, my use of the word *reform* does not imply improvement but rather signifies a counterpoint to radical or transformational approaches to structural problems. A. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete*?; Gilmore, "Globalisation and US Prison Growth."

7 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104–193, 110 Stat. 2105 (1996).

8 On the fixation with protecting children, see Meiners, *For the Children?*

9 Bush, "Remarks to Welfare-to-Work Graduates," 935.

10 A. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 8.

11 M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing*, 190.

12 For examples of feminist histories of welfare, see L. Gordon, *Pitied but Not Entitled*; Mink, *Wages of Motherhood*; Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare*; Koven and Michel, *Mothers of a New World*; and Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work*. Scholars of race and the welfare state including Linda Faye Williams and Chad Alan Goldberg have made moves similar to mine in locating the Freedmen's Bureau in the history of the welfare state. L. Williams, *Constraint of Race*; Goldberg, *Citizens and Paupers*. However, it is rare for the Freedmen's Bureau to be engaged within feminist literature on the welfare state.

13 As Elsa Barkley Brown shows, "We need to recognize not only differences but also the relational nature of those differences. Middle-class white women's lives are not just different from working-class white, Black and Latina women's lives. It is important to recognize that middle-class women live the lives they do precisely because working-class women live the lives they do. White women and women of color not only live different lives but white women live the lives they do in part because women of color live the ones they do." E. Brown, "'What Has Happened Here,'" 298.

14 L. Gordon, *Pitied but Not Entitled*.

15 On maternalism and racial hierarchies, see Mink, *Wages of Motherhood*; and Ward, *White Welfare State*.

16 Andrea Smith, *Conquest*, 23; Lugones, "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System."

17 As Seth Koven and Sonya Michel write, "Maternalism always operated on two levels: it extolled the virtues of domesticity while simultaneously legitimating women's public relationships to politics and the state, to community, workplace, and market place. Maternalist ideologies, while invoking traditional images of womanliness, implicitly challenged the boundaries between public and private, women and men, state and civil society." Koven and Michel, "Introduction: 'Mother Worlds,'" 6.

18 Amy Kaplan draws attention to the interconnectedness of these first two meanings of the term in her essay "Manifest Domesticity."

19 Many thanks to Charis Thompson for pointing me toward this third meaning of the term.

20 Bhattacharjee, "Public/Private Mirage."

21 C. Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens."

22 Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*.

23 Franke, "Becoming a Citizen."

24 Harris, "Whiteness as Property"; Sexton, "People-of-Color-Blindness."

25 Hall, "Race, Culture, and Communications," 17. For elaboration on Stuart Hall's characterization of racism, see Gilmore, "Fatal Couplings of Power."

26 Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom*.
27 On the right to their own lands, see Saville, *Work of Reconstruction*, 18–19. On the vote, see E. Brown, "Negotiating and Transforming"; and Rosen, *Terror in the Heart*. On freedom of movement, see Foner, *Reconstruction*, 82–84.
28 Foner, *Reconstruction*, 85.
29 Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom*.
30 Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 30.
31 Lieberman, "Freedmen's Bureau and the Politics," 413–14.
32 Foner, *Reconstruction*, 248.
33 Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 276–77; Du Bois, "Freedmen's Bureau."
34 Foner, *Reconstruction*, 233–37.
35 Farmer, "Because They Are Women," 166.
36 Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*; A. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, 22–39; Michelle Alexander, *New Jim Crow*; Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work*.
37 Bentley, *History of the Freedmen's Bureau*; Farmer, "Because They Are Women."
38 Quoted in Farmer, "Because They Are Women," 165–66.
39 Quoted in Farmer, "Because They Are Women," 167.
40 Franke, "Becoming a Citizen," 253.
41 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 116–17.
42 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 118.
43 Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 125.
44 Gordon writes, "Following the ghosts is about making a contact that changes you and refashions the social relations in which you are located. It is about putting life back in where only a vague memory or a bare trace was visible to those who bothered to look. It is sometimes about writing ghost stories, stories that not only repair representational mistakes, but also strive to understand the conditions under which a memory was produced in the first place, toward a countermemory, for the future." A. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*, 22.
45 M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing*, 190.
46 M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing*, 181–284.
47 Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*, 6.
48 Hall, "Problem of Ideology," 35–36.
49 Arondekar, *For the Record*, 4.
50 Arondekar, *For the Record*, 4.
51 Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 34.
52 A. McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 45.

Chapter 2. Making State, Making Family

1 C. Cohen, "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens," 438.
2 Kapadia, "Up in the Air and on the Skin," 369.