

# **THE FURY ARCHIVES**

Female Citizenship,  
Human Rights, and  
the International  
Avant-Gardes

**Jill Richards**

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# Introduction

**T**his book assembles a transatlantic archive of female citizenship. It tracks women's arson campaigns, suffrage riots, birth strikes, illegal birth control clinics, industrial sabotage, antilynching activism, queer revolutionary cells, and the more daily work of committee meetings, sewing circles, and letter-writing campaigns. These actions were not always militant or righteous. They did not necessarily involve stated demands. Often enough the people involved did not use the language of action but instead took up the more diffuse terms of waiting, refusal, survival, practice, cooperation, and care. Many of these political tendencies wanted to abolish the nation-state or sought out modes of affiliation, recognition, and belonging across national boundaries. One of the more contradictory aspects of this history is the way that these efforts retained the language of rights and citizenship even while working toward more radical futures. How do we negotiate the disparities between demands for women's rights and the social worlds that emerged around these demands? In what ways did the construction of these social worlds exceed or transform the language of rights altogether?

In revising the terms of female citizenship and the perspectives from which we understand its import, *The Fury Archives* looks to unsettle what counts as the basis of knowledge in wider narratives of women's rights during the period most often referred to as feminism's first wave. In this sense, the "archive" of my title is not only a matter of recovery but also a more polemical intervention.<sup>1</sup> This intervention sets aside the articulated demand for the woman's vote and moves into the more daily life of organizing that

emerged through and alongside this demand. In many cases, a more granular attention to the daily life of a political tendency, seen apart from the achievement of a stated demand, lands upon moments of impasse, boredom, and failure. It tracks threads never followed up on and political tangents broken off from more recognized or respectable currents. However, this perspective also allows for the destabilization of the category *woman* as a primary site of retrospective emphasis, revealing a more coalitional entanglement among socialist, syndicalist, anarchist, and anticolonial groups. This perspective sets aside the question of singular will to consider people acting together who might disagree about what their action means or why they are doing it. In considering these often peripheral or forgotten intersections as they play out in the field of political action, *The Fury Archives* assembles an alternative conceptual vocabulary for rights claims, moving beyond juridically defined freedoms and obligations understood in relation to the nation-state.

My consideration of the female citizen as a subject of action responds to a wide body of feminist scholarship that has traditionally focused on identity and injury. In these works, shared pain and suffering provide a foundation for the female citizen's felt sense of national belonging. In Wendy Brown's influential account, people who have been marginalized from the abstract claims of liberal humanist personhood establish a sense of political identity through their "wounded attachment" to shared histories of exclusion.<sup>2</sup> Lauren Berlant articulates this shared sense of injury as constitutive of modern citizenship, locating a sense of belonging in "the capacity for suffering and trauma at the citizen's core."<sup>3</sup> Building on and shifting these field-shaping debates, *The Fury Archives* approaches female citizenship from a different angle, setting aside the rubric of injured identity and the theorization of affect more generally to reconsider the daily life of collective action as a site of vast theoretical and aesthetic complexity. In this framing, female citizenship is constituted through ongoing practice and process, rather than a prior history of woundedness.<sup>4</sup>

This turn from injured identity to the daily life of feminist action necessitates a methodological shift. Scholars working at the intersection of literature, citizenship, and rights discourses most often consider a set of genres closely associated with traumatic injury, including testimony, witness, documentary, and the confession. In these accounts, realist narrative makes suffering legible to a wider audience through the reader's sympathetic

identification.<sup>5</sup> Narrative can “give suffering a human face” that reveals concealed or forgotten violence.<sup>6</sup> For Lynn Hunt, the eighteenth-century epistolary novel gives rise to the sympathetic attachments necessary for a human rights framework; for Joseph Slaughter, the bildungsroman provides a model of the liberal individual incorporated by human rights discourses; for Elizabeth Anker, contemporary world literature offers an embodied alternative to the individualizing, abstract language of rights discourses.<sup>7</sup> Whether celebratory or critical, these arguments rely on a realist model of narrative, one that offers readerly models of identification, recognition, sympathy, and attachment. But what about entirely abstract works of art that lack coherent subjects or plotlines? Moving beyond the questions of recognition and into an antimimetic and experimental tradition allows for a different set of questions: Why does the suffering subject need to be a subject that readers can recognize? What forms of likeness does this recognition impose or assume? First-wave feminism and institutional human rights came of age at the same time as the Dadaist word salad and the surrealist dreamscape. How might we understand these currents alongside one another, as part of the same historical moment?

This alternative history begins with the little-known but nevertheless extensive entanglement between women’s rights movements and the international avant-gardes. In the early decades of the twentieth century, avant-garde and women’s rights movements were in much closer contact than has been supposed. Part of this alignment emerged from a mutual dependence on a socialist international that financed the distribution of radical newspapers, journals, and pamphlets across the Atlantic. However, much of this archive exceeds the traditional confines of the socialist press or little magazine to include a more unorthodox set of genres, including parliamentary inquiries, police reports, mug shots, propaganda booklets, foreign policy notes, the *League of Nations News*, and the United Nations’ *Yearbook*. Crossing oceans and continents, these print cultures ground the central claim of this book, that women’s rights movements and the historical avant-gardes became intertwined in an often vexed but hugely influential relationship of reciprocal construction. Each offered the other a conceptual vocabulary to imagine forms of life excluded from the rights of man and citizen. Avant-garde experiments with fractured, collaged, or inhuman representations of modern personhood offered feminists a language for a paradoxical subject of rights: the woman who is active in the public sphere of politics but not

recognized by the state as a citizen. At the same time, the paradoxical legal status of the female citizen provided the avant-gardes with a template for the utopian reimagination of the boundaries of the human and of human rights during moments of radical political upheaval. *The Fury Archives* follows this imagination through revolutionary currents peppering the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book ultimately locates, among women's movements, socialist tendencies, and the avant-gardes, a radical alternative to liberal human rights discourses in formation at the same historical moment. Toward this end, each chapter focuses on the intersection of a specific avant-garde movement, women's rights struggles, and the discursive formation of human rights in the years leading up to the Cold War.

This perspective contrasts to a more familiar Enlightenment genealogy of natural law, as cited in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)*. Rather than a survey of European political theory, I arrive at the establishment of the *UDHR* through a different path. This book assembles a counterarchive of rights practiced by female incendiaries, self-named terrorists, anti-colonial insurgents, witches, cross-dressers, lesbian criminals, and queer resistance cells. In so doing, I follow the ways that the human emerged as a legal category for women and queers amid an international push for suffrage reform. But I also move outside the courtroom, to more vernacular imaginations of the human and human rights during moments of revolutionary upheaval. To set women's movements alongside this imagination of what is called human allows for a biopolitical theory of right, one that tracks the twentieth century's well-known gains in suffrage reform alongside increasing state control of fertility, particularly among nonwhite, colonial, and queer people.

In calling this book *The Fury Archives*, I do not mean to focus on anger as the prevailing emotional response across these disparate histories. "Fury" is a strange word, a marker for feelings in general and for a vengeful woman in particular. In these pages it primarily signals the legal imagination of the female citizen as an inhuman woman warped by her paradoxical relation to state recognition and the public sphere. But "fury" also occurs, in these settings, as a punitive adjective for irrational, unchecked emotion. In the military trials for female arsonists considered in the first chapter, the "fury" is one of many names for women who actively take part in a revolutionary struggle: "She was more enraged than a viper, she was a fury, she was bent in two under the weight of the stuff that she carried to feed the fire."<sup>8</sup> What

interests me is the way that feminist political action, from the extremely mild-mannered to the militant, has historically been received as the work of angry or vengeful women. In this book, I turn to the ways that anger has been weaponized to delegitimize political claims under the rubrics of respectability, seriousness, and social worth. In the most classical literary sense, in the *Oresteia*, the Furies are the antithesis of democratic politics; their vengeful justice provides a counterpart to the procedural justice of legal institutions, where guilt is determined by evidence, argument, and citizen juries.<sup>9</sup> In considering this archive, I mean to excavate histories of feminist contestation not directly engaged with legal remedy, considered from the midst of day-to-day action, apart from any stated demand. This perspective sets aside the successes or failures we know to be true in order to inhabit a social world of action from the perspective of the persons involved. Here emphasis shifts from articulated demands to forms of world making, through people working together in the streets, the factories, and at home. This shift allows us to reconsider what might be asked for and who gets to ask; what kinds of spaces and labors are political; and the ways that forms of waiting, survival, and domestic care undergird more traditional accounts of the public sphere of politics.

Indeed, one of the main lines running through this book is that the narrative of human rights that foregrounds the League of Nations and the United Nations is not the only narrative to be had. Suspicious of juridical reform and discourses of universalism, a number of early women's movements sought out a more radical understanding of the human and of human rights beyond the confines of the nation-state. Tracing this counterhistory shifts our understanding of rights from a kind of boundary, between citizen and noncitizen, to a set of practices that dismantle such boundaries in the attempt to rebuild social relations and social life. For this reason, I take up the roughly one-hundred-year period between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries to reconsider a moment before the discourses of human rights became a dominant ethical language for multinational institutions. The chapters that follow move across three overlapping fields of extraterritorial scale: the rise of the socialist internationals as an early program for rights beyond the territorial limits of the nation-state, feminist internationalisms between metropole and the colonies, and the avant-garde formations that understood their art to be in the service of a global revolution. These formations are not internally consistent and certainly do not align in any neat



or narratively coherent way. Instead, much of what follows highlights moments of rupture when these groups come into conflict with one another.

From our current perspective, many of these political tendencies might seem like blips and caesuras on the way to the inexorable rise of neoliberalism. However, I argue against this more fatalistic historical purview, focusing instead on the voices of nonstate actors and unofficial representatives, as indicative of political imaginations more varied, radical, and transformative than the versions that have since achieved canonical status in more standard histories of international justice. Finally, I also argue that any consideration of socialist internationalism must reckon with the “women question” as a central preoccupation, one animating yet another archive of rights, this time focused on public health, family, and reproduction. Most pointedly, my account foregrounds the unwaged reproductive labor of cooking, cleaning, pregnancy, child rearing, and elder care as an often overlooked foundation necessary for political mobilization and a significant site of feminist and queer politics in its own right. I collect this archive, for all its inconsistencies and ineffectuality, to argue that our current moment of human rights governmentality was not inevitable. These documents suggest other historical courses that might have been, as well as conjunctures for our present history.

## Feminist Internationalisms and the Governance of Human Rights

There are many ways to narrate a history of human rights: as Enlightenment philosophy, as natural law, as postwar institutional doctrine, as universalizing morality. The most familiar account begins with the UN Charter in 1945 and continues into the present day, a moment when the language of human rights has solidified into the normative ethical discourse to address social justice across national boundaries. In the 1970s, the Czech jurist Karel Vasak proposed a generational model to understand this history as a gradual unfolding narrative of progress, from first-generation rights that protect the individual from the state, prominent in the eighteenth-century declarations, to second-generation social and economic liberties, like public health and education, included in the UN covenants.<sup>10</sup> However, this generational model does not attend to the ways that rights regimes emerged through and alongside the expansion of empire. One of the major debates shaping this

field of study attends to the paradoxical quality of universal rights, often rendered as a gap between abstract claims for equality and the material fact of unequal people, subject to vastly different life chances, racialized forms of precarity, and vulnerability to premature death.

This scholarship informs much of the book to come. However, for now I want to mark a shift in emphasis away from theoretical considerations of what rights are, or even how our current human rights regime came to be, and instead toward the ways human rights language has been used as a vocabulary for freedoms and obligations beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the nation-state. That is to say, the governmentality of human rights will become my primary point of emphasis, and for this reason I forgo many of the more famous declarations to consider instead the ways human rights operated as both a tactic and a technology of power outside the field of sovereignty.<sup>11</sup> Rather than focus on the content of who is considered human or reject this category altogether, I am interested in the ways human rights claims were used, appropriated, or transformed to make demands for justice beyond the remedies provided by positive law. What follows tells a history of human rights that attends to this expanded juridical scope, beyond the nation and state actors traditionally cited by the laws of war.

To tell this story, I turn to an earlier historical moment, before the mid-century institutionalization of human rights through the United Nations. This account begins with what the legal historian Micheline Ishay has described as a major split between two opposing tendencies: first, the liberal internationalism of the League of Nations promoted by Woodrow Wilson, consistent with multinational capitalism, and, second, the supranational rights promised by the socialist internationals in the service of a global revolution.<sup>12</sup> When socialists and anarchists founded the First International, in 1864, their stated goals entailed collaboration across national lines, from organizations representing over one hundred countries, for social, political, and economic rights. Though the First International was short lived, the Second International proved more resilient, spanning the period between 1889 and 1916. After World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution, a Third International continued to challenge liberal visions of rights, often in friction with radical socialist parties that formed their own confederation of nations, including the Vienna International.

In Samuel Moyn's revisionary history, our current regime of human rights emerged in the 1970s, when these proliferating internationalisms collapsed

at the same time that postcolonial statecraft came into crisis.<sup>13</sup> At this moment in the 1970s, the phrase “human rights” exploded as a commonplace term to talk about the protection of individual citizens from the state and to justify interventionist foreign policy on moral grounds. Rather than approach the period after the Enlightenment as a narrative leading up to this moment, I want to tease out a more speculative history, opening up space for competing claims on rights to proliferate into messier and more contradictory forms. This long middle between the Enlightenment and the Cold War, considered on its own terms, allows for a more improvisatory, more extravagant imagination of international justice, in part because the referential status of human rights had not yet calcified as an institutional norm.

This periodization stages the high-water mark of two linked internationalisms, one socialist, one feminist. In the roughly one hundred years that make up this study, these groups are more often in conflict than not.<sup>14</sup> This was often a question of prioritization. One of the long-standing debates between socialists and feminists during the Second International concerned the way questions relating to women’s rights, particularly housework, might fit into a wider radical agenda. In 1901, the SPD member Lily Braun published a proposal for *Einküchenhäuser* (one-kitchen buildings) to collectivize housekeeping and childcare in her book *Frauenarbeit und Hauswirtschaft* (*Women and Housework*). Clara Zetkin, the leader of the women’s movement in Germany and a member of the Women’s International Congress, responded to this proposal as the “latest blossoming of Utopianism in its most dangerous, opportunistic form.”<sup>15</sup> Zetkin’s response holds fast to the International’s party line: what might be desirable after the revolution could be counterproductive during earlier stages of the social struggle. For this reason, political platforms relating specifically to women’s rights should only arise at the right moment, in the appropriate historical stage, to hasten a larger revolution of the proletariat.

At this time, the Socialist International was riven with a number of contradictory programs for revolution. For Lenin, in *What Is to Be Done?*, the correct path to revolution would be led by the party, who will bring class consciousness to the masses. In this infamously stagist account, the party becomes a kind of guiding star, one that channels the energy of the workers. Revolution can only occur at a future historical moment when the party has sufficiently grown, when the masses are prepared, and when the objective circumstances are ripe. What garners mistaken worshipful sentiment

is the organic response of the workers or, in Lenin's paraphrase, "spontaneity, i.e. of that which exists at the present moment."<sup>16</sup>

What preoccupies Rosa Luxemburg, in her direct criticism of Lenin, is the possibility of spontaneous political action to produce new organizational structures among factory workers that moves from the bottom up rather than from the party down. Alongside Lenin, Luxemburg agrees that the masses need political education. But for Luxemburg, this education does not come from the party. Instead, for Luxemburg, spontaneous action in the present becomes the ground for political education that allows for the revolution in the future. In this way, revolution can be seen as a much longer process of gains and losses. For Luxemburg, it is not "pamphlets and leaflets" that prepare the masses but an ongoing "living political school, by the fight and in the fight, in the continuous course of the revolution" as a succession of smaller gains and losses.<sup>17</sup>

For our purposes, Luxemburg's theory is usefully extended by her ally, the Dutch Council communist Anton Pannekoek. Like Luxemburg, Pannekoek rejects what he sees, in the theories of Lenin and Kautsky, as a "dichotomy between day-to-day action and revolution." For Pannekoek, the process of workers organizing together in unions, through gains and losses, becomes the stuff of a longer revolution. This is not education through theory, handed out in pamphlets to the masses from above; rather, "it is only by the struggle for power itself that the masses can be assembled, drilled and formed into an organization capable of taking power." Pannekoek sees the formation of these new kinds of organizations and new bonds of solidarity among workers during the ongoing struggle as something that transforms individual subjects:

They have become completely different persons from the old individualistic petty-bourgeois and peasants . . . the transformation of human nature in the proletariat is primarily the effect of the conditions under which the workers live, trained as they are to act collectively by the shared experience of exploitation in the same factory, and secondarily a *product of class struggle*, that is to say militant action on the part of the organization.<sup>18</sup>

We might note here as well that there is among these theories of revolution a narrative commonality. In each case, the program for revolution insists upon a protagonist and a path. For the reigning currents of the Second

International, this protagonist was the male industrial worker. Across these various programs, the status of the human protagonist, or the becoming-human of the protagonist through struggle, is a universal category that is also limited to the body of a male factory worker. In what follows, I take up these accounts of action “under the present conditions,” in “the present time,” apart from the party, as a vocabulary for the day-to-day forms of contestation for women living outside the wage relation, with no clear role in the stagist programs of the Socialist Internationals.

That said, the friction between socialist and feminist internationalisms allows for a more expansive vocabulary for extraterritorial rights, promoting an imagination of justice not limited to the nation-state. This approach draws on the work of a number of scholars, including Brent Hayes Edwards, Cheryl Higashida, and Aarthi Vadde, who have taken up Edward Said’s early call to reckon with the formation of “adversarial internationalization” in the wake of empire.<sup>19</sup> These challenges to universalist Western paradigms restage the question of international alliance, this time centering populations and geographies often excluded from the “rights of man and citizen.” Rather than dismiss internationalist ambitions as a purely imperial or homogenizing project, I want to consider how feminists appropriated and transformed this conceptual vocabulary to rethink feminist alliance, solidarity, and care beyond the nation. These efforts were often reformist or reactionary. However, tracing the day-to-day life of this internationalist tendency reveals the ways that women’s rights and human rights have long been overlapping fields of inquiry.

Many of the case studies I go on to consider prefigure a major current in transnational feminist activism and legal scholarship that called for a recalibration of “women’s rights as human rights.”<sup>20</sup> Emerging in the 1990s, this tendency focused on the ways that the seemingly neutral language of human rights doctrine relies on a clear divide between public and private spheres. This division prioritized human rights concerns as the domain of men in the public sphere, rendering the rights of women and children in the home a matter of lesser consequence unrelated to the workings of foreign policy. Against this model, feminist legal scholars and activists argued for a reconsideration of women’s experience in the field of human rights, along with increased attention to social and economic entitlements, including access to housing, education, and health care.

By turning to a historical moment many decades before the call for “women’s rights as human rights,” I argue that the public/private split has a more

varied history than we might imagine. Feminists were making these claims well before the 1990s, before even the midcentury institutionalization of human rights. Attention to this history challenges the regnant model of international law as a doctrine focused on war and its aftermaths, making visible instead the ways that childbirth, housework, domestic violence, sex work, race hygiene, and public health were positioned as a matter for international justice. In some cases, these rights movements were productive of jurisprudence at a national or international level. However, more often in this history, the call to reclassify women's rights as human rights is better understood as a tactical maneuver, to call attention to gendered forms of injury often disregarded in the normative focus on war and revolution. *The Fury Archives* begins with the premise of women's action, but these actions can also be framed as a response to unlivable or precarious conditions of life, including state-sanctioned torture, routinized sexual assault, domestic violence, infanticide, eugenic sterilization, and the criminalization of non-normative sexualities. To approach this history is not just a matter of legal categorization or recovery but also a more interventionist claim to reconsider whose rights are deemed important in the wider scope of international justice.

At the same time, postcolonial scholars have long noted the ways that white women invoked the language of humanity to justify their political inclusion in the British Empire. In the historian Antoinette Burton's account, British feminists imagined colonial women as their own particular burden, situating white women's enfranchisement as one step toward a wider civilizing process because enfranchised white women would then go on to liberate colonial populations.<sup>21</sup> From the 1860s to World War I, a wide variety of British feminists argued that it was their humanity, their ability to sympathize with and promote the well-being of colonial subjects, that made them particularly suitable for franchise. Here again, human rights work as a tactical language, this time asserting white women's citizenship through a racial hierarchy of social worth. This book looks to account for both these narratives, that is, the uses and abuses of the human in the practice of early women's rights movements. Rather than a narrative of women's progress, this is a double-sided movement, wherein the celebrated freedoms of some rest upon the subjugation of others. Here, at the crux of feminism's first wave, gains in white women's rights are contemporaneous and often intertwined with a new science of government directed at the management of colonial populations.

As a case in point and as an outline for the archival methodology to come, I turn now to a series of debates circa 1912 concerning wages for housework as a human rights issue. At this time, the London-based weekly *The Freewoman* published a series of articles on cooperative housekeeping and the motherhood endowment, a state subsidy that would be paid to unwed mothers.<sup>22</sup> What joins these articles is the wider sense that the burden of unpaid housework fetters the development of woman's human personality. In February, the front-page editorial, "The Drudge," staged this dilemma through the language of foreign politics: "It is quite true that the State interfered with the wife's empire over the children and, at age of five years, has claimed the right to withdraw them also from the home. Even so; and here is the housewife's chance to regain her dignity as a wealth-producing individual. She can now cease to be a housewife, and become a human being."<sup>23</sup> Though suspicious of state power, the article argues for the establishment of a collective nursery for the maintenance of infants beginning five weeks after birth so that mothers might rejoin the waged workforce more quickly.

Marsden's editorial set off a wider debate not just on the motherhood endowment or a radical crèche but over the vexed relationships among dignity, freedom, housework, and the British Empire. What would it mean to consider the wider run of *The Freewoman* as an experimental form that responds and adapts to this configuration? How might we consider this paper as a technology that produces gendered subjects transnationally, as audience, authors, and objects of discipline? This question marks a shift in scale. Rather than a single article, the points of conflict between adjacent and unlike forms become the primary site of emphasis. Consider, for instance, the table of contents in *The Freewoman* from Thursday, March 7, 1912. There is the continuation of the motherhood endowment coverage, alongside three major conversations in the letters: the birthrate; the continuation of the housework debates; and the question of male homosexuality ("Who Are the 'Normal'?" "The Normal' Again"). The "Foreign Affairs" news includes reporting on sex workers in Japan, a split in the South African suffrage movement over the question of universal suffrage for colonial subjects, and the expansion of the feminist press in southern China. From this perspective, the weekly run of *The Freewoman* is a material instance of a collage form that brings together widely divergent topics and sets them side by side. These currents emerge alongside an internationalist agenda, one that includes reporting on women's rights in China, Persia, India, New Zealand, and Australia.

Over the next six months, many of these articles on housework, motherhood, and eugenics look like typical opinion pieces of the period, voiced by experts. However, Dora Marsden and Mary Gawthorpe published their critique of the motherhood endowment in the form of a multipage questionnaire. The prospect of state payment for childbirth prompted an entire series of new questions on women and labor more generally: Is pregnancy like a disability? Should wives expect payment for companionship or sex? If wives and mothers are a class of workers, can they form a “trade union of wives” and mutiny? What if wives refused to work entirely?

The questionnaire is a strange political document for the ways that it sidesteps a program of action, instead offering points of inquiry, some reactionary, some radical. What is important here is the way that the questionnaire defamiliarizes established ways of thinking about women, labor, and the state. These questions leave open the possibility that unwaged workers can be imagined as a transnational public with political impact. The questions present what might have seemed like an open-and-shut case as a site of debate: first, the possibility that the domestic work of cleaning, cooking, and child rearing might be considered value-producing forms somehow linked to the reproduction of the nation; and second, the possibility that companionship might be seen as a kind of necessary labor for which a person, sex worker or wife, could be paid.

Marsden and Gawthorpe presented their questions as a rhetorical feat too absurd to be answered. However, many responses poured in, which *The Freewoman* published in turn. The science-fiction author and utopian socialist H. G. Wells took the form of the questionnaire quite seriously and provided an enumerated list of likely answers, beginning with the clarification: “It’s not human beings we want to buy and enslave, it’s a social service, a collective need, we want to sustain.”<sup>24</sup> Though better known for his wartime manifesto *The Rights of Man, or What Are We Fighting For*, cited by the drafters of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Wells’s writing in *The Freewoman* makes a prominent intervention in the gendering of early human rights claims, in that this writing foregrounds the private sphere, the family, and women’s household labor.

However, Wells was not alone in this endeavor. For a weekly journal, *The Freewoman* dedicated an outsize portion of its pages to letters to the editor. “Correspondence” often occupied a third of the issue, and letters were presented as though they were articles, with titles and page numbers listed in



the table of contents. In the summer of 1912 many of these letters offered their own thesis on wages for housework and childbirth. Letter writers argued that the status of motherhood should be considered alongside the collective maintenance required by the coal strikes; that state-organized, free crèche systems should be considered as a legal right; that all businesses that employ women should be required to provide on-site free childcare; that wives have a right to a proportion of their husband's earnings; that readers should publish a public list of employers that pay fair wages to women and those that do not; and that readers should start their own small-scale cooperative kitchens with other women in their neighborhoods. Often signed with initials or a pen name, the letters go on at length, describing the tasks involved in assembling meals or nursing infants, then comparing these labors with the paid work of clerks and factory workers. In some cases, the editorial staff offered a response keyed to Marden's original antistate, antiendowment program. However, in later weeks, this writing acknowledges that some women might prefer to work in their homes. "It is best of all to be an independent, self-supporting human being, because then you can choose whether you will be a machinist or a mother, or both or neither."<sup>25</sup>

In the spring of 1912, *The Freewoman* began advertising an evening "Discussion Circle" for readers on key topics of interest, including housework, eugenics, and the birthrate. The programs for the meeting were circulated in advance (see the table "Programme for Session"). More straightforward manifestos for the collectivization of housework and the abolition of the nuclear family can be found in a competing venue, *The Worker's Dreadnought*, at roughly the same period.<sup>26</sup> In *The Freewoman*, the schedule of discussion meetings is a different kind of archive, one that usually does not merit attention as a source of knowledge for rights claims or international politics. The meeting schedule suggests ties between topics of concern (eugenics, celibacy, housework, prostitution) but does not put forth a plan of action or a philosophy of right.

The meeting schedule does not offer a utopian program; it does not tell us what to do or make demands for the future. Alongside the questionnaire and the letters to the editor, the meeting schedule chronicles the kinds of social worlds that emerged from more daily configurations of trial and error. These worlds certainly extend beyond what can be found in the digitized archives of *The Freewoman*. In the years before publication, Gawthorpe and Marsden had already been arrested and jailed together a number of times.

### Programme for Session, July–October 1912

Date	Subject	Speaker
July 3	Sex Oppression and the Way Out	Mr. Guy Aldred
July 17	Some Problems in Eugenics	Mrs. Havelock Ellis
July 31	The Problem of Celibacy	Mrs. Gallichan
Sept. 4	Neo-Malthusianism	Dr. Drysdale
Sept. 18	Prostitution	—
Oct. 2	The Abolition of Domestic Drudgery	Mrs. Melvin and Miss Rona Robinson, M.Sc
Oct. 16	The Reform of the Divorce Laws	Mr. E. S. P. Haynes

Source: “The Freewoman’ Discussion Circle,” *The Freewoman* 2, no. 32 (June 27, 1912): 115.

In 1910, along with Mabel Capper, they were assaulted during a suffragette protest and unsuccessfully brought charges against three men in a highly publicized trial. *The Freewoman* was largely Marsden’s effort to break off from the mainstream suffrage movement, turning from a single-issue focus on the vote to wider issues of women’s social and economic justice. In the years following its founding, the magazine had many lives and collaborators: it was rebranded as the *New Freewoman*, and then *The Egoist*, which would go on to publish some of the most famous contributors to high modernism and the European avant-gardes.

I want to highlight the strangeness of this adjacency: *The Egoist* serialized James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and T. S. Eliot’s “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” alongside a more self-consciously avant-garde tendency that included the imagist manifestos. But only a few years earlier the same journal, under a different name, included a months-long debate on payment for childcare and housework as a human right, alongside reporting on eugenics, the birthrate, and women’s foreign affairs. Across these years, the publication maintained its internationalist agenda, often using the language of human rights as a barometer for

racial progress and the expansion of empire. I chart out these coordinates in part to mark a material adjacency, page facing page. However, more important is the way that meeting schedules and questionnaires here emerge alongside the manifesto as experimental forms to account for new kinds of action, subjects, and alliances during a moment of proliferating internationalisms.

## Intimate Theory of the Avant-Garde

In the last section, *The Freewoman* and its successor, *The Egoist*, provide a material site of adjacency between women's rights movements, human rights claims, modernist literature, and the avant-garde manifesto. This section looks to add specificity and depth to this last term, "the avant-garde," in distinction to a wider literary modernism. Both high-modernist and avant-garde formations during this period were experimenting with traditional modes of realist representation through a turn to abstraction, fragmentation, disordered syntax, and collage. For most critics, what differentiates the avant-garde from a wider modernist tradition is a real or imagined alliance with radical political movements on the ground. However, the avant-garde is a notoriously tricky historical concept in part because it is often a retrospective label for artistic currents that understood themselves through more precise registers of symbolism, imagism, vorticism, Dada, surrealism, and Négritude. The chapters that follow hew to the particularities of these more local movements as they are happening. Rather than determine the precise relation between art and politics in the generalized phenomena retrospectively labeled avant-garde, I want to expand and complicate what counts as political labor during this historical moment. In so doing, I hope to show how the gendering of the political has shaped the theorization of the avant-garde more widely.

One of the earliest attempts at a retrospective consolidation, Renato Poggioli's *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, was first published in four installments in the Italian-language literary journal *Inventario*, from 1949 to 1951.<sup>27</sup> With Italy in ruins and the horrors of Stalinism growing more and more visible, Poggioli had good reasons for deemphasizing the avant-garde's ties to radical political movements. He writes off surrealism's involvement with the Communist Party and futurism's nationalist fervor as somewhat naïve

adventurism or merely superficial sympathy, never actually effective. In this way, Poggioli rejects the often spoken insistence that to be properly avant-garde artists have to be actively in league with the radical movements to which they lay claim. Instead, Poggioli charts out a history of convergence and separation. This begins with the French revolutions of 1830 and 1848 as the first moment the term “avant-garde” was commonly used in a nonmilitary context to describe radical political movements. In Poggioli’s account, the category “avant-garde” begins to shift meaning during the uprising and repression of the Paris Commune. At this moment, “avant-garde” briefly signals an alliance between cultural and political groups working together. After that first moment of practical overlap during the Paris Commune, there are two avant-gardes, one cultural and one political. Their ties are rhetorical. The cultural avant-gardes imagine a new world that they, as a group, will herald through art in the service of revolution, not political activism on the ground. This art serves revolution through variants of antagonism, whether nihilistic, scandalous, eschatological, or messianic. In the broadest sense, for Poggioli, the avant-garde is a “movement formed in part or in whole to agitate *against* something or someone.”<sup>28</sup>

When Poggioli posits a clear line between artistic vanguards and political vanguards, he has a specific version of political practice in mind. This practice might occur in the streets, at the barricades, in the midst of a worker’s strike, or through the Socialist International. But these versions of politics hypothesize a European male political actor and center the identity of a largely male working class. In the following pages, I want to reconsider what counts as political practice and where this practice might occur, to accommodate other versions of politics and other kinds of subjects who are not necessarily waged, located in the factories, or members of a Socialist International. For many of the figures that I consider in this book, Poggioli’s sense of a clear division between artistic and political avant-gardes does not hold fast. Rebecca West was a novelist and also rioted with the suffragettes. Angelina Weld Grimké was active in antilynching campaigns. During World War II, Claude Cahun and her partner, Marcel Moore, were sent to a prisoner of war camp for their participation in the French resistance. Hannah Höch was a Dadaist, recipient of two abortions, and advocate for birth control reform. Til Brugman joined the Dutch resistance. Paulette Nardal produced a black feminist periodical and served as an area expert for the newly formed United Nations. Better known as a British surrealist, Leonora

Carrington was also a refugee several times over who fled Mexico in fear of retribution for her participation in antigovernment protest meetings. Often left aside in the major theoretical formulations of the avant-garde, these figures necessitate a different conceptual schema, one that can account for the intersection of artistic forms and political action in a manner that is not purely deterministic. Regarding the cultural products themselves, I am not sure that art makes anything happen, to borrow Auden's phrase, and certainly don't think, alongside André Breton, that avant-garde art can sway the proletarian masses. However, it does seem reasonable to me that the strategies developed in collective social movements make their way as new forms or paradoxes into cultural objects, which then become sites to imagine personhood in ways not entirely constrained by force or necessity.

For this perspective, the first chapter of this book also turns to the Paris Commune but shifts Poggioli's account in two ways, first, to account for the gendering of citizenship for communard women and, second, to consider the racialization of both women's rights and human rights through contemporaneous anticolonial uprisings in Martinique. In reframing the import of the Paris Commune as an origin story, I join a growing group of scholars interested in expanding the geographies, races, genders, and sexualities that might be considered avant-garde more widely.<sup>29</sup> This expansion proceeds in part through transatlantic modes of comparison but more significantly through a reconsideration of intimate life as a site of gendered political labor and racialized discipline. In so doing, I respond to a wide body of work that has centered the role of sexuality, marriage, kinship, and reproductive labor in the wider arc of empire building and revolutionary upheavals across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>30</sup> These accounts reject a clear division between the public sphere of politics and what Jürgen Habermas has called "that area where the experience of 'humanity' originated: in the humanity of the intimate relations between human beings who, under the aegis of the family, were nothing more than human."<sup>31</sup> In Habermas's account of the rise of the eighteenth-century public sphere, the bourgeois family becomes a "domain of pure humanity" that offers a counterpart to the political-economic realm of labor and commodity exchange. This book looks to cross this division, between the household and the political-economic realm, as part of a wider accounting for the gendering of the category "human" across legal, political, and aesthetic sites.

This mode of comparison looks to account for a wider historical conjecture that ties the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century expansion of empire to gendered divisions of labor. Drawing these two currents together as part of an account of “patriarchy and accumulation on a world-scale,” Maria Mies has argued that colonization should be understood as the counterpart to a simultaneous process of what she calls “housewifization” in Europe.<sup>32</sup> Mies thus tracks European attempts to impose the nuclear family upon colonial populations alongside “housewifization,” which splits off unwaged reproductive labor performed by women in the home from the wider category of women’s waged labor. As part of what a number of historians have called the normalization of the nuclear family among the working class, this gendered division of labor cements a spatial division between the private sphere of the family and the public sphere of politics. This transnational framework then has a much more local correlate through the politicization of reproductive labor as a site of political contestation. Inflected by a body of work broadly conceived of as social reproduction theory, my sense of social reproduction marks unwaged domestic labor in the home but also any number of affects, actions, and institutions devoted to care that form a racialized division in the global labor force and serve as part of the reproduction of people necessary for capitalist development.<sup>33</sup> As Silvia Federici, a key theorist of this tendency, has pointed out, feminists have demanded wages for housework and imagined forms of intimate care outside the heterosexual family form well before the more well-known currents of Marxist feminism in the 1970s.<sup>34</sup>

This book recovers this archive in order to situate what I call an “intimate theory of the avant-garde.” My emphasis falls on the establishment of a social community rather than a set of aesthetic commitments or experimental forms shared between artists.<sup>35</sup> I focus on the social intimacy of salon cultures that nourish conversations between artistic and political circles. This turn to the salon begins, most simply, by taking up a host of material practices, both inside and outside the home. These forms of intimacy emerge from collaboration in the production of little magazines, manifestos, performances, or political meetings. Affiliation often involves a common language or a common enemy. This wider social nexus might involve lovers, friends, or family but does not necessarily cede to heterosexual models of kinship. Instead, the group form offers a politicized relation of care that does not necessarily entail shared goals or experience. This moves us away from

the critical theories based on the positive affects associated with collectivity, including friendship, affinity, or romance, to a social tie without any determinate mood attached, geared less toward feeling for or with than the bare fact of working together. In this case, what matters is the imagination of a *we* that makes demands. In some cases, this *we* joins other versions of *us* and *ours* in the name of survival. This joining isn't necessarily cause for celebration or comfort. These modes of relation might include the ties between coauthors, collaborators, and lovers; between mothers and children; amid sewing circles; and inside queer salons. But these relations of care extend into the street as well, as a way of sustaining a more public social movement. These are the invisible labors of preparation, the organization of marches, cooking for insurgents, or tending wounds. Here feminized forms of labor connect different kinds of bodies that might lay claim to the category "woman," without necessitating a genital configuration. I follow these relations into prisons and among rioters at the docks, arsonists, hunger strikers, anarchists, exiles, and pamphleteers.

For the public cultures that named themselves avant-garde, this joining up was often ineffectual. The avant-garde imagined art to do all sorts of things that it did not do. Most fantastically, this was the artist provoking revolution or, in the darker case of Ezra Pound, inciting a new guild society of ruler-artists swaying the masses toward their autocratic demands. In hindsight, it is sometimes difficult to argue against Fredric Jameson's melancholic purview of "the determinate failure of all the revolutions that have taken place in human history."<sup>36</sup> Every radical political struggle in the following pages, on the Right and the Left, inarguably, indisputably, failed in terms of its stated ambitions. But that failure, seen from the present, tells us very little. It could not necessarily be foretold by the participants involved. It says nothing about the working existence of politics on the ground or aesthetic formations intertwined with them. To begin with tragedy constructs a narrative based upon the ending that was, as though each work of art and every political action were always already pointing to that ending. At our present moment, it seems more useful to take up the force of this antagonism rather than the tragedy of its failures. I want to consider the way that artists and activists said *no*, *not this*. This *against*, I will argue, changes people and communities in the present tense of its articulation. As a form of intimacy in the key of solidarity, this shared antagonism, as productive of a *we* or *us*,

marks the boundaries of the art that I call avant-garde more so than the naming of an -ism, though the two categories certainly collide.

## Documenting Woman, Human, and Homosexual

One of the challenges of this book has been locating methodologies adequate to the archives under discussion. For this reason, the methodology in this book often departs from more traditional modes of literary scholarship. This difference can be polarizing for readers expecting an area-studies approach or a formalist close reading of orthodox literary genres. A reading of an instruction manual or the notes from a birth-strike meeting will look different from a reading of a novel, potentially in ways that are unsettling or irritating. The readings of novels and poems in the wake of these archives will look different as well. But the avant-gardes were also interested in the unsettling or irritating, through the presentation of everyday found objects like toilets or trashcans as works of art. In aligning these contemporaneous traditions, this book asks: What kinds of archives can account for the daily life of feminist action? In what ways can this archive provide a basis for thinking about rights that moves beyond the sympathetic representations of personal suffering?

As one response to these questions, this book foregrounds what I call the long middle of women's rights movements as a perspective that can account for daily forms of world making as an ongoing process, set apart from any stated demand. To account for this perspective, I leave aside the avant-garde manifesto to focus instead on more incremental archives of practice, including journals, tables of contents, lists of names, meeting minutes, birth control manuals, and prison medical logs. A number of chapters offer theorizations of genres that emerge alongside and through these practices, including the instruction manual, the case study, and the committee meeting. Indeed, throughout this book, there are consistent returns to political meetings, in terms of not just what was collectively decided but also all the more banal processual details: the divisions of tasks; forming of committees; the arguments, heated and flagging; the inevitable boredom, bad behavior, or grandstanding; the compromises, defections, and collective moods. This archival method works to establish an archive of localized actions severed from the



kinds of demands more forcefully stated in manifestos or declarations of right. Rather than foreground a singular subject of action, this perspective allows for a plurality of wills, intentions, and feelings that we might attribute to the people acting together. As a politics of the street or square, this perspective looks to foreground the bodily dimension of action and the material supports it requires: what different bodies need, what they can do or not do, and the ways that they are unequally vulnerable.<sup>37</sup>

For this reason, I situate feminist action as site of both freedom and injury, understood in conjunction with and often productive of disciplinary norms at an institutional level. That is to say, alongside these more local accounts of collective action, this book situates the governmentality of rights at the level of the state and within the transnational arc of empire. Rather than trace what some historians call a “woman to human transition,” I want to put some pressure on the legal categories “woman” and “human” as shifting terrain, subject to sudden reversals, overlap, and incommensurability.<sup>38</sup> Part of this consideration includes a closer look at institutional practices of documentation, particularly through the rise of biological racism and the criminalization of homosexuality. Scholars have traditionally regarded such classifications according to a Foucauldian schema, as a means of subjugation that both controls and constitutes human subjects. I don’t disagree with this view but want to consider other more varied effects of institutional classification beyond the more familiar terrain of discipline.

As one final case study in method, consider one of the stranger afterlives of the Paris Commune, the posthumous appearance of the *pétroleuse* Louise Michel in Magnus Hirschfeld’s magnum opus, *Homosexuality in Men and Women*. First published in 1913, the diagnostic manual frequently cites from a book-length character study of Louise Michel written by Karl von Levetzow. Quoting liberally, Hirschfeld describes a number of unusual traits: as a child, Michel did not care for dolls or cooking; she played outdoors; as an adult, she disliked corsets and high heels; she enjoyed the music of Wagner; she was courageous, almost reckless; she was flat-chested and angular; she did not take much trouble with her appearance; her features were masculine, her demeanor, mannish.<sup>39</sup>

Somewhat infamously, Emma Goldman bristled at this retrospective classification and wrote a lengthy letter in defense of Michel’s heterosexuality. Published in Hirschfeld’s *Yearbook for Sexual Intermediate Types*, the letter

involved some rhetorical contortions. Goldman assures Hirschfeld that she is not prejudiced against homosexuals and notes that she finds her own friends of Uranian disposition above average in terms of charm and intelligence. However, Goldman takes issue with the diagnosis, which presents unfeminine characteristics as evidence of a Uranian nature. Somewhat paradoxically, Goldman then argues von Levetzow point by point. ("As to her face, it is clear to me that von Levetzow never saw Louise smile. If he had done so he would no longer have seen the male in her.")<sup>40</sup>

Set side by side, Goldman's letter and the diagnostic manual muddle the familiar terms of archival recovery. Here the radical feminist letter of protest does not offer a more liberating definition of homosexual identity than the institutional diagnosis, only its inverse. This muddling becomes even more vexed amid the wider historical conjuncture between sexual science and the language of universal rights. At this moment in Germany, a number of early gay rights groups were using the rubric of human rights. In 1903, Johannes Holzmann founded the League for Human Rights (Bund für Menschenrecht) in Berlin, which hosted regular meetings for people interested in sexual freedom and anarchist politics. Inspired by Hirschfeld's Scientific-Humanitarian Committee, in 1924 Henry Gerber founded the first gay rights group in the United States, Chicago's Society for Human Rights.<sup>41</sup> It is tempting to posit the early existence of these human rights groups as a radical queer counterpart to the more conservative institutional history of human rights discourses. However, these organizations were not necessarily emancipatory for the subjects named. After the war, a mass homosexual rights movement in Germany included right-wing nationalists, anti-Semites, liberals, Social Democrats, and communists, all in favor of legal reform but of different minds about how to get there.<sup>42</sup> Among these currents we can locate a number of gay advocacy groups calling themselves "Human Rights Leagues," most prominently in Friedrich Raduzweit's popular journal *News for Human Rights (Blätter für Menschenrecht)*. However, the *Blätter* was deeply interested in its own project of classification. The journal argued for a distinction between good and bad citizens of the state: between manly homosexual men and the unfortunately swishy or deviant types, including cross-dressers, sex workers, and fairies.

This more conservative invocation of human rights, as a way to distinguish between good and bad homosexual citizens, offers one particular ruse

of counterhistory: the implication that the recovery of a feminist, queer, or erased history will be more egalitarian than the dominant institutional narrative. To study the public reception and renegotiation of the categories “woman,” “human,” and “homosexual” does not necessarily result in a clear binary: the bad institutional narrative against its emancipatory avant-garde reconfiguration. Nor do I mean to dismiss the historical gains and efficacy of human rights language for grassroots activism ongoing at the present moment. Instead, as a methodological framework in my work more widely, I am interested in two related perspectives: first, the institutional configuration of identity-based rights as a vexed domain and, second, the movement from identity-based rights claims for recognition to collective practices of citizenship, in all their contradictions, lulls, and fracture.



This book is divided into three parts. The first locates early discourses of the human alongside the presumed inhumanity of the female citizen. Rather than endow these figures with full personhood after the fact, this section considers the ways that the juridical inhumanity of the female citizen allows for a reimagining of political change. Not recognized as part of the industrial proletariat or public sphere, the female citizen provides an opening for the reconstruction of who might participate in revolutionary struggle, what kinds of rights could be demanded, and where such struggles might take place. Toward this end, part 1, “Sex and Citizenship in the Atlantic Archives,” repositions the hazy formation often referred to as first-wave feminism as an integral part of socialist and avant-garde radicalism in the early twentieth century.

Chapter 1 offers a study of two contemporaneous trials on either side of the Atlantic: for the *pétroleuse* of the Paris Commune and the female insurgents accused of arson in Martinique’s Insurrection of the South. The military trials showcase the juridical construction of the female citizen as a paradox, active in the public sphere but not recognized by the state. This archive provides the groundwork for the rest of the book, through the historical gendering of citizenship and the formation of the juridical human amid the rise of positive law. A final section turns to Ina Césaire’s play *Fire’s Daughters* (*Rosanie Soleil*), as an animation of the Martinican insurgency that offers new pathways to reconsider the entanglements between practices

of sexual citizenship and avant-garde performativity. Césaire shifts the time and place of women's political practice by resituating reproductive labor as a practice of political contestation.

Chapter 2 builds an archive of female citizenship through the daily life of tactics in the militant suffragette movement. Through attention to a catalogue-heavy archive, including mug shots, arrest records, and prison medical reports, this chapter examines the textures of suffragette action as a world-building practice. In suffragette autobiography, feminist periodical cultures, and Rebecca West's *The Sentinel: An Incomplete Early Novel*, narrative does not develop toward some future gain, like the vote or revolution. Instead, recursive, often repetitive plots create a long middle of protest and police repression. Rather than an emphasis on demands for the future, here the content of the women's revolution is the transformation of public space and social relations in the present tense. The chapter ends with a reading of serialized accounts of the hunger strike, to take up the ways that this narrative framework coincided with the tactical use of human rights rhetoric in suffragette attempts to classify the force-feeding of hunger-striking prisoners as domestic torture.

While the first section of the book offers a narrative of feminist gains, part 2, "The Reproductive Atlantic," follows the ways that suffrage reform corresponded with increasing state regulation of sexuality, particularly along racial lines. Part 2 thus offers a biopolitical history of human rights and revolution, taking up birth control legislation, miscegenation, sexual violence, and larger questions of public health. Beginning with the early years of the transatlantic birth control movement, chapter 3 considers anarchosyndicalist tendencies that aligned the sex rights of women with social revolution. Rather than viewing reproductive freedom as a *right to privacy* to be granted by the state, these groups positioned birth control as a direct action, a *tactic for equality* in the larger struggle against capitalism. The first half of the chapter centers on a particular tactic generally left out of the wider birth control movement: the proletarian birth strike. Around the turn of the century, neo-Malthusians and anarchists argued that women should stop having children in order to fell capitalism through an undersupply of workers. The second half of the chapter traces the convergence between industrial production and female reproduction in a set of adjacent texts, including Angelina Weld Grimké's lynching stories for the *Birth Control Review* and the 1951 petition to the United Nations, *We Charge Genocide*. Moving beyond the

American birth control movement into what I call the reproductive Atlantic, this cluster of texts makes up a distinctly feminist theory of right. Rather than a focus on the agential subject—the “good female character” with access to birth control—this expanded field of feminist print culture turns to a more tactical practice of reproductive justice as a human right.

The interwar era also gave rise to a much more reactionary biopolitics, as I discuss in chapter 4. In the spring of 1920, E. D. Morel flooded the British socialist press with a series of articles on the French occupation of the Rhineland. Morel’s pamphlets touched upon the conditions of the Versailles Treaty but focused particularly, and with particular hysteria, on the presence of black colonial soldiers on the Franco-German border. In what would become an international print sensation, the “Black Horror on the Rhine” propaganda aligned the sexual threat posed by the African troops with the metaphorical “rape” of Germany through an unfairly punitive foreign policy. The Berlin Dada artist Hannah Höch explicitly takes up the Rhineland controversy, but these works tie the fate of the “Rhineland bastards” to the sexual science of early gay rights movements. For Höch, experiments with the photographic image allow for inhuman combinations that literalize relations of enmity. In this way, Höch’s work allows for a mapping of the intimate relationship between rights and injuries precisely at the moment these rights are becoming articulated through the biological determinism of a human subject.

Part 3, “Convergences in Institutional Human Rights,” takes up a more direct interaction among avant-garde circles, feminist activism, and the formation of the United Nations at midcentury. Here the administrative processes of international law, seen through archives of the drafting process, offer a counterpoint to more grassroots forms of feminist and queer activism on the ground. Chapter 5 thus focuses on family law, beginning in the years leading up to World War II, when European legal practice began to regulate legal personhood against the specter of depopulation. The chapter takes up this juridical history alongside the surrealist work of Claude Cahun, a flamboyantly queer poet, actress, photographer, and activist in the French resistance. In Cahun’s later work, experiments with chance shift registers, moving from a celebratory fracturing of the bourgeois subject to an uncanny reproduction of the unmaking of persons through juridical practice. In this way, Cahun’s prison writing recodes the chance procedure, moving from

aleatory mysticism to the purely contingent selection of people persecuted in Vichy France and National Socialist Germany. Departing from traditional accounts of Cahun's work as a drag performance, the chapter argues that the prison writings offer an inquiry into the boundaries of the human and inhuman, citizen and noncitizen, in light of wide-scale rights abuses during World War II.

Finally, the last chapter reconsiders the committee meeting as a form of social life, decision making, care work, and governmentally central to the early development of the United Nations. In contrast to a more traditional understanding of the public sphere as a space of rational-critical debate among equals, this turn to one of the less-celebrated technologies of social organization, the committee, highlights the daily practices of government among markedly unequal bodies. In so doing, I look to establish an alternative methodology for human rights critique, and open up a somewhat massive bureaucratic archive by reconsidering the daily life of the committee meeting. This shift in attention allows for a more flexible genealogy of the human and human rights, one that can pivot between UN bureaucracy and the working existence of black feminist organizing in the colonies. Here I turn to the Négritude author and UN ambassador Paulette Nardal, whose monthly periodical *La Femme dans la Cité* published regular updates on the United Nations, alongside editorials arguing that newly enfranchised Martinican women were particularly well adapted to continue the UN's "civilizing process" among the island's working poor. This little-known journal also participated in the wider context of Négritude print cultures, publishing poems, songs, short stories, and folktales of a quite different political stripe. Reading back and forth across the pages of *La Femme dans la Cité*, this chapter locates the emergence of a black counterpublic sphere rendered through the grassroots committee meeting as an alternative practice of sociality and care.

My epilogue turns to the development of social reproduction theory in the work of Silvia Federici and others, to offer a reading of the witches, crones, and fantastic beasts in Leonora Carrington's midcentury novel *The Hearing Trumpet*. Written in postrevolutionary Mexico in the 1950s, *The Hearing Trumpet* was not published until the 1970s, at what many consider to be the end of the avant-garde, the end of actually existing socialism, and the beginning of second-wave feminism. My reading of the text complicates these

historical arcs from the perspective of Cold War Mexico, through Carington's juxtaposition of the marvelous with the prospect of atomic devastation.



This book began in Oakland, during the Movement of Squares, as a way to think through the working existence of publicly reclaimed spaces. It was finished in New Haven, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn, amid the rise of Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, and the Trump presidency. From the vantage of our current moment, I don't turn to the historical past for lessons, so much as to sound out some of the narratives that have been erased or forgotten and understand why others have become so familiar to almost seem like truth. For this reason, I am skeptical of the stories of progress often attached to first-wave feminism or the defeatist summary of socialist revolutions past. Instead of drawing up a balance sheet of the twentieth century, seen through the lens of success or failure, I turn to what these formations might have looked like on the ground, while things were happening, before a decisive end could be determined.

Not that grand narratives don't have their functional place. It is true enough that in the salons and along the barricades, there were women who wanted everything, not just the parliamentary vote. By necessity this wanting involved rejection, antagonism, opposition, but it also took on other forms more casual, friendly, daily, or minute. Looking backward from the present, well after "a century of failed revolutions," I want to understand this period not from what we know to be true, now, but from what it might have looked like then, not knowing what the end of the story would be. This perspective is always a fiction, of course. It is a posture just as much as left-wing melancholy or the heroics of deeds. In many ways, this book is an attempt to exorcise those last two tendencies, of tragedy or heroism, as poses that suggest the history of attempts to change society, to manage it differently or start again, are all already over, finished for good. What the following pages attempt is a more modest effort, to capture what that antagonism looked like, what that wanting looked like, then, there, at what must have seemed like a beginning.

# PART II

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## THE REPRODUCTIVE ATLANTIC



# 3

## The Art of Not Having Children

### Birth Strike, Sabotage, and the Reproductive Atlantic

**P**ublic lecture, Société de géographie, Paris, 1892: Journalists in attendance estimated that the crowd of antivivisectionists, anarchists, syndicalists, university students, feminists, and neo-Malthusians numbered nearly two thousand people.<sup>1</sup> This is probably an exaggeration, amid a general reportage high on outrage, but nevertheless it is certain that Marie Huot's lecture on population control attracted a large and lively audience. As secretary of the League Against Vivisection, Huot was already notorious as an animal rights activist given over to militant direct actions, including an umbrella attack on the anatomist C. E. Brown-Séguard.<sup>2</sup> She was also a proponent of animal population control. In one of her more controversial anecdotes, Huot described how she would dispose of newborn puppies by tying a heavy stone around their necks and then throwing them in a body of water.<sup>3</sup> According to a different account, Huot advised the audience to control their housecat population by taking kittens directly from their mothers' flanks and drowning them in a pot of water with a heavy lid.<sup>4</sup> Allegedly, Huot claimed that the same might be done for unwanted human infants.<sup>5</sup> Huot went on to argue for the full-scale extinction of the human species through the use of birth control in order to end suffering for both man and animal. She noted, however, that she was primarily concerned with the welfare of animals.

A week later, *La Semaine Vétérinaire* wrote up a disapproving account of Huot's lecture as a call for a "birth strike," or in a more literal translation, a "strike of wombs [*grève des ventres*]."<sup>6</sup> Whether or not Huot used these words remains a subject of scholarly debate.<sup>7</sup> However, it is certain that Huot made

famous a conceptual analogy that would migrate into loftier political circles on the international extreme Left over the next four decades. In this analogy, the production of people to fight in wars is likened to the industrial production of commodities. Through the birth strike, women might call the production of people to a halt and therefore occupy a position of bargaining power with the nation-state, potentially stalling the expansion of capitalist enterprise more widely.

Though never dominant in the wider movement for birth control reform, the birth strike was most closely associated with Paul Robin's League for Human Regeneration, which published Huot's lecture as a pamphlet in 1909. Financed in part through the distribution of birth control manuals, the league quickly took off as an international neo-Malthusian organization, with offices in France, Germany, Italy, Argentina, Mexico, and Cuba. In the years before World War II, debates on the birth strike appeared in both the transatlantic worker's newspapers and avant-garde little magazines, developing beyond a single institutional formation into little-known fringe groups and anarchist offshoots. Across these more international domains, adherents of the birth strike dropped the matter of purposeful human extinction. Instead, they argued that the limitation of reproduction would deprive capitalism of workers and soldiers to exploit, eventually resulting in a world-wide revolution.

The birth strike militarizes the language of human population, but it makes proletarian women, and not the state, the agents of political change. This is a eugenic argument, but it is not a part of the more familiar biopolitical narratives of the early twentieth century. Traditionally, scholars interested in the history of population control have tended to focus on the intersection between eugenic science and the modern nation-state. In these histories, eugenic science offers justification for state management of the population, be it through legislation surrounding contraception, the criminalization of homosexuality, the forced sterilization of ethnic groups, or state-sanctioned genocide. In each case, population control operates in the service of the nation-state, to shore up racial homogeneity and the heteronormative family as constitutive of proper citizenship. For adherents of the proletarian birth strike, workers' self-management of reproduction offers a biopolitics *against* the state.

Adherents for the birth strike thus framed nonprocreative sex as a political act, shifting the public/private divide of reproductive labor in ways that

bear on the reproductive politics of our present history. Since *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) established the legality of birth control, a number of landmark rulings on reproductive rights in the United States have hinged on the privacy doctrine, including the legalization of interracial marriage (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967), abortion (*Roe v. Wade*, 1973), sodomy (*Lawrence v. Texas*, 2003), and same-sex marriage (*Obergefell v. Hodges*, 2015). In light of this juridical history, legal scholars have long since argued that the right to privacy is a poor foundation for reproductive rights because it upholds a distinction between the private sphere of the home and the public sphere of politics.<sup>8</sup> The right to privacy allows for the state's noninterference in the domestic sphere, or the "right to be left alone," in a way that presupposes the domestic sphere as a realm of freedom for all people. In this way, the privacy doctrine renders matters of sexuality and reproduction somehow outside the boundaries of the political, beyond the interests or responsibility of the state.

I will argue that this more familiar legal narrative of reproductive rights, through the language of personal privacy, obscures a more radical lineage of feminist, queer, and antiracist organizing in the early twentieth century. Rather than viewing reproductive liberty as an individual *right to privacy* to be granted by the state, these groups positioned the birth strike as a direct action, a collective *tactic for equality* in the larger struggle against capitalism. To track this imagination of feminist direct action, the first half of this chapter takes up the proletarian birth strike and sabotage as explicitly conjoined public tactics. In transatlantic print cultures, the proletarian birth strike invokes a class divide between workers and owners. The strike favors one side of this antagonism, so that human regeneration occurs through technoscience that favors the working classes. However, this classed narrative of freedom takes its coordinates from the legacies of the transatlantic slave trade and contemporaneous colonial development policy. Across these documents, full humanity becomes a teleological category set at the end of the proletarian revolution. The full humanity of the postrevolutionary period comes into view in contrast to the zero degrees of freedom assigned to slaves and colonial subjects, thus shifting the geographic terrain of what is commonly called the American birth control movement.

To account for this conjuncture, this chapter turns to a transnational framework, or what I call the "Reproductive Atlantic." On one hand, the Atlantic serves as a literal geography: opening in Paris, this chapter then

turns to 1913 Berlin, skirts across middle America, and ends in Harlem at midcentury. However, I will also theorize the Atlantic as an analytic category in its own right, building on the insights of Paul Gilroy, Brent Hayes Edwards, Laura Doyle, and Alys Eve Weinbaum.<sup>9</sup> In so doing, I torque Gilroy's original formulation, focusing more particularly on the Atlantic intersections of white and black women's reproduction. This intersection, what Weinbaum calls the "race-reproduction bind," offers one concrete way to move beyond a progressive historical narrative, instead probing the mutual relation between reproductive rights and racialized injuries. In so doing, I look to resituate reproductive justice as a neglected site in the historical formation of human rights discourses. This turn to the interrelation between domestic and international law begins with a question: Why are some injuries understood in a national framework and others subject to international norms? Or, as a number of feminist scholars of international law have asked in a more speculative framework: What happens when crimes that happen in the private sphere become tactically resituated in terms of international forms of solidarity, such that domestic violence might be reconsidered as torture, police violence as genocide, or access to gender-affirming surgery as a right to life?<sup>10</sup> The end of this chapter takes up these questions of international jurisdiction more directly through the U.S. Civil Rights Congress's 1951 petition to the United Nations *We Charge Genocide*.

For now, by marking this Atlantic geography, I reconsider debates on reproductive futurity beyond the heteronormative white family and the nation-state, moving into a series of entanglements between racialized groups, non-normative sexualities, and diasporic communities. Taking the alignment of women's reproduction and industrial production as a starting point, the chapter surveys new models of reading and action premised on the medical protocol or, in its more literary offshoots, the instruction manual. In this discourse of instruction, theories of action produce subjects that are distinctly experimental, though not necessarily through the rubric traditionally associated with the avant-gardes. Akin to the manifesto, the instruction manual—for birth control, industrial sabotage, or, in some cases, both—focuses on the *what* of actions rather than the *who* of an injured subject. Reading across sex manuals, birth control pamphlets, little magazines, and petitions for their instructive content, I argue that these discourses move beyond our more traditional accounts of birth control as a rights-based demand in order to establish a distinctly internationalist practice of reproductive justice.

## Proletarian Birth Strike

Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) public meeting, Berlin 1913: The crowd was mostly women. Tables were removed from the hall so that there would be more space for people to stand. After 8:00 PM, the police had to seal the doors as a safety measure, to prevent overcrowding. Klara Zetkin was the first speaker, and she didn't want to be there. Right at the start, Zetkin called the birth strike a "bourgeois quackery."<sup>11</sup> To have to treat the subject at all with any serious consideration, at this low point in the history of social democracy, was an embarrassment, she claimed. The logic of the argument that followed was a bit slippery. Zetkin was known for composing her speeches quite carefully in advance, so one wonders if these words, entered in the meeting's minutes, were a bit ad hoc. First, Zetkin argued that the artificial restriction of births as a "weapon in the revolutionary struggle" equated population decline with the more important work of trade unions and social reform. In what might be the speech's most burning insult, Zetkin called this sort of equation a "bourgeois-anarchist viewpoint" centered on the individual family rather than the proletariat as a whole. Zetkin concluded with the SPD party line: the thing to focus on, the real enemy, was the capitalist system. Anything else was a distraction.

A few weeks later, there would be another meeting, with much of the same. Here Zetkin was a bit more conciliatory. She argued that birth control, "like love, religion, literary taste, etc.," was a private matter not under the purview of the SPD.<sup>12</sup> At this second meeting, the Marxist revisionist Alfred Bernstein repeated the anarchist-syndicalist view, more prominent in France: if proletarian women collectively limit their offspring, in what was effectively a birth strike, this would deprive the state of soldiers and factory workers. Without such a "life marrow" to exploit, capitalism would be brought to its knees. From there on out, things got more antagonistic. Zetkin was booed. The women in the crowd favored the birth strike, even if the party leadership did not. One audience member, a Mrs. Schulz, suggested that Comrade Zetkin did not know anything about the conditions of the poor burdened by an abundance of children. Mrs. Schulz to Zetkin: "You strike yourself." At this point, the meeting is called to an end.

Perpetually inconsistent on the matter of birth control, the SPD had been pressured to put a debate on the agenda because Drs. Moses and Bernstein had been raising the issue in public meetings. Articles in *Vorwärts* and *Die Neue Zeit* had taken up the matter at length, most often with reference to

the then popular brochure *Blessed with Children: And No End to It?* The brochure was written by the Swiss doctor and anarchist Fritz Brupbacher, who had been to Paris and encountered Marie Huot's work in 1898.<sup>13</sup> Though a little later than anarchist currents elsewhere on the continent, the German socialist debate on the birth strike that came into prominence in 1913 was therefore part of a more expansive intersection between leftist and eugenic groups across Europe.

At this time in France, anarchism and neo-Malthusianism had become nearly synonymous.<sup>14</sup> Under the tutelage of Paul Robin, the use of birth control became framed as "a sign of revolt."<sup>15</sup> Posters for the League de la régénération humaine proclaimed a "revolution in procreation" directed toward the common good. After an international conference at The Hague in 1910, Robin's organization included neo-Malthusian groups across a wide swath of southern Europe and South America. Liga de regeneración humana was represented by Catalan revolutionaries in eastern Spain and, across the Atlantic, in Argentine labor journals including *La Protesta Humana*.<sup>16</sup> The far-flung groups associated with the league did not use the same language or program but remained distinct for their close association with anarchism and the framing of birth control as a revolutionary weapon against the ruling classes.

These debates can be found across a wide array of anarchosyndicalist periodicals and birth control manuals. In Italy, the most popular book on neo-Malthusian politics was the anarchist Secondo Giorni's *L'art di non fare figli* (The art of not having children), a birth control manual illustrated with woodcuts that demonstrated the use of contraceptives.<sup>17</sup> In New York, *The Masses* regularly covered the proletarian birth strike debates in Germany, along with homegrown editorials on the revolutionary effects of birth control (figure 3.1). Amid consistent coverage of the Margaret Sanger indictment, the anarchist journal *Mother Earth* published a special birth control number in 1916, in which Emma Goldman argued for birth control as both a women's right and an antiwar measure: "Capitalism cannot do without militarism and since the masses of people furnish the material to be destroyed in the trenches and on the battlefield, capitalism must have a large race."<sup>18</sup> In 1920, Margaret Sanger called for "A Birth Strike to End World Famine" with more precise direction, asking all women to refrain from childbirth for a period of five years.<sup>19</sup>

It would be possible to follow the wider debates about birth control across a spate of radical presses and little magazines. In recent years, both Layne





**FIGURE 3.1** Max Eastman, “Revolutionary Birth-Control.” Drawing by K. R. Chamberlain: “The Jones Family Group (Mr. Jones believes that Family-Limitation is criminal).” *The Masses* 6, no. 10 (July 1915): 21.

Parrish Craig and Aimee Armande Wilson have written important accounts of interwar modernism through its convergence with the wider birth control movement.<sup>20</sup> However, amid the vast archive of birth control discourses in the early twentieth century, I am interested in the narrower matter of the birth strike, for the ways that it likens industrial production and women’s reproduction. To look more closely at this likeness in the leftist press reveals two distinctly narrative modes: the first uses narrative to render a sympathetic engagement with a suffering subject; the second sets aside narrative in favor of instructions, or a series of actions to be accomplished in the future tense, amid many subjects.

As I noted in the introduction to this book, scholars of liberal human and civil rights often rely on this first mode, of sympathetic identification, to account for the emergence of universal rights discourses more generally. In *Inventing Human Rights: A History*, Lynn Hunt identifies the eighteenth-century epistolary novel as a key narrative invention that paved the way for the discourses of universal rights. Through the fictional exchange of letters,

these novels allowed readers to empathize with literary characters across the lines of class, gender, or nation. Through this passionate identification with the suffering of strangers, “epistolary novels taught their readers nothing less than a new psychology and in this process laid the foundations for a new social and political order.”<sup>21</sup> Hunt thus resituates Jürgen Habermas’s account of the rise of the public sphere in the more specific terms of rights discourse. Following Habermas, Hunt argues that the epistolary novel made readers aware of a universal capacity for interiority through the public declaration of private feelings. Though Hunt notes that this sympathetic identification did not always result in social action, that feeling with and acting for might naturally go together is a long-standing expectation of humanitarian narratives. In response, a number of scholars have criticized the expectation that making visible unnoted or unmarked suffering will result in action. In Joseph Slaughter’s critical summation, “all sentimental models of humanitarianism valorize a disturbing condescending dynamic by which noble adult male master readers learn, from stories of suffering, to empathize with the common illiterate female child servants.”<sup>22</sup>

The IWW pamphlet *Sabotage: The Conscious Withdrawal of the Workers’ Efficiency* (1915) begins with some of the more practical problems with this familiar humanitarian ideal. The author and Wobbly activist Elizabeth Gurley Flynn writes on behalf of workers who already understand “that neither appeals for sympathy nor abstract rights will make for better conditions.” She explains,

For instance, take an industrial establishment such as a silk mill, where men and women and little children work ten hours a day for an average wage of between six and seven dollars a week. Could any one of them, or a committee representing the whole, hope to induce the employer to give better conditions by appealing to his sympathy, by telling him of his misery, the hardship and the poverty of their lives; or could they do it by appealing to his sense of justice? Suppose that an individual working man or woman went to an employer and said, “I make, in my capacity as wage worker in this factory, so many dollars’ worth of wealth every day and justice demands that you give me at least half.” The employer would probably have him removed to the nearest lunatic asylum.<sup>23</sup>

Rather than tell a story about injustice, Flynn’s manual offers instructions for industrial sabotage as a tactic for change. Rather than convince or explain,



the pamphlet suggests many ways that workers might collectively sabotage their own production as a bargaining tool. Though *Sabotage* contains many stories, it is not itself a narrative and certainly does not attempt to capture the reader's sympathy. Instead, *Sabotage* offers the reader precise instructions. In the event that the more well-known tactics of strike or collective bargaining have failed, Flynn enumerates a number of other, more experimental forms of contestation. For instance, on the docks, longshoremen might frequently drop boxes of fragile materials or let wine kegs fall into the sea. In the factory, a bit of vinegar can be put in the reed of the loom, to ruin the silk. In restaurants, a more casual attitude toward rats and mice might have concrete effects.

Toward the end of the pamphlet, Flynn turns to a different sort of sabotage, through self-directed population control. This section begins with praise of syndicalist propaganda in Europe, voiced as a quotation from a model worker: "Not only will we limit the product in the factory, but we are going to limit the supply of workers on the market."<sup>24</sup> Flynn sees this family planning as way to produce a better quality of offspring through lower quantity. In this case, the limitation of offspring is a collective act "in the spirit that produces sabotage," if not a "strictly scientific definition."

Flynn's consideration of birth control among other tactics of industrial sabotage may seem like an unlikely inclusion, but contemporaneous print cultures frequently coupled family planning and more familiar strategies of direct action. In the birth control issue of *Mother Earth*, Reb Raney's "The Crowbar vs. Words" unambiguously affirms Flynn's argument. Raney begins, "When a person gets ready to Act, the first thing that person does is to Forget THEORIES."<sup>25</sup> The idiosyncratic capitalization reveals a general sense of exasperation on the part of the author, who complains about the uselessness of "Paper teachings," "meaningless treaties," against "half-baked decrees, dust-covered prerogatives and over-clothed Decreers."<sup>26</sup> Raney notes that the readership of *Mother Earth* most likely already supports birth control, so need not be convinced. The article therefore does not argue for the good of birth control and focuses instead on instructions for future actions. Raney informs her readers that Emma Goldman is currently in jail for distributing pamphlets that offer direct information about how to prevent births. This is not a warning. Raney would like to see a general expansion of such illegal actions: "DO the thing that she did only do it Moreso." However, if we consider the issue of *Mother Earth* as a unit, this division between *feeling* with and *doing* for are not so clearly separated. Directly after Raney's

article appears “A Human Document,” an open letter addressed to Emma Goldman. The letter begins with the autobiographical life narrative of G, a thirty-four-year-old woman. Here is the epistolary mode of a suffering subject: G narrates her own birth to an overworked, frail mother and addict father. She details a series of disabilities owing to these conditions: first partial blindness, then a hip disease that left one limb shorter and caused muscle degeneration. Early on, doctors tell G that she will not live through childhood or that her children will be crippled and blind. For these reasons, G renounces all thoughts of marriage. She has found a beloved of her own advanced age but cannot marry unless she discovers a way to not have children. It is easy enough to note the ways this letter makes its appeals, “in the name of human love,” according to a distinct hierarchy. “I have come to you with my ‘hurt’ just as a little child runs to its mother for comfort and sympathy,” writes G.<sup>27</sup> The author calls herself a “delicate-looking, harmless little creature” awaiting rescue. However, the letter is more canny than it might seem at first glance for the ways the humanitarian narrative also serves as a veiled site of instruction. Late in the letter, G explains how a woman might prevent contraception. She puts it as a question: “Will that book by Dr. Robertson, ‘Limitation of Offspring’ give me the knowledge I crave?”<sup>28</sup> The answer to the question is yes, as we expect G well knows, thus making the letter both a plea for sympathy and an indirect form of birth control instruction.

Indeed, many of the textual effects I have noted thus far are the result of censorship. To avoid the censors, articles might name a book about contraception but not the methods found within it. The letter thus tells and doesn't tell: what appears to be a call for sympathy is also an indirect suggestion for action. In these cases, the reading public is the hypothetical political actor, as a medium for the distribution of medical knowledge. The object distributed, be it Dr. Robertson's *Limitation of Offspring* or any other of the hundreds of manuals available in the early twentieth century, is a form of knowledge gestured toward but not reproduced. Moving from *Mother Earth* to early-twentieth-century birth control manuals more widely, we might ask: How do we read an instruction manual as both a textual form and an illegally circulated medical practice?

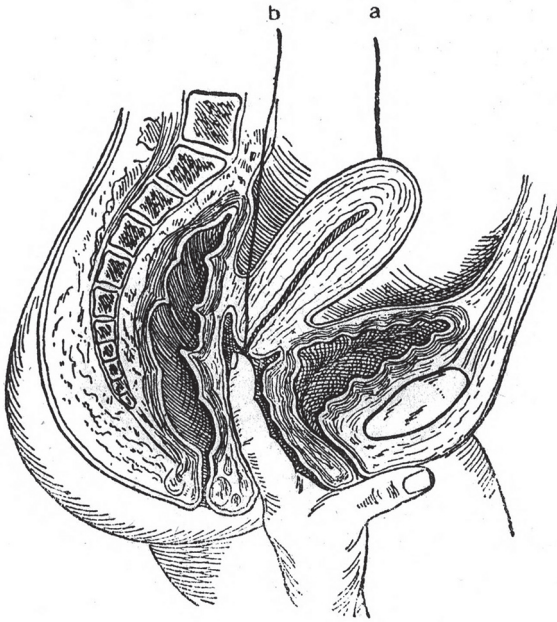
By the end of World War I, the transatlantic circulation of birth control materials had become anatomically explicit. These documents tend to offer lists and diagrams, with little to no literary flair. *Why and How the Poor*

*Should Not Have Many Children*, by Emma Goldman and Ben Reitman, describes to the reader how to use condoms, cervical caps, and diaphragms, alongside a number of home-made douches. Marie Stopes's *Wise Parenthood* (1918) offers a guide to contraceptive techniques much more explicit than her more well-known classic *Married Love*. I cannot begin to catalogue the birth control manuals that proliferated in the interwar period so will restrict my closer consideration to one moment from Sanger's *Family Limitation*, which features an anatomical drawing of a woman's pelvis to show the proper insertion of a diaphragm (figure 3.2).

Follow the directions given with each box, and learn to adjust it correctly; one can soon learn to feel that it is on right. After the pessary has been placed into the vagina deeply, it can be fitted well over the neck of the womb. One can feel that it is fitted by pressing the finger around the soft part of the pessary, which should completely cover the mouth of the womb. If it is properly adjusted there will be no discomfort, the man will be unconscious that anything is used, and no germ or semen can enter the womb. . . .

I recommend the use of the pessary as the most convenient, the cheapest and the safest. Any nurse or doctor will teach one how to adjust it; then women can teach each other.<sup>29</sup>

If this text is a medical technology, what kind of subjects does this technology make? Sanger is easy enough to locate as a source of authority. She notes matters of preference: the pessary as preferable to the postcoital douche with a solution of boric acid, alum, citric acid, or cider vinegar. More interesting is the hypothesized *you* of the reader, who begins as a singular subject, identified with the anatomical drawing, then expands into a more diffuse network of information: "Any nurse or doctor will teach one how to adjust it; then women can teach each other." This sort of branching occurs more explicitly in the flowchart "How to Establish a Birth Control Clinic," which visualizes networked subjects in a series of interlinked bodies: citizens, physicians, ministers, social agencies, lay committees, and so on (figure 3.3). The how-to poster pictures a series of steps as a visual hierarchy, rendering *then* or *next* as lines and squares. Though arranged chronologically, these steps show a lateral entanglement between persons and institutions necessary for health care outside of legal medical institutions. This picturing



Finger touching mouth of womb.  
a—womb ; b—mouth of womb.

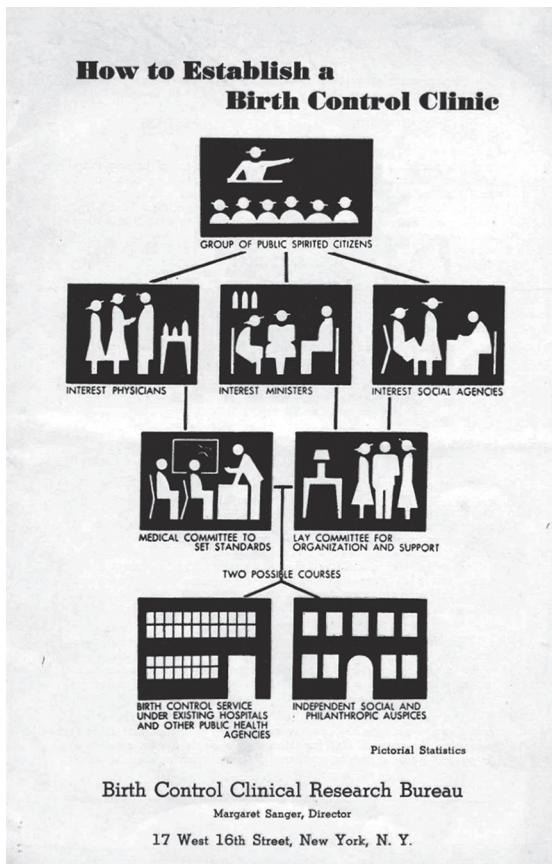
### SPONGES.

**FIGURE 3.2** Margaret Sanger, *Family Limitation*, 6th ed. (1917), 13.

represents the reader to herself, as a hypothetical figure-to-be. By following the steps of the how-to guide, the reader inhabits the role of the skirted icons pictured. In this way, the how-to poster or the birth control instruction manual are not so much narratives as procedures directed at the second person: *you*. These procedural texts enumerate steps toward reproductive autonomy that include the reader as a hypothetical political subject connected to a wider public sphere.

The early birth control manuals and clinics thus offer a clear precursor to better-known second-wave efforts to seize the means of reproduction through what became known as the women's health care movement. In a groundbreaking history on the convergences between feminism and

technoscience, Michelle Murphy focuses our attention on the ways that this movement emerged through a diverse set of techniques shared outside of legalized medical institutions: health manuals, homemade abortion devices, self-help seminars, consciousness-raising groups, and living room health clinics. Rather than frame these groups through the language of resistance or revolutionary subjectivity, Murphy turns to what she calls “protocol feminism”: “a mobile set of practices, a mode for arranging knowledge production and health care, in other words, a *protocol*—a *procedural*



**FIGURE 3.3** Pamphlet, “How to Establish a Birth Control Clinic,” Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau, undated.

Source: Birth Control Clinical research Bureau, New York, NY. Margaret Sanger Research Bureau Records, Courtesy of the Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College.

*script that strategically assembles technologies, exchange, epistemologies, subjects, and so on.*"<sup>30</sup> In this consideration of protocol, Murphy names a set of formal guidelines as well as the "choreographed arrangement of subject positions and institutional players"; this arrangement then generates historically specific capacities for the subjects involved, "to act, to matter, to care, to be counted, to attach, to emote, to narrate, to ignore, to work, to value, to politicize, and so on."<sup>31</sup> In other words, these protocols make up a field of possibility and vulnerability for different kinds of politicized subjects.

Turning from Murphy's work back to the medical diagrams in *Family Limitation*, the formation of the subject hypothesized by the text, the subject that identifies with the pictured woman, is a subject formed *through* a set of learned techniques. "Any nurse or doctor will teach one how to adjust it; then women can teach each other." The hypothesized readership is a subject that comes after the mobilization of protocol. In a more formal sense, the hypothesized subject, the feminist who uses illegal methods of birth control, moves from the future to the present. That is to say, our sense of this person, as a subject, emerges through the processes detailed in the book.

In the next section, a closer attention to this strange temporality will allow for wider reconsideration of the discourses surrounding birth control as a medical protocol that produces a distinct characterological form. This turn to character does not offer a psychological distinction between flat and round, nor does it point to the distribution of the reader's attention in terms of major or minor. Instead, the humanity of the female character is a teleological process made through a process of collective actions. This characterological form crosses the genre boundaries between history and fiction. It produces a subject as the answer to a question. The question emerges through a consideration of a famous historical personality and a hypothetical future, as in "What would Emma Goldman do?"

## The Subject of Tactics, or What Would Emma Goldman Do?

A strategy requires a subject with both will and power. Strategy also depends upon a specific spatial relation. The city, army, or business requires a place of its own, a kind of base, from which potential competitors or enemies might be managed. In the years after the war, the increasingly professionalized American Birth Control League would become such an institution and

develop a long-term strategy for the legalization of contraceptives. However, in the early decades of the twentieth century, the considerably less organized anarchist and syndicalist proponents of birth control focused instead on direct action in different terms, as a tactic. For Michel de Certeau, a tactic names a mobile action belonging to no proper person and no proper place. “The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power. It does not have the means to *keep to itself*, at a distance, in a position of withdrawal, foresight, and self-collection.”<sup>32</sup> If the subject of strategy is a robust agent, a fully developed person or institution, the subject of tactics is something more difficult to name, without a distinct location or premeditated goals.

To locate this subject of tactics, I turn to the short-lived anarchist newsletter *The Woman Rebel: A Monthly Journal of Militant Thought* (1914). In wider histories of the American birth control movement, *The Woman Rebel* is often remarked upon but seldom read with close attention. An early, largely independent production of Margaret Sanger, the magazine took its subtitle taken from an IWW pamphlet, a translation of the French that comes, more distantly, from the French socialist Louis Auguste Blanqui: “No Gods No Masters.” The subtitle begins to express the ways that *The Woman Rebel* was not explicitly focused on reproductive rights but associated with a larger problem of class struggle. At this early moment in her career, Sanger connected birth control, a term she coined in the newsletter, with the struggles of the working class, arguing that only when women were sexually emancipated, their energies redirected from their families, could a social revolution take place.

The journal advertised for a particular type of woman reader. A subsection of the April 1914 edition announces, “REBEL WOMEN WANTED”:

WHO deny the right of the State to deprive women of such knowledge as would enable them to take upon themselves voluntary motherhood.

WHO deny the right of the State to prohibit such knowledge which would add to the freedom and happiness of the people.

WHO demand that those desiring to live together in love shall be provided with such knowledge and experience as Science has developed, which would prevent conception.

WHO will assist in the work of increasing the demand for this information.



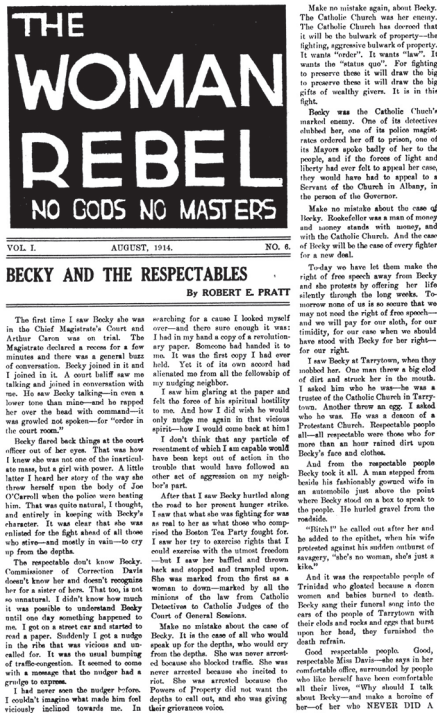


FIGURE 3.4 *The Woman Rebel* 1, no. 6 (August 1914): 1.

WHO have the courage and backbone to fight with "THE WOMAN REBEL."

Against this outrageous suppression, whereby a woman has no control of the function of motherhood.

WHO are willing to enter this fight, and continue to the end.<sup>33</sup>

This might be an advertisement for women already in existence, to bring like minds together. However, the list of wanted women, and much of the content of *The Woman Rebel*, is better understood as a set of instructions geared toward the future. Like Flynn's manual for sabotage, the magazine hypothesizes a female subject who is made through a series of actions. Within the wider arc of *The Woman Rebel*, this advertisement is a bit of an anomaly.



Most often, these instructions for women come in the form of historical lessons. Each issue of *The Woman Rebel* includes a number of short biographies of model rebel women, including Mary Wollstonecraft, Louise Michel, Marie Spiridonova, George Sand, and Theroigne de Mericourt. Elsewhere, poems salute Emmeline Pankhurst and Mother Jones. In some cases, the line between historical subject and fictionalized character becomes a bit blurry. Some articles animate their biographical personages. For instance, “Cleopatra” begins with a monologue that passes between ancient history and the present day. It starts in the first person, as though Cleopatra were directly addressing her readers. She claims, “I have no right to demand rights! I have no feeling to be the master of men! I have no right for rights! For I have all rights! I take all rights!”<sup>34</sup> Is this meant to be a speech that Cleopatra *would* say? It is a critique of rights at a distance from Ptolemaic Egypt, no doubt. But this historical vagueness allows the monologue to do double work, as the imagined speech of an Egyptian queen and a plausible critique for the right to birth control in present-day America.

The conditional, what Cleopatra *would* say, appears as a key mode in other articles. Some speak directly to the reader in the imperative tense: “Feminists—Come out from under the cover of morbid respectability and let’s get a look at you! How many could be a Voltairine de Clayre [*sic*], a Louise Michel, an Emma Goldman or an Elizabeth Flynn?”<sup>35</sup> Here is the interrogative form with which I began, one that frames a hypothetical future: what Cleopatra *would* say, what Emma Goldman *would* do. To answer the question involves an imaginative leap, so that biographical history becomes so much raw matter, to be reworked to suit the present day. This imagination involves a form of sympathy but breaks with the models of identification most common to the humanitarian narratives I discussed earlier. To do as an Emma Goldman would do involves sympathetic identification. But the site of identification is not suffering. It is not even feeling. Rather, the reader identifies with action: a history of political acts and their hypothesized extension in the future.

To focus on the conditional imagination allows for a shift in emphasis, so that *The Woman Rebel* can be understood not as a little magazine but as a compendium of portable tactics. Some articles are more forthright about this effort. “The Militants in England” details the recent work of the suffragette movement abroad as so many tactics to be considered at home: “Acids were poured into letter boxes, telegraph wires cut, plate glass windows

smashed, fire engines called out on false alarms and ministers baited wherever they went.”<sup>36</sup> The front-page column, “In Defense of Assassination,” takes up the recent deaths of three anarchists, accidentally killed by dynamite while constructing a bomb. Noting that the “czars of industry” use the police force and soldiers as weapons, to break strikes or intimidate workers, the article concludes that workers must turn to militant tactics in return, as the weapons of the weak:

The point I wish to bring out is this—since the great mass of people are by force of circumstances unable to use the same weapons employed by the better educated and privileged class, this does not preclude the working class from using whatever other means of defense may be at its disposal, such as the strikes, boycott, sabotage [*sic*] or assassination.<sup>37</sup>

In general, *The Woman Rebel* does not have much to say about assassination, but the final issues of the journal become increasingly focused on a single tactic, the hunger strike, which had recently gained prominence through its widespread use by the British suffragettes. According to the *New York Times*, the anarchist Becky Edelsohn was the first woman to stage a hunger strike in the United States. Arrested for inciting a riot, Edelsohn turned to the hunger strike during her imprisonment at Blackwell’s Island. Along with the *Times*, *The Woman Rebel* became increasingly focused on Edelsohn’s narrative. In the August 1914 issue of *The Woman Rebel* there are five separate articles on Edelsohn: “A History of the Hunger Strike” details Edelsohn’s arrests for speaking against the war with Mexico (April 22) and after the Colorado National Guard attacked a tent city of striking miners in what became known as the Ludlow Massacre (July 20). Another article includes Edelsohn’s letters, smuggled out of Blackwell’s Island, during her second imprisonment. Most strikingly, the cover-page article, “Becky and the Respectables,” makes clear a distinction between Edelsohn and an opposite class of persons, including judges and the Catholic church. In a separate article, the “respectables” are personified by the sociologist Katherine B. Davis, the police matron for the Bedford Reformatory for Women and commissioner of corrections of New York. Residing on Blackwell’s Island on opposite sides of the law, Davis and Edelsohn supply model types based on localized actions, rather than on inherent characteristics. Readers are asked to think about what they would do if they were in each woman’s

place. Interestingly, *The Woman Rebel's* anonymized editorial collective offers its own preemptive response to this sort of inquiry. "The question has been asked: What would THE WOMAN REBEL do with Rebecca Edelsohn if she were in Dr. Katherine B. Davis' position? No woman rebel would ever find herself in such a degraded position. The view of the revolutionary woman is expressed adequately enough in other columns in this number."<sup>38</sup> Here again, readers are urged not to feel with Edelsohn or Davis but more literally to imagine themselves in such a position and then to focus on action, to do what these women would do.

This imagination is a mode of reading premised on action, but the type of action matters too. For this narrative mode to work, the tactic has to be considered as a mobile kind of action, without a proper person or proper place. It can belong to anyone. In *The Woman Rebel*, reading for tactics involves an imaginative leap into the past actions of other people, but this leap is particular for the way it literalizes much of the rhetoric of sympathetic identification, to turn it toward different ends. As Elizabeth Gurley Flynn notes, in *Sabotage*, claims about suffering or justice might have little effect on the owners of a silk mill. However, the readers of *Sabotage* might engage in a different sort of projective imagination, by treating the histories of work slowdown and birth strike as a set of practices to be reproduced. Read as instruction, these histories offer a mobile set of strategies to assemble knowledge, technologies, and—finally—subjects. *The Woman Rebel* is clear on this point. Tactics develop a particular type of personhood. The article on Police Matron Davis and prisoner Edelsohn notes that sociologists of Davis's stripe look upon prisoners "with pity if not sympathy, as long as the victims submit tamely." This dynamic changes with a shift in behavior: "Only when the victims rebel, revolt, inaugurate a hunger-strike, or in any way indicate that they are of human flesh and blood . . . is the expert in correction ready to revert to methods of torture."<sup>39</sup> In this narrative of subject formation, the no place and no person of the portable tactic paradoxically indicates that the female political actor has become human. But this becoming-human of the prisoner is what prompts a host of new cruelties that remain unnamed.

The insistence that female victims become human through an act of the will does not consider the ways that, for some, sheer willpower might not be enough. Here and elsewhere, white women offer a standard for women in general, as a universal category. Consider again the question addressed

to hypothetical readers: “How many could be a Voltairine de Clayre [*sic*], a Louise Michel, an Emma Goldman or an Elizabeth Flynn?” Racial difference across the category “women” is not a part of this scenario, nor does it appear in frequent allusions to white workers as wage slaves. To be sure, at this early moment, *The Woman Rebel* argues for human betterment through class uplift, rather than racial purity. However, these discourses are nevertheless marked by the status of the slave as a zero degree of freedom. After Sanger was indicted for obscenity charges for the content of *The Woman Rebel*, she arranged for the following letter to be sent to President Woodrow Wilson. Unpublished in Sanger’s lifetime, the letter asks the president: “While men stand proudly and face the sun, boasting that they have quenched the wickedness of slavery, what chains of slavery are, have been or ever could be so intimate a horror as the shackles on every limb—on every thought—on the very soul of an unwilling pregnant woman?”<sup>40</sup> After World War II, Sanger’s reliance on the language of slavery becomes even more pronounced, as we shall see in the next section. For now, it is enough to mark this teleological process, from wage slave to human subject, for the way it assumes a somewhat pliable world, ready to be molded, or at least to fracture, with the application of collective force. In turning to Harlem, the vectors of force and threat are different, in the midst of what James Weldon Johnson called the Red Summer of 1919. In this case, the understanding of a pliable world is different too, in terms of how it might yield or scar. This is a story that will lead back to the wider question of reproductive justice and feminist tactics, but for now I begin on a more local scale, with the absent future of the black child.

## Queer Futures in Harlem

In October 1919, *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races* published a children’s number. The table of contents lists “Pictures of Seventy-Four Colored Children” (figures 3.5a–b). There are several pages devoted to yearbook-style portraits, the children alone or in groups. These are interspersed amid the usual articles. Portraiture accompanies the stories and editorials as well. The children look like models, posed in a studio and professionally shot. They adorn the page like an advertisement. Though some of the literary sections of the magazine are on theme, the baby photographs do not always illustrate



**FIGURE 3.5** “The Baby Figure of the Giant Mass of Things to Come,” *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, October 1919, 302–3.

or refer to the written content they are set beside. A diapered baby appears at the top of W. E. B. Du Bois’s editorial, which is primarily about the lynching of black men in Texas (figure 3.6).

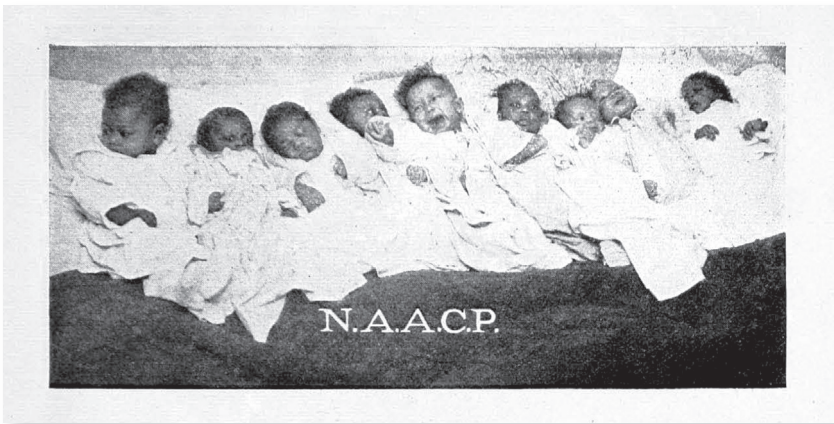
“Since 1889 Texas has lynched 338 human beings—standing second only to Georgia and Mississippi in this horrible eminence,” Du Bois writes.<sup>41</sup> Du Bois goes on to write about Congressman James Francis Byrnes, of South Carolina, who has accused the magazine of inciting the race riots in Washington and Chicago. On the pages that follow, baby photographs illustrate the letters to the editor. They are appended to poems and fairy stories. Nine newborns, bundled in a row, illustrate Walter White’s postmortem on the summer’s race riots in Chicago (figure 3.7). The photograph was likely appended after the article’s writing—White makes no mention of infants. His article ends with a quotation from the *Associated Press* report: “Negros are not planning anything, but will defend themselves if attacked.”<sup>42</sup> A number of the following pages are entirely given over to portraits of babies and small children.



**FIGURE 3.6** W. E. B. Du Bois, "Opinion," *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, October 1919, 283.

The children's number was an annual affair. Du Bois called it the most popular issue but also noted a disturbing conjuncture. "To the consternation of the Editors of *The Crisis* we have had to record some horror in nearly every Children's Number—in 1915, it was Leo Frank; in 1916, the lynching at Gainesville, Fla; in 1917 and 1918, the riot and court martial at Houston, Tex., etc."<sup>43</sup> The juxtaposition of children's portraits and the reportage on lynching was, then, not entirely unique to 1919. Over the past decade, it had become standard that the issue devoted to children would include jarring adjacencies. Take, for instance, the toddler adorning "The Looking Glass," posed in

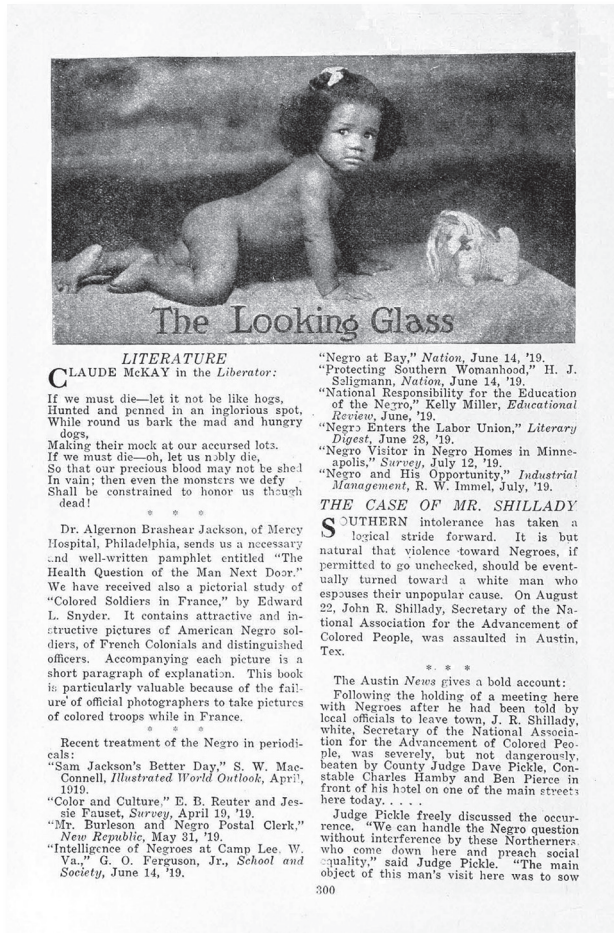




**FIGURE 3.7** Walter White, “Chicago and Its Eight Reasons,” *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, October 1919, 293.

the photography studio alongside her stuffed horse. Below her *The Crisis* reprints Claude McKay’s “If We Must Die” (figure 3.8). Just above McKay’s fighting words, adjacent to the lynching reportage, the portraits celebrate black children as a promise for a different sort of life. This is a heterosexual future based on the reproduction of the nuclear family, but it is also a gesture of resistance amid a culture of racial violence. The children’s issues are saccharine and a little campy—but they are also brutal. The juxtapositions between baby photographs and lynching reports remind us that the pictured children are always already in a structural relation to premature death.<sup>44</sup>

In *Unnatural Selections: Eugenics in American Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance*, Daylanne K. English considers the children’s issues of *The Crisis* alongside a wider survey of the racial-uplift narratives of the 1920s and 1920s. English argues that racial uplift during this period frequently took up the language of eugenic science as a common good. These arguments promoted black motherhood particularly among upper-class families, for the betterment of the race. As a point of contrast, English situates the emergence of a new genre among New Negro women writers working between 1916 and 1930: the antilynching drama. These works situate healthy black motherhood as a historical impossibility amid a culture of lynching, often through representations of women who refuse to become mothers or murder the children they have. Across the work of writers including Alice Dunbar Nelson,



**FIGURE 3.8** Claude McKay, "If We Must Die," *The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races*, October 1919, 300.

Mary Burrill, and Angelina Weld Grimké, lynching offers an inversion of the logic of eugenics, "a most unnatural form of selection, one designed to reinforce white supremacy and sustain black powerlessness, regardless of the quality and education of either whites or blacks."<sup>45</sup> In her reading of anti-lynching dramas, English primarily focuses on Grimké's best-known work, *Rachel*, which was first performed in 1916 and published in 1920. Though I will not discuss this play at length, I want to highlight one moment that will



become important in the pages to come, for the ways that it situates lynching as a form of structural violence, what English calls a form of “unnatural selection,” embedded in the possible futures of the black child:

**Rachel:** If Jimmy went South now—and grew up—he might be—a  
George?

**Mrs. Loving:** Yes.

**Rachel:** Then, the South is full of tens, hundreds, thousands of little  
boys, who, one day may be—and some of them with  
certainty—Georges?

**Mrs. Loving:** Yes, Rachel.

**Rachel:** And the little babies, the dear, little helpless babies, being born  
today—now—and those who will be, tomorrow, and all the tomor-  
rows to come—have *that* sooner or later to look forward to? They will  
laugh and play and sing and be happy and grow up, perhaps, and be  
ambitious, just for *that*?

**Mrs. Loving:** Yes, Rachel.<sup>46</sup>

To be a George is to be prematurely dead. Though the above scene is rife with evasion—all those italicized *that*'s—enough of the play has passed by this time for the audience to know, as do Rachel and Mrs. Loving, that to be a George means to be pulled from your bed in the middle of the night by a group of white men and hanged by the neck from the trees in your yard, alongside your father. George is a future that might apply to Jimmy and that will with some certainty happen to some of the thousands of black boys living in the American South. As a possible future, George signals a vulnerability to premature death as a basic, nonnegotiable fact. George marks, in effect, the lack of a future for some black boys that here reads as statistical inevitability. Note how the dashes stutter across this otherwise straightforward grammar, as though the train of associations is forcibly broken and then retethered into sentences. This lack of futurity is almost unthinkable, or better not thought. But the answers also suggest that this lack is normal, or at least lived with day in and day out as a kind of common sense. (“Yes.” “Yes, Rachel.” “Yes, Rachel.”)

Unlike the calls in *The Woman Rebel* to imagine oneself as an Emma Goldman or a Louise Michel, this scene of projection is not about sympathy or action. The passage does not ask us to feel as a George might feel or do as

a George might do. George's death stands in as one component in a wider structure of violence. George is a destination that some will reach, regardless of how they "laugh and play and sing and be happy and grow up." The way that this future is structural common sense sometimes makes it seem, in this passage, like absolute inevitability. For this reason, Rachel responds with a preemptive conditional: "How horrible! Why—it would be more merciful—to strangle the little things at birth."<sup>47</sup> Rachel does not, in fact, strangle her children. But at the end of the play, she does refuse her suitor's marriage proposal, to avoid having children at all and thus save them from growing up to face the brutality of a white mob.

When *Rachel* was published in 1920, some critics accused Grimké of advocating race suicide.<sup>48</sup> Though the comparison goes unnoted, this critique inserts *Rachel* into the wider arc of birth control materials I have already discussed, in that it positions *Rachel* as an instruction manual for the prevention of conception. Grimké responded to these claims in no uncertain terms. "Since it has been understood that 'Rachel' preaches race suicide, I would emphasize that that was not my intention. To the contrary, the appeal is not primarily to the colored people, but to the whites."<sup>49</sup> Grimké explained that she was looking to reach white women through the shared fact of motherhood. By demonstrating the effects of lynching on black mothers and children, Grimké hoped to sway white women, so that they might "see, feel, and understand just what effect their prejudice and the prejudice of their fathers, brothers, husbands, sons were having on the souls of colored mothers everywhere."<sup>50</sup>

What follows will more firmly connect Grimké's writing to the American birth control movement through attention to her short story "The Closing Door," published in two 1919 issues of *The Birth Control Review*. Through Agnes's dialogue, the story cannily refracts the language of the birth strike as narrated by white feminists. What was then in anarchosyndicalist circles the utopian promise of recognizing women as producers becomes, for Agnes, a nightmare of forced objectification: "'Yes!—Yes!—I!—I!—An instrument of reproduction!—another of the many!—a colored woman—doomed!—cursed!—put here!—willing or unwilling! For what?—to bring children here—men children—for the sport—the lust—of possible orderly mobs—who go about things—in an orderly manner—on Sunday mornings!'"<sup>51</sup>

The monologue describes a relation of persons as part of a wider racialized structure that disallows individual agency. What Agnes cannot do, in

this scenario, is protect her children from the mob violence that killed her brother. For Grimké's critics, this stance was often described as pessimism, in contrast to a more heroic notion of resistance or redress. In a review of *Rachel*, the *Washington Star* claimed: "The action progresses by way of episodes calculated to show the futility of individual effort on the part of the colored people, since no amount of effort is able to overcome the arrogance of the white race."<sup>52</sup> The language that Grimké prefers is closer to doom—a marked destiny, as though one were living the life of a character in a book already written. This sense of foreboding permeates the story as always already over, narrated in retrospect.

"The Closing Door" is narrated by a character seemingly peripheral to the action, the teenager Lucy. At the beginning of the story, Lucy has been passed around to a number of relatives, then comes to live with Agnes Milton, who is happily married to her husband, Jim. In the opening stages of the story, Lucy narrates the family's happiness as a thing of the past, foreshadowing an unmarked violence to come. Some of these scenes focus on the relations between Jim and Agnes, but a number of them are erotically charged interactions between Agnes and Lucy, with reference to kissing, touching, and secrecy. At the story's midpoint, Agnes learns of her brother's lynching and descends into numb terror. After she gives birth to a son, she murders the infant so that he will not grow up to be another victim of racial violence.

How do we navigate between depictions of same-sex desire, mob murder, and infanticide? As one answer to this question, what follows situates "The Closing Door" as a meditation on action, though quite different than the narratives of individual rights found in *The Woman Rebel* or the Berlin birth strike debates. Rather than a focus on right—the right to privacy, the right to contraception, the right to stage a birth strike, the right to be left alone—Grimké's work takes up the wider racialized field of reproductive justice. This wider scale allows for a consideration of the body as a terrain of contestation that can encompass same-sex desire and the structural vulnerability to premature death without equating the two, or making one a reparation for the other's brutality.



Published from 1917–1940, *The Birth Control Review* was a different sort of magazine than its discontinued predecessor, *The Woman Rebel*. The *Review*

had an editorial staff and offices outside Sanger's living room. It was more likely to publish the testimony of medical experts and push for the legalization of contraception as a single-issue demand. In the 1920s, the *Review*, alongside the wider birth control movement, became increasingly medicalized, focused on the eugenic science of biological racism. From 1919 to 1920, Grimké's stories ran alongside another serialized book, Warren S. Thompson's *Race Suicide in the United States*. First published in *Scientific Monthly*, Thompson's research relied on statistical methods to forecast the decline of what he called America's "native stock." In a series of elaborate graphs, Thompson supplied figures for the proportion of children to women according to distinctly valued categories: urban white, rural white, urban negro, rural negro. Alongside Warren, both lay writers and scientists increasingly turned to the question of the birth rate more generally, often through the racialized language of human quality over quantity.

This eugenic turn to the quality of human stock was not just a racial argument. As Roderick Ferguson and Siobhan Somerville have argued, scientific racism and the formation of homosexual identity at the turn of the century were discourses that depended on each other, so that racial and sexual deviance can be historically understood as mutually reinforcing.<sup>53</sup> Note, for instance, the frequent appearance of Havelock Ellis in *The Birth Control Review* alongside Warren's serialized text. Better known as the author of *Sexual Inversion*, in the *Review* Ellis offers an extended, largely sympathetic analysis of Lothrop Stoddard's popular text *The Rising Tide of Color*. Though skeptical of some of Stoddard's more extreme positions, particularly the rising threat of Bolshevism, Ellis agrees that unchecked procreation would have a critical effect on the "relation between the primary human races, White and Colored."<sup>54</sup> The article indirectly racializes its audience, the royal *we*, as white: "Since by the prejudice of color, we must mostly be on [Stoddard's] side in this matter, we may profitably meditate on the reasonable considerations he brings forward."<sup>55</sup> Primarily among these considerations is the eugenic destiny of "our civilization," a human stock often enumerated as universal but also, implicitly and explicitly, marked by the exclusion of blackness.

Given the double threat of Ellis and Warren in *The Birth Control Review*, it is more than unexpected to find therein Grimké's short story "The Closing Door."<sup>56</sup> Even more difficult to account for are the scenes of same-sex desire that appear at the beginning of the story, as so many loose threads. Some are glancing claims of affection. "I have cared for people. I care for Jim,

but Agnes Milton is the only person I have ever really loved. I love her still.”<sup>57</sup> At other moments, Lucy recalls episodic fragments. Lucy is struck with affection when Agnes describes her wrinkles as a positive effect of smiling too much. “For reply I leaned forward and kissed them. I loved them from that time on,” Lucy recalls (12). The next section offers what might be the most explicitly homoerotic scene in the story, as a conversation full of unmarked referents and doublespeak. “Here is another memory of her—perhaps the loveliest of them all,” Lucy begins. It is a May evening, and Lucy is trying to thread a needle. She finds herself blinded by Agnes: “two soft hands were clapped over my eyes.” I quote the entire scene as it is separated from the other text on the page, from beginning to end:

“Please don’t be cross,” came the soft voice still close to my ear.  
 “I’m not.”  
 At that she chuckled.  
 “Well!” I said.  
 “I’m trying to tell you something. Sh! Not so loud.”  
 “Well!” I said a third time, but in a whisper to humor her. We were alone in the flat, there was no reason I could see for this tremendous secrecy.  
 “I’m waiting for you to be sweet to me.”  
 “I am. But why I should have to lose my needle and my temper and be blinded and sweet just to hear something—is beyond me.”  
 “Because I don’t wish you to see me while I say it.”  
 Her soft lips were kissing my ear.  
 “Well, I’m very sweet now. What is it?”  
 There was another little pause and during it her fingers over my eyes trembled a little. She was breathing quicker too.  
 “Agnes Milton, what *is* it?”  
 “Wait, I’m just trying to think *how* to tell you. Are you sure you’re very sweet?”  
 “Sure.”  
 I loved the feel of her hands and sat very still.  
 “Lucy!”  
 “Yes.”  
 “What do you think would be the loveliest, loveliest thing for you to know was—was—there—close—just under your heart?”

(12)

This scene is retroactively constructed as secret, even if this occlusion appears unnecessary inside the shuttered doors of the flat. (“We were alone in the flat, there was no reason I could see for this tremendous secrecy.”) It is quite literally a scene of blindness as well—for the duration, Agnes’s hands cover Lucy’s eyes. The knowledge to be shared is perpetually missing, set in the gaps of ellipsis or understood through assumption. Agnes has something to tell Lucy, but the referent—the something—never appears in the passage, at least not overtly. Instead there is telling and not telling, through abbreviated dialogue that might seem like so much filler between the more straightforward actions: “Her soft lips were kissing my ear.” “She was breathing quicker too.” “I loved the feel of her hands and sat very still.” Later it will become clear that the knowledge to be shared is Agnes’s pregnancy. But isolated here the scene suggests that the “loveliest, loveliest thing for you to know” might be any number of things not related to heterosexual reproduction.

Much of this passage borrows its language from a letter in the Grimké archive, sent to the author from Mary Burrill, rumored to be her lover. Dated 1896, the letter inquires, “Could I just come to meet thee once more, in the old sweet way, just coming at your calling, and like an angel bending o’er you breathe into your ear, ‘I love you.’”<sup>58</sup> In her response to Burrill, Grimké writes, “Oh Mamie if you only knew how my heart beats when I think of you and it yearns and pants to gaze, if only for one second upon your lovely face.”<sup>59</sup> Though not word for word, much of the Lucy/Agnes scene picks up on this language: “I took her hands from my eyes and turned to look at her. The beauty of her face made me catch my breath.”<sup>60</sup> The similarities between biographical letter and fictionalized story, as though one were a re-creation of the other, become more pressing when we note that Mary Burrill’s dialect play *They That Sit in Darkness: A One-Act Play of Negro Life* appears alongside “The Closing Door” in the September 1919 edition of *The Birth Control Review*.

The love scene is a public secret, appearing in print, but it remains illegible to people outside of the Grimké-Burrill epistolary romance. However, these scenes go nowhere. They are not effectively folded into the wider narrative. Indeed, by isolating these fragments I also erase a major effect of their reading, in that these moments appear within a wider atmosphere of foreboding, perpetually marked by Lucy’s oblique references of a bad end for Agnes and Jim. “There was just the merest suspicion of a cloud over their happiness, these days, they had been married five years and had no children,”

Lucy recalls (10). This sense of inevitable doom becomes particularly vexed when Agnes connects her own future to a literary character, through a story of star-crossed love already written. Agnes asks Lucy, “Do you remember Kipling’s ‘Without Benefit of Clergy?’” (12). First published in 1890, the story takes place in British India, where the civil servant John Holden lives with a young Muslim woman, Ameera, secreted away at the edge of the city. The couple are unmarried by necessity because public knowledge of the interracial affair would ruin Holden’s career. They exist, therefore, “without the benefit of clergy,” despite “every rule and law” that would prevent their courtship. In swift succession, the couple’s infant son dies, followed by Ameera. The aspects of the story seized upon by Agnes are the early days of erotic bliss, of potentially unholy or unsanctioned happiness in love, to be followed by swift retribution. Agnes quotes Ameera’s warning from the story, as a way to avoid future harm: “We must make no protestations of delight but go softly underneath the stars, lest God find us out” (13).

Thus far I have noted two different intertexts that fold themselves into the story: the love letter, emerging through the scenes of same-sex desire, and Kipling’s narrative of Anglo-Indian love, modeled by John Holden and Ameera. Early in Grimké’s story, a third, more historical narrative emerges. In a flashback that seems to leap into an alternative time/space altogether, Lucy recalls, “I used to pray that in some way I might change places with her and go into that darkness where though, still living, one forgets sun and moon and stars and flowers and winds—and love itself, and existence means dark, foul smelling cages, hollow clanging doors, hollow monotonous days” (11). This hope refigures the Middle Passage as an impossible memory haunting the narrator’s present—a haunting that occurs with such intensity that, by the end of the story, Agnes fully enters this space of death. Like the slave ship, the infanticide belongs to a history out of sync with the wider arc of the story. In the following pages, I want to look more closely at this representation of infanticide, as both a reanimation of slavery’s reproductive violence and a reconsideration of black women’s agency through a longer, vexed history of slave resistance.

Jennifer L. Morgan begins her history of gender and reproduction in New World slavery with the uneasy relation between infanticide and individual agency. In turning to women’s reproduction as a historical frame, Morgan situates the black female body as a terrain of contestation that spoils a strict binary between resistance and accommodation.<sup>61</sup> In this context, the matter of reproduction entails a reconsideration of agency more generally, so that

the birth of children that enables the continuation of slavery does not immediately signal accommodation. In the same way, practices of birth control, abortion, or, in some cases, infanticide, cannot immediately be understood as a form of resistance. Lacking autobiographical testimony, it is impossible to speculate upon the intentions behind such practices. There is ample documentation, however, of planter concerns over the low birth rates of slaves. In the mid-nineteenth century, Southern medical journals investigated this population trend somewhat obsessively. Noting entire families of slave women that did not bear children, Dr. E. M. Pendleton explained that “the blacks are possessed of a secret by which they destroy the fetus at an early stage of gestation.”<sup>62</sup> In the *Nashville Journal of Medicine and Surgery*, Dr. John H. Morgan documented the use of a number of abortifacients, including tansy, rue, pennyroyal, cedar berries, and camphor.<sup>63</sup> In 1826, the Reverend Henry Beame claimed that in Jamaican slave populations, the “procuration of abortion is very prevalent . . . there being herbs and powders known to them, as given by obeah men and women.”<sup>64</sup> Common abortifacients included manioc, yam, papaya, mango, lime, and frangipani.<sup>65</sup> Women might take a “corset leaf” infusion or tie a twig of *Jatophra* (physic nut, or nettlespurge) to a string, placing it in the womb to cause a miscarriage. Midwives were known to administer the emetic cerasee, wild Tansy, the water germander, or the seeds of a sandbox tree.

Most troubling for the planter class were infanticides named as a stillbirth. In a consideration of census reports from 1790 to 1860, Michael P. Johnson estimates that more than sixty thousand slave infants were reported as smothering deaths.<sup>66</sup> However, Johnson and others conclude that this high rate of infant death is more likely attributable to sudden infant death syndrome than purposeful suffocation. Of course, high infant mortality rates could also be attributed to malnutrition, overwork, and insufficient living conditions; these more sensible arguments were also noted during the antebellum era. In Greene County, Alabama, beginning in 1852, the children of George Hays sued William Gould for poor oversight during the administration of their father’s will, resulting in a loss of capital. According to the suit, Gould had appointed an overseer who has a “cruel, brutish and inhuman disposition.”<sup>67</sup> During the years of his administration, the “breeding women on said Plantations were rendered almost entirely worthless as such” and “subject to continual miscarriages.” The plaintiffs estimated a loss of “some forty children through either barrenness of the females or abortions.”



Abolitionist texts often focused on the deaths of women and children caused by the inhumane conditions of plantation society. However, slave infanticide proved to be a more difficult topic for the ways it rendered mothers both victim and criminal. Though largely absent from slave narratives, abolitionist texts, and plantation journals, a partial record of slave infanticides can be gleaned from court records. In *Jane (a slave) v. The State* (1831) the defendant was convicted by the Missouri courts of “knowingly, willfully, feloniously and of her malice aforethought” giving “a certain deadly poison” to her infant child Angeline. Several days later, when the poison failed, she allegedly “choked, suffocated, and smothered” the child with her bedclothes.<sup>68</sup> In the wider abolitionist literature, most publicized case of infanticide concerns the runaway slave Margaret Garner. In 1856, trapped by slave catchers in Cincinnati, Ohio, Garner killed her three-year-old daughter, slashing her throat with a butcher knife. In Paul Gilroy’s account, the Garner case signals an important turn in abolitionist literature, when the use of violence became sanctioned as a tactic, alongside education reform and legislative change, to oppose the wider institution of slavery.<sup>69</sup>

Grimké’s turn to infanticide as a protest against racial violence thus invokes a wider historical legacy. Ultimately, the afterlife of plantation slavery is one of three distinct chronotopes, or spheres of time and space, that appear in the story. There is first the living death of the slave ship, linked to Agnes’s desperate murder of her son as a choice between modes of death. There is the doomed interracial coupling of Ameera and John Holden in Kipling’s *British India*. And finally, there is the same-sex romance between Agnes and Lucy, as a reanimation of Grimké’s correspondence with Mary Burrill. All of these narratives operate according to registers of secrecy. But these chronotopes are not equivalent or even of a piece. Occurring as discrete sections in the story, they do not map smoothly onto one another. Ameera’s death through cholera is unlike Agnes’s choice to murder her infant. Agnes’s choice operates according to a different frame of possible action than what would be available to the women on the slave ship, where “existence means dark, foul smelling cages, hollow clanging doors, hollow monotonous days.”

The way these discrete chronotopes do not fit together thus allows for a meditation on agency in terms of the differential fields of possibility available to African American women at midcentury. In this way, Grimké’s story offers an alternative to the rights-based claims of white feminists within the

birth control movement, turning away from an individual choice to use contraception to the wider field of what Dorothy Roberts and others have called “reproductive justice.”<sup>70</sup> In Roberts’s foundational account, the American birth control movement primarily associated the right to bodily privacy with the experience of white feminists. In response, Roberts reframes racial justice as a central component in the wider project of reproductive autonomy, to consider both “the full range of procreative activities” alongside racialized social forces that affect or inhibit these choices, including uneven vulnerability to premature death and sexual violence; access to health care, a living wage, and housing; and state-sponsored medical oversight, sterilization, and children’s welfare services.<sup>71</sup> Roberts thus situates reproductive justice beyond the matter of privacy or contraception. Rather than a practice to be followed, this sense of bodily autonomy entails a rethinking of the presumed universality of the subject of tactics, to differentiate between the possible futures available to racialized groups.

In “The Closing Door,” Grimké juxtaposes many of these sites as entangled forms of intimacy and violence. It is montage at its most cruel and disturbing: the love scene next to the slave ship, the choleric death in India, the lynching in a nameless city of the American South, the reanimation of infanticide as a vexed form of resistance. In this rendering, there is a lack of absolute causation. One of these scenarios does not prevent the other or even make it more livable. There is no salvation to be had in the love scenes between Lucy and Agnes. Both Agnes and her baby die. What I want to mark is entanglement, rather than instruction. For Grimké, the wider field of reproductive justice encompasses a number of categories that cannot be understood as foils for or solutions to the others: the futures of black children, the threat of mob violence, same-sex desire, reproductive autonomy, childlessness. To hold these together is uncomfortable because they are not of a piece. Against the other materials considered in this chapter, “The Closing Door” refuses to give historical lessons as so many instructions to follow, step by step. It does not say, kiss your female lover, murder your infants, or do not have children at all, though this last case has been the implicit understanding of many readers. History is still there, but not as a lesson. Grimké narrates actions and subjects, but the crux of the story is about making visible the relations between chosen pleasures and unasked-for violence, some families and others, children, no children, and variable futures, caught up in the wider field of reproductive justice.

## We Charge Genocide

So far I have said many things that Grimké's writing is not: not a humanitarian narrative, not instructions for race suicide, not a protocol for a birth strike, not a guide to lesbian romance. To understand what the story is requires a different viewpoint, one that moves beyond a national context and into a wider Atlantic history. The following pages take up a question: Why does it matter that Grimké links lynching crimes in the United States with colonial death in India? What does this international geography suggest, not as a mode of comparison, but as an argument about the remedies and entitlements for reproductive justice in a transnational framework?

These questions are already moving toward a different sort of vocabulary, one that shifts away from the birth strike and into the demographic contexts of international law. At midcentury, discourses about the links between birth control began to turn away from the language of race suicide and invoke the relatively recent neologism "genocide," from the Greek word *genos* (race) and Latin suffix *-cide* (killing). Coined by the Jewish Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin in 1943, genocide quickly gained international recognition as new legal category for the mass killing or disabling of a human group.<sup>72</sup> Though Lemkin's work often cited the race laws of the National Socialists, he also argued that the term "genocide" should be understood within a five-hundred-year history of colonial occupation that sought to change human demographics to favor colonial powers. However, Lemkin did not think that genocide should apply to racial conflict in the United States and said so directly, in the *New York Herald Tribune* in 1951.<sup>73</sup>

The occasion for Lemkin's public statement was a 1951 petition to the United Nations from the Civil Rights Congress (CRC), *We Charge Genocide*. This was a media event widely covered by the international press. Paul Robeson presented copies to the UN Secretariat in New York, while William L. Patterson distributed copies at the UN's Paris meetings. There is a performative element to this presentation, but in this last section I want to look more closely at the document itself, to consider *We Charge Genocide* as an archive of international reproductive politics. Most widely, I want to reconsider this document as a tactic, one that seizes upon the postwar public debates about genocide to argue for racial justice. In this way, *We Charge Genocide* uses the language of human rights to make demands that reach beyond the forms of justice that can be remedied by national law.

*We Charge Genocide* is book length—240 pages. It opens with a lynching photograph, of two black men hanging in such a way that they might be embracing, the bound arm of one tucked under the chin of the other. Their names are Dooley Morton and Bert Moore, and they died in Columbus, Mississippi. But Morton and Moore are not the protagonists of this document. The following pages are about title and copyright, then Articles II and III of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide appear in full, with lettered outlines of “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.”<sup>74</sup> There is a table of contents and a list of petitioners in alphabetical order by last name. The introduction uses the names as components of the *we* that charges the government of the United States with the violation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. This is a particular *we*: “Many of your petitioners are Negro citizens to whom the charges herein described are not mere words. They are facts felt on our bodies, crimes inflicted on our dignity” (*WC* 7). The *we* of the petition marks two classes of persons: those injured by the U.S. government and those who address this government with a demand for remedy. This demand connects U.S. racial injustice with the wider historical arc of the last war and the threat of a new war to come:

We, Negro petitioners whose communities have been laid waste, whose homes have been burned and looted, whose children have been killed, whose women have been raped, have noted with particular horror that the genocidal doctrines and actions of the American white supremacists have already been exported to the colored peoples of Asia. . . . Jellied gasoline in Korea and the lynchers’ faggot at home are connected in more ways than that both result in death by fire. The lyncher and the atom bomber are related.

(7)

These sentences create ties across national lines through a shared history of injury. But they also make an argument about jurisdiction. The argument goes like this: Lynching is a crime that occurs in the United States but concerns the world. It is an ongoing crime. See the early addition to this document, of violent deaths that happened between the first printing, in October 1951, and now, December 1951. These deaths can be catalogued and

classified. Some are mob murders, and others take place at the hands of the police. Indeed, the police can be considered a structural source of black death: "Once the classic method of lynching was the rope. Now it is the police man's bullet" (8). All of these claims are buttressed with evidence, which makes up the bulk of the document. The materials come from black newspapers like *The Crisis* and from the labor press, black yearbooks, prison records, and sociological reports. Some crimes have been reported firsthand, by the petitioners. The petition notes that the vast majority of crimes have not been recorded. "Negro men and women leave their homes and are never seen alive again. Sometimes weeks later their bodies, or bodies thought to be theirs and often horribly mutilated, are found in the woods or washed up on the shore of a river or lake" (9). However, the petition is not a new kind of memorial. *We Charge Genocide* is a document that uses these deaths to make its demands.

Most of the time this evidence appears in list form, though the lists are not always the same. Early on, in the opening statements, the lists of names look to convince a white audience. There are the causes célèbres like the Martinsville Seven or the Trenton Six, who have been largely ignored by the white press but well documented elsewhere. Another subtitle enumerates "Other Race Murders," then "Incitement to Genocide," then "Klan Terror." But this is still the introduction. The longest section of the petition is the chapter "The Evidence," at 138 pages.

These pages present documented crimes at the federal, state, and municipal levels, from 1945 to 1951. The lists are subdivided into categories according to the aspects of the Convention they violate, then arranged chronologically. The year 1946 begins, "February.—FRANK ALLAN, taxi driver . . . February.—JAMES MAGNUM, 17 years old . . . February 5.—A policeman of Freeport, L.I., New York . . . February 9.—PVT. NATHANIEL JACKSON" (61). Most of the victims are men, but there are some women and children. In 1950, January 8: "Ruby Nell Harris, 4, Mary Burside, 8, and Frankie Thurman, 12, of *Kosciusko Mississippi*" (74). That same month, "Mrs. Mattie Debardeleben, of *Birmingham, Alabama*, refused to sell some chickens to three Federal revenue agents and a deputy sheriff. They beat her and she died 'of a heart attack' on the way to jail" (74).

I have tried to imagine a midcentury reader presented with this evidence. To read line by line would take hours. It would tax the attention, in that one death or rape or fire begins to blur with the others that resemble it. But it is

not a document that promotes skimming, from month to month, say, or for key words. To continue reading, page after page, the mind makes up certain patterns: these deaths by hanging, those rapes that were survived, the typical lynching, the atypical lynching, the weapons used, the beatings that were fatal. There is the exceptionally monstrous, as a category of its own, and this distinction is part of the work of the evidence. These lists create new categories of violent acts and divisions within them, as in whether or not parts of the body were cut off and taken for souvenirs.

This formation of new categories, from the lists of names, makes the petition nearly unreadable. It is difficult to select a single case from these lists of evidentiary facts, because the work of this list is to represent an aggregate: *and this, and this, and this, again, again, again*. Nor can the connections between parts achieve any coherent pattern: the list is also a collage, taken from different accounts in the black press, and so lacks conjunctions that order: *then, next, so that, therefore*. In aggregate, these pages of evidence chart out the connections between interracial rapes, the accusation of rape, childbirth, child murder, the murder of adult men, and the murder of adult women as all caught up in the reproduction of the race as a human group, or in starker terms, as a matter for black survival.

This structure cannot be inserted into a humanitarian narrative because it does not make space for interiority. The project of sympathy with a single suffering subject is blunted by the unmanageable effect of so many names. Instead, in these pages, the human is a discourse that can be claimed and used as a collective practice. To reframe American racial violence as genocide that threatens the human group, and therefore a matter of reproductive justice, is a tactical interpretation, not an ethical one. It expands the question of jurisdiction, of *who decides*, beyond a purely legal or national framework. To call the U.S. government's policy against African Americans genocide changes the content of the crime "genocide" in this claiming. This expansion is also an experiment, in saying and doing, in that the final boundary of justice is not a legal one or even a matter of national concern. In this framework, justice entails the imagination of something else, something otherwise than the crimes that have been and the ways they have or have not been punished within a national frame. This imagination disarticulates national law from justice but does not require a positive content for what justice would entail.

*We Charge Genocide* necessitates an internationalist juridical scope, one that connects domestic reproductive politics with war crimes abroad as a

threat to the human group. Alongside the birth control manuals, Grimké's writing, and the other materials in this chapter, the petition weaponizes the injured body as a subject of action. The politics of this gesture are contextual. Internationalist humanitarian claims can certainly be used for many different ends. As theorized in this chapter, the tactic is a mobile form, without content, that can be manipulated for any political outcome. My purpose here is not to prescribe a course of political action. It is to understand the ways that the language of the human was appropriated by both the Far Right and a militant, feminist, and antiracist Left. These groups turned to the language of human population to create an arsenal of tactics against the state, rather than focus on the reproductive rights that the state might grant. In so doing, they make up one of the less familiar histories of human rights, a history based on practices of sexual citizenship rather than claims for a shared humanity. These conjunctures make visible a different geography of potential action, not just in the legal terms of who decides, but in terms of who is entitled to make demands.

Though I have primarily focused on these practices as a self-directed biopolitics, I do not mean to suggest that they forestalled the ongoing governmentality of sexuality through an increasingly securitized state. As a counterpoint, the next chapter will turn to a more governmental version of biopolitics, this time in Germany. No doubt, these materials posit a different kind of reader than *The Woman Rebel* or *We Charge Genocide*. Rather than a subject of tactics, hypothesized in the future, this turn to governmental strategy absents individual experience altogether, as so much unreliable testimony, ceded to the authority of fact. For this story about government and the biological futures it might promise, I turn to the primary genre of the humanitarian narrative: the case study.



# Notes

## Introduction

1. For this distinction between the archive as a neutral fact and process of creating facticity, see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon, 2015). See also Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge: And the Discourse on Language* (New York: Vintage, 1982).
2. Wendy Brown, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).
3. Lauren Berlant, "Poor Eliza" *American Literature* 17, no. 3 (1998): 636. See also Lauren Berlant, *The Female Complaint: The Unfinished Business of Sentimentality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008). For ties between affect and transnational forms of belonging, see Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006).
4. A turn from identity to practice and process has often been cited as one of the central features of Women of Color feminisms active in the 1960s. For an overview of this tendency, see Grace Hong, *The Ruptures of American Capital: Women of Color Feminism and the Cultures of Immigrant Labor* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). In the more delimited case of citizenship studies, a shift in emphasis from juridically defined rights to practice-oriented frameworks as a basis for shared identity most widely emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s. See especially Margaret Somers, "Citizenship Troubles: Genealogies of Struggle for the Soul of the Social," in *Rethinking Modernity*, ed. Julia Adams, Elisabeth Clemens, and Ann Orloff (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 438–69. In terms of literary studies, I am greatly indebted to a number of more recent books on the intersections of literary texts and a more capacious, practice-based, embodied, or experimental understanding of citizenship. See especially Jane Garrity, *Step-Daughters of England: British Women Modernists and the National Imaginary* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003);

- Mimi Sheller, *Citizenship from Below: Erotic Agency and Caribbean Freedom* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012); Nadine Attewell, *Better Britons: Reproduction, National Identity, and the Afterlife of Empire* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014); and Janice Ho, *Nation and Citizenship in the Twentieth-Century British Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
5. For more on witness and realist genres of human rights, see James Dawes, *That the World May Know: Declaring Witness to Atrocity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007); and James Dawes, *The Novel of Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).
  6. Kay Schaffer and Sidonie Smith, *Human Rights and Narrated Lives: The Ethics of Recognition* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 3.
  7. Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: Norton, 2008); Joseph Slaughter, *Human Rights Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007); Elizabeth Anker, *Fictions of Dignity: Embodying Human Rights in World Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).
  8. “Elle était plus enragée qu’une vipère, c’était une furie, elle était courbée en deux sous le faix des fairas qu’elle portait pour alimenter le feu.” *Insurrection du Sud*, Conseil de Guerre, second series (September 22, 1870): 80; my translation.
  9. For the Greek narrative, see Martha Nussbaum, *The Monarchy of Fear: A Philosopher Looks at Our Political Crisis* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018). For considerations of anger as an affect and political practice, see Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger: Women Responding to Racism,” in *Sister/Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Toronto: Crossing Press Feminist Series, 2007), 124–133; and Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).
  10. Karel Vasak, “Human Rights: A Thirty-Year Struggle: The Sustained Efforts to Give Force of Law to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” *UNESCO Courier* 30, no. 11 (1977).
  11. See Michel Foucault, “Governmentality,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
  12. Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 177.
  13. Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 8.
  14. For an overview, see Cinzia Arruzza, *Dangerous Liaisons: The Marriages and Divorces of Marxism and Feminism* (London: Merlin, 2013).
  15. Letter from Clara Zetkin to Karl Kautsky, quoted in Jean H. Quataert, *Reluctant Feminists in German Social Democracy, 1885–1917* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 122.
  16. V. I. Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, vol. 1 of *Selected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1967), 115.

17. Rosa Luxemburg, "The Mass Strike, the Political Party, and the Trade Unions," in *The Rosa Luxemburg Reader*, ed. Peter Hudis and Kevin B. Anderson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2004), 182.
18. Anton Pannekoek, "Marxist Theory and Revolutionary Tactics," *Die Neue Zeit* 31, no. 1 (1912), <https://www.marxists.org/archive/pannekoek/1912/tactics.htm>, italics in the original.
19. Edward Said, "Third World Intellectuals/Metropolitan Culture," *Raritan* 9, no. 3 (1990): 31; Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Cheryl Higashida, *Black Internationalist Feminism: Women Writers on the Black Left, 1945–1995* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2013); Aarthi Vadde, *Chimeras of Form: Modernist Internationalism Beyond Europe, 1914–2016* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016). For an excellent account of transnational rather than internationalist tendencies, see Samantha Pinto, *Difficult Diasporas: The Transnational Feminist Aesthetic of the Black Atlantic* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).
20. See Charlotte Bunch, "Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* (1990): 486–98; Hilary Charlesworth, Christine Chinkin, and Shelley Wright, "Feminist Approaches to International Law," *American Journal of International Law* 85, no. 4 (1991): 613–45.
21. Antoinette Burton, "'States of Injury': Josephine Butler on Slavery, Citizenship, and the Boer War," in *Women's Suffrage in the British Empire: Citizenship, Nation, and Race*, ed. Ian Christopher Fletcher, Laura E. Nym Mayhall, and Philippa Levine (London: Routledge, 2000), 18–32; Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History: Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994). Also see Chandra Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).
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23. [Dora Marsden, unsigned editorial], "The Drudge," *The Freewoman: A Weekly Feminist Review* 1, no. 12 (February 8, 1912): 222.
24. H. G. Wells, "Mr. Wells to the Attack: Freewoman and Endowment," *The Freewoman: A Weekly Feminist Review* 16, no. 1 (March 7, 1912): 1.
25. "Correspondence," *The Freewoman: A Weekly Feminist Review* 1, no. 20 (April 4, 1912): 396.
26. See "A Constitution for British Soviets: Points for a Communist Programme," *Worker's Dreadnought* 7, no. 13 (June 19, 1920): 1.
27. See Roberto Ludovico, "Renato Poggioli: Between History and Literature," *Studi Slavistici* 10 (2013): 301–10.
28. Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 25.

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31. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 48.
32. Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labor* (New York: Zed, 1999).
33. Silvia Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle* (New York: PM, 2012); Leopolda Fortunati, *The Arcane of Reproduction: Housework, Prostitution, Labor, and Capital* (New York: Autonomedia, 1996); Tithi Bhattacharya, ed., *Social Reproduction Theory* (London: Pluto, 2017).
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36. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982), 102.
37. See Judith Butler, *Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 75.
38. See Denise Riley, *Am I That Name? Feminism and the Category of "Women" in History* (London: Palgrave, 1988).
39. Magnus Hirschfeld, *Homosexuality in Men and Women*, trans. Michael Lombardi-Nash (New York: Prometheus, 2000), 157–58, 220, 471, 191.
40. Emma Goldman to Magnus Hirschfeld (Berlin, 1923). A draft of the article by Goldman was published in *Yearbook for Sexual Intermediate Types*, issued by the Scientific-Humanitarian Committee IISH/EGP, inventory no. 208, <http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH00520>.

41. Robert Beachy, *Gay Berlin: Birthplace of a Modern Identity* (New York: Vintage, 2014), 220–40.
42. Beachy, *Gay Berlin*, 222.

## 1. The Fury Archives: Afterlives of the Female Incendiary

1. “Elles ne sont ni assez hideuses, ni assez vieilles, ni assez criminelles pour inspirer de l’horreur.” Léonce Dupont, *La Commune et ses auxiliaires devant la justice* (Paris: Didier, 1871), 233. All translations mine unless otherwise noted.
2. Dupont, *La Commune et ses auxiliaires*, 236.
3. “Gazette des Tribunaux,” *Le Figaro*, September 6, 1871, 3.
4. “Gazette des Tribunaux,” 3.
5. Gay L. Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris: Images of the Commune* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 192.
6. Qtd. in Gullickson, *Unruly Women*, 180.
7. Alice Bullard, *Exile to Paradise: Savagery and Civilization in Paris and the South Pacific, 1790–1900* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).
8. Alexis de Tocqueville, “First Report on Algeria (1847),” in *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, trans. Jennifer Pitts (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 135.
9. Tocqueville, “First Report on Algeria,” 135.
10. Tocqueville, “Essay on Algeria (October 1841),” in *Writings on Empire and Slavery*, trans. Jennifer Pitts (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 71.
11. Lieutenant-Colonel de Montagnac, *Lettres d’un soldat: Neuf années de campagnes en Afrique* (Paris: Plon, 1885); trans. Christian Destremeau (1998), 299.
12. Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris*, 202.
13. “‘Elle était vêtue, dit ce témoin, d’une camisole blanche et portait une écharpe rouge et un fusil en bandoulière.’” *Le dossier de la Commune devant les Conseils de Guerre* (Paris: Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1871), 157. Translations mine unless otherwise noted.
14. Francis Magnard, “La Femme Libre,” *Le Figaro*, June 3, 1871, 1.
15. Magnard, “La Femme Libre,” 1: “Le tête qui avait dû être jolie, presque distinguée, gardait dans la mort une expression de haine farouche.”
16. Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*, in *Later Political Writings*, trans. Terrell Carver (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 181.
17. Marx, *The Civil War in France*, 188.
18. Marx, *The Civil War in France*, 187.
19. Marx, *The Civil War in France*, 192.
20. Kristin Ross, *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune* (New York: Verso, 2008), 33.
21. Kristin Ross, *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune* (New York: Verso, 2015), 17.
22. Carolyn J. Eichner, *Surmounting the Barricades: Women in the Paris Commune* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 103.

27. *Votes for Women*, January 1910, 1.
28. June Purvis, "'Deeds Not Words': The Daily Lives of the Militant Suffragettes in Edwardian Britain," *Women's Studies International Forum* (1995): 97–98.
29. "From Mrs. Saul Solomon," *Votes for Women*, November 17, 1911, 105.
30. F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, "Mrs. Leigh's Action Against the Home Secretary," *Votes for Women*, December 17, 1909, 185.
31. F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, "Women's Fight for the Vote," *Votes for Women*, June 3, 1910, 575.
32. Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence, "Women or Kaffirs?" *Votes for Women*, July 9, 1909, 112.
33. Kathleen Tanner, "The Driving Force Behind the Women's Movement," *The Vote*, March 27, 1914, 370.
34. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 198.
34. "Forcible Feeding. Statement by Mrs. Mary Leigh to Her Solicitor," *Votes for Women*, October 15, 1909, 84.
35. "Imprisonment of eight suffragettes in Winson Green Prison in Birmingham following violent protests and incidents linked to a visit by the Prime Minister, Herbert Henry Asquith, to Birmingham on 17 September 1909. Those imprisoned, with sentences ranging from one to three months, were Patricia Woodlock, Ellen Barwell, Hilda Evelyn Burkett, Leslie Hall, Mabel Capper, Mary Edwards, Mary Leigh and Charlotte Marsh. The file contains a number of medical reports on the health of the prisoners, several of whom went on hunger strike and were forcibly fed. It also contains medical opinions on force-feeding and letters from the prisoners' relatives enquiring about their welfare. A recommendation for the release of Mary Leigh on health grounds was approved and took place on 30 October 1909. There are also details of Charlotte Marsh's early release on 9 December 1909 on account of her father's illness, and of attempts by solicitors representing Mary Leigh to take legal action against the Home Secretary. The file records the official appreciation of the Home Secretary to the Governor and prison staff for their handling of the prisoners." Government Papers, National Archives, Kew, [http://www.archivesdirect.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/HO\\_45\\_10418](http://www.archivesdirect.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/HO_45_10418).
36. *Rachel Peace and Jane Short, suffragettes, forcibly fed*, Government Papers, National Archives, Kew, 1912–1914, <http://www.archivesdirect.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/HO144-1232-229179>.

### 3. The Art of Not Having Children: Birth Strike, Sabotage, and the Reproductive Atlantic

1. For firsthand accounts of the lecture, see *L'Encyclopédie Contemporaine Illustrée*, October 9, 1892; and "Une conférence extravagante," *Le Temps*, October 10, 1892, 3.
2. Angus McLaren, *Sexuality and Social Order: The Debate Over the Fertility of Women and Workers in France, 1770–1920* (Holmes & Meier, 1983), 162.
3. Gaston Percheron, "Causerie," *La Semaine Vétérinaire*, October 9, 1892, 645–46.

4. Marie Huot, *Mal de vivre* (Paris: Generation Consciente, 1909), 13–14.
5. Percheron, “Causerie,” 645–46. This assertion does not appear in *Mal de vivre*, which is decidedly more sardonic than the original accounts of the lecture.
6. Percheron, “Causerie,” 645.
7. Historians have often attributed the phrase “*grève des ventres*” to Huot’s lecture, but more recent scholarship puts this origin in dispute. Ann Cova first refutes Huot as the originator of the phrase in *Maternité et droits des femmes en France: XIXe–XXe siècles* (Paris: Economica, 1997), 114–15. Also see Karen Offen, *Debating the Woman Question in the Third Republic, 1870–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 255. Whether voiced by Huot or not, the phrase gains traction in the popular press in the years after her lecture. A sample of articles includes Severine, “Retour de Tonkin,” *Le Journal*, January 14, 1893, 1; and E. Humbert, “La Grève des Ventres,” *L’Ouvrier Syndiqué*, April 1, 1903, 2. Also see Fernand Kolney, *La grève des ventres* (Paris: Génération Consciente, 1908).
8. Catherine MacKinnon, “Privacy vs. Equity: Beyond *Roe v. Wade*” (1983), in *Feminism Unmodified: Discourses on Life and Law* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 93–102; Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981); Anita Allen, *Uneasy Access: Privacy for Women in a Free Society* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1988); Carole Pateman, “Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy,” in *The Disorder of Women: Democracy, Feminism, and Political Theory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989).
9. This term is most indebted to Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). See also Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Laura Doyle, *Freedom’s Empire: Race and the Rise of the Novel in Atlantic Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); and Alys Eve Weinbaum’s consideration of the “race-reproduction bind” in *Wayward Reproduction: Genealogies of Race and Reproduction in Transatlantic Modern Thought* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
10. For an overview, see Dianne Otto, “Feminist Approaches to International Law,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Theory of International Law*, ed. Anne Orford, Florian Hoffmann, and Martin Clark (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 488–504.
11. “Gegen den Gebärkstreik: Berichte über zwei Volksversammlungen in Berlin,” in *Frauenemanzipation und Sozialdemokratie*, ed. Mainz Niggemann (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1981), 271; translation mine. See also Robert Jütte, *Contraception: A History*, trans. Vicky Russell (Cambridge: Polity, 2008), 167–71; and Cornelia Osborne, *The Politics of the Body in Weimar Germany: Women’s Reproductive Rights and Duties* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 8–10.
12. “Gegen den Gebärkstreik” 275.
13. Jütte, *Contraception*, 169.
14. Francis Ronsin, *Grève des ventres: Néo-malthusienne et baisse de la natalité* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1980), 93–115.



15. Cited in Christine Diemel, *Kinderzahl und Staatsräson. Empfängnisverhütung und Bevölkerungspolitik in Deutschland und Frankreich bis 1918* (Munster, 1995), 178.
16. Joan Martinez-Alier and Eduard Masjuan, "Neo-Malthusianism in the Early 20th Century," *International Society of Ecological Economics*, n.d., 13.
17. Linda Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 157.
18. Emma Goldman, "The Social Aspects of Birth Control," *Mother Earth*, April 1916, 468.
19. Margaret Sanger, "A Birth Strike to Avert World Famine," *Birth Control Review* 4 (January 1920): 1.
20. Layne Parish Craig, *When Sex Changed: Birth Control Politics and Literature Between the World Wars* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013); Aimee Armande Wilson, *Conceived in Modernism: The Aesthetics of Birth Control* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016).
21. Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: Norton, 2008), 39.
22. Joseph Slaughter, "The Enchantment of Human Rights, or What Difference Does Humanitarian Indifference Make?" *Critical Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2014): 50.
23. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, *Sabotage: The Conscious Withdrawal of the Workers' Efficiency* (Cleveland, Ohio: IWW Publishing Bureau, 1925), 3.
24. Flynn, *Sabotage*, 28.
25. Reb Raney, *Mother Earth*, April 1916, 479.
26. Raney, *Mother Earth*, 480.
27. G., "A Human Document," *Mother Earth*, April 1916, 481.
28. G., "A Human Document," 482.
29. Margaret Sanger, *Family Limitation* (1917; Margaret Sanger Papers Project, New York University, 2018), 12–13.
30. Michelle Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction: Entanglements of Feminism, Health, and Technoscience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 25.
31. Murphy, *Seizing the Means of Reproduction*, 29–30.
32. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 37.
33. "Rebel Women Wanted," *Woman Rebel* 1, no. 2 (April 1914): 16.
34. "Cleopatra," *Woman Rebel* 1, no. 1 (March 1914): 7.
35. "The New Feminists," *Woman Rebel* 1, no. 1 (March 1914): 2.
36. "The Militants in England," *Woman Rebel* 1, no. 4 (June 1914): 25, continued 31.
37. Herbert A. Thorpe, "A Defense of Assassination," *Woman Rebel* 1, no. 5 (July 1914): 33.
38. *Woman Rebel* 1 no. 6 (August 1914), 45.
39. *Woman Rebel* 1, no. 6 (August 1914), 42.
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41. W. E. B. Du Bois, "Opinion," *The Crisis*, October 1919, 283.
42. Walter White, "Chicago and Its Eight Reasons," *The Crisis*, October 1919, 298.
43. White, "Chicago and Its Eight Reasons," 285.

44. For a wider backdrop to these questions, see contemporary debates about what Lee Edelson had called “reproductive futurity.” Lee Edelson, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); and José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009). My understanding of structural vulnerability to premature death is indebted to Ruthie Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).
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50. Grimké, “‘Rachel,’” 414.
51. Angelina Weld Grimké, “The Closing Door,” *Birth Control Review*, October 1919, 10.
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55. Ellis, “The World’s Racial Problem,” 16.
56. For considerations of Grimké and *The Birth Control Review*, see Tate, *Domestic Allegories of Political Desire*, 209–30; Erika Miller, *The Other Reconstruction: Where Violence and Womanhood Meet in the Writings of Wells-Barnett, Grimké, and Larson* (New York: Garland, 2000), 57–100; and Lorna Raven Wheeler, “The Queer Collaboration: Angelina Weld Grimké and the Birth Control Movement,” in *Critical Insights: LGBTQ Literature*, ed. Robert C. Evans (Ipswich, MA: Salem Press, 2015), 179–92.
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  63. John H. Morgan, “An Essay on the Production of Abortion Among Our Negro Population,” *Nashville Journal of Medicine and Surgery*, August 1860, 117–18.
  64. Qtd. in Bush, *Slave Women*, 139.
  65. Bush, *Slave Women*, 140.
  66. Michael P. Johnson, “Smothered Slave Infants: Were Slave Mothers at Fault?” *Journal of Southern History* 47 (November 1981): 493–520. See also Kelli M. Black, “Creating Infanticide: A Comparative Study of Early Modern British Servant and Antebellum American Slave Women,” MA thesis, San Diego State University, 2003.
  67. Petition Analysis Record, “To the Honorable Joshua L. Martin Chancellor of the Middle Chancery Division of the State of Alabama,” in *Race, Slavery, and Free Blacks*, series 2: *Petitions to Southern County Courts, Part A*. (January 1852–February 1953), folder 009061-011-0265.
  68. Jane (a slave) v. the State, Supreme Court of Missouri, Bowling Green District, April 1831, Mo. LEXIS 22. This case is discussed at more length in A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., “Race, Sex, Education, and Missouri Jurisprudence: Shelley v. Kraemer in a Historical Perspective,” *Washington University Law Review* 67 (1989): 694–96.
  69. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 64–68.
  70. The lineage of this term can also be located in black feminist organizing of the 1990s, through the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Collective. See Loretta J. Ross and Rickie Solinger, *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017); Loretta J. Ross et al., eds., *Radical Reproductive Justice: Foundations, Practice, Theory, Critique* (New York: Feminist Press, 2017); and Loretta J. Ross, “The Color of Choice: White Supremacy and Reproductive Justice,” in *Color of Violence: The “Incite!” Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2006), 53–65. See also Dean Spade, “Intersectional Resistance and Law Reform,” *Signs: A Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 38, no. 4 (2013): 1–25.
  71. Dorothy E. Roberts, *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty* (New York: Vintage, 1997), 6.
  72. Raphael Lemkin, “Genocide as a Crime Under International Law,” *American Journal of International Law* 41, no. 1 (1947): 147. See also A. Dirk Moses, “Raphael Lemkin, Culture, and the Concept of Genocide,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 20–41.
  73. Peter Kihss, “Lemkin Decries Accusation of U.S. Genocide,” *New York Herald Tribune*, December 16, 1951, 26.

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#### 4. Rhineland Bastards, Queer Species: An Afro-German Case Study

1. See Peter Collar, *Propaganda War in the Rhineland: Weimar Germany, Race, and Occupation After World War I* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2013), 125–29.
2. Ray Beveridge, *Mein Leben für Euch! Erinnerungen an Glanzvolle und Bewegte Jahre* (Berlin: Deutschen Verlag, 1948), 257.
3. *Colored Troops in the French Army: A Report from the Department of State Relating to the Colored Troops in the French Army and the Number of French Colonial Troops in the Occupied Territory*, 66th Congress (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921), 12.
4. See M. Cherif Bassiouni, *Crimes Against Humanity in International Criminal Law* (London: Kluwer Law International, 1999).
5. For the paradoxical newness and eternity of the nation's imagined community, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016), 11.
6. Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 32.
7. Lyon, *Manifestoes*, 32.
8. Tristan Tzara, "An Introduction to Dada," in *Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology*, ed. Robert Motherwell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 403.
9. Georges Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," in *Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology*, ed. Robert Motherwell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 141–42.
10. Richard Huelsenbeck, "Dada Lives!," in *Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology*, ed. Robert Motherwell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), 281.
11. Catherine Ann Cline, *E. D. Morel: The Strategies of Protest* (Belfast: Blackstaff, 1980), 98–115.
12. F. Seymour Cocks, *E. D. Morel: The Man and His Work* (London: George Allen, 1920), 39.
13. Cline, *E. D. Morel*, ix.
14. Foundational accounts of the English-language press can be found in Robert C. Reinders, "Racialism on the Left: E. D. Morel and the 'Black Horror on the Rhine,'" *International Review of Social History* 13 (1968): 1–28; Sally Marks, "Black Watch on the Rhine: A Study in Propaganda, Prejudice, and Prurience," *European Studies Review* 13, no. 3 (1983): 297–333. More recently, see Keith L. Nelson, "The 'Black Horror on the Rhine': Race as a Factor in Post-World War Diplomacy," *Journal of Modern History* 42, no. 4 (1970), 610–11; Christian Koller, *Von Wilden aller Rassen*