

## CONCLUSION

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# SEXUALITY AND MATERIALITY

### *The Challenge of Method*

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#### **SEXUAL EFFECTS**

Sexuality's particular quality is to be both intensely private, personal, and sensory and also public and definitive of the structures of social and economic organization, everywhere. As such, sexuality may leave no material trace and may be denied or disguised in written records, persisting only in the ephemera of memory. But at the same time, sexual norms or prohibitions may shape assemblages of artifacts, the organization of domestic space, the design and construction of institutional buildings, and the layout of cities and landscapes. This play between the personal and sensory and the public and material is a rich and provocative theme that runs through all the chapters in this book.

Developing an archaeology of sexuality – one of the ambitions of the project that resulted in this collection of essays – requires that the particular duality of the private–sensory and the public–material is made explicit and more general. As with all disciplines, archaeology is what archaeologists do. If there is to be an archaeology of sexuality, there needs to be attention to “method,” to the hermeneutical processes that move backward and forward between conceptualization and evidence, progressively building up our understanding of the world.

My objective here is to use the rich and varied material in this set of essays to draw out some of these methodological strands. This takes the form of an extended dialogue with Casella and Voss's framing introduction, and with Voss's opening essay, “Sexual Effects: Postcolonial and Queer Perspectives on the Archaeology of Sexuality and Empire.” After drawing out some key themes, I make the case for an emerging methodology along a set of overlapping vectors. Taken in combination, these interpretive vectors constitute a significant advance in our understanding of how sexuality is embroiled in colony and empire, and the ways in which materiality is central to an archaeological interpretation of sexuality. By using some of my own work on sexual effects at the Dutch and British colonial Cape of Good Hope as a foil, I suggest a schema for a rounded methodology for an archaeology of sexuality.

In her opening chapter, Voss emphasizes the need to build a bridge between two bodies of scholarship. The first is the gathering interest in the sexual politics of empire. Coming from feminist and postcolonial scholarship, this work has focused in particular on the European empires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the ways in which they were organized, and functioned. The second strand is the growing momentum of interest in the archaeology of colonialism, and a heightened awareness of the discipline's own origins in the processes of colonialism. These maturing interests have resulted in valuable explorations of creolization, ethnogenesis, hybridity, and syncretism – themes that, in turn, point toward what Voss calls “the intimate entanglements produced through colonial encounters.” This broader platform of work on empire, colony and reflexive practice provides a firm foundation for an archaeology of sexuality, of “sexual effects.”

Understanding the effects of sexuality within the organizational forms of empire or colony (or, for that matter, within any form of social organization) requires that, a priori, normative assumptions are suspended and interrogated. This is particularly so with sexuality, as Voss emphasizes. Just as the “reflexive turn” of critical archaeologies of colonialism require archaeologists to be aware of their own potential role in colonial processes, so a critical archaeology of sexuality must be enabled by an awareness of the influence of the archaeologist's sexual preferences and assumptions about sexual normality. In particular, there can be no assumption that the processes of colonization and imperialism are invariably heterosexual, or that the expressions of sexuality are inevitably confined to private and domestic spaces. Sexuality, in other words, is “a culturally contingent formation.”

### CONTESTING ASSUMPTIONS, RECENTERING GENDER AND SEXUALITY

In bringing together these essays, Voss and Casella are clear that, as an archaeological project, materiality will form a strong, unifying thread, noting that these varied studies “all fundamentally consider how an interrogation of *materiality* itself illuminates the embodied, objectified, spatial, reproductive, and sensual dynamics of these new social interactions” (Casella and Voss, Chapter 1, this volume). In exploring the methodologies that enable these studies of material sexuality, I have found it useful to separate out four strands. The first of these challenges assumptions that the heterosexual way is the only way, offering new, and often provocative, explanations of archaeological evidence. The second dimension abandons assumptions of scale, the taken-for-granted that sexuality is to be found only in the privacy of confined and restricted spaces. Third, and building on the ruins of assumptions of heterosexuality and domesticity, authors in this collection seek, in varied ways, to locate sexuality at the core of colonial and imperial processes. Fourth is the persistence of violence, coercion, and persecution – the forces that aid and abet assumptions of heterosexuality and patriarchy in the first place.

Five essays in this collection together illustrate the Pandora's Box of possibilities that emerge if assumptions of heterosexual normality are suspended and interrogated. Their combined effect is the more powerful because of their range in space and time: the Mediterranean, South America, Australia, Africa; from the first century BCE until a century or so ago.

Kay Tarble de Scaramelli, Mireia López-Bertran, and Mary Weismantel each take a new look at conventionalized parts of the broad archaeological narrative, where many would probably assume that the primary dimensions of interpretation have been settled for some time. In reexamining manifestations of Spanish imperialism along the Orinoco frontier, Tarble de Scaramelli notes the general heterosexual and patriarchal set of assumptions that White European men simply overran submissive and feminized indigenous communities – “dark, untamed, virgin territory.” These assumptions serve to mask the creative roles of indigenous women in negotiation, resistance, and the *mestizaje* process. And once the assumed dominance of patriarchy and heterosexuality is removed, the evidence points to other possibilities: “under the colonial regime some indigenous women were empowered by their productive capacities both in the biological and agricultural realms and sought to negotiate social mobility through conversion to Catholicism, commodity production for personal economic gain, and, in some circumstances, sexual favors, concubinage, or marriage outside of their birth community” (Tarble de Scaramelli, Chapter 9, this volume).

Similarly, Weismantel takes a new look at those Peruvian ceramics with exaggerated genitalia and sexuality – the Moche “sex pots.” These have long been assigned to an uncritical category of pornographic amusement, a lazy assumption facilitated by the tendency of male archaeologists to collect and display them as risqué possessions. Abandoning these long-standing assumptions frees Weismantel to explore new interpretations of the sex pots’ role and mode of use. López-Bertran is also interested in clay figurines, in her case from the Punic town of Eivissa in about 600 BCE. Like Tarble de Scaramelli and Weismantel, López-Bertran’s essay shows the interpretative possibilities that become evident once stultifying, normative, assumptions about sexuality and gender are set aside.

In contrast, Eleanor Casella and Lindsay Weiss have opened up areas of archaeological enquiry beyond the traditional boundaries of the discipline. Although this means that they have fewer long-cherished archaeological assumptions to dismantle, they still need to clear away the consequences of heterosexual interpretations of colony and empire. Casella’s interests are in gender and sexuality in Australia’s nineteenth-century penal system and the dynamics of domination and resistance by women caught up in this quintessentially Victorian system of colonization and patriarchal morality. Her point of entry into this system of interpretation is an ambiguity that disturbed those who designed and justified transportation and incarceration – the question of children born to convict women. These prison children were both innocents and evidence of their mothers’ illicit sexuality. Casella shows how prison design and structure became “ambiguous theatres of conflict” within the British penal colonies. Her argument is that, by means of the built environment, the colonial bureaucracy tried to cleanse its convict subjects of their sexuality and restore its power as a surrogate paternal authority. By turning heterosexual dominance into the subject of enquiry rather than the assumption in interpretation, Casella throws new light on the well-trodden ground of control, punishment, and the Foucauldian panopticon.

Weiss’s essay is concerned with forms of control and resistance a little later in the nineteenth century and on the South African diamond fields. Although half a

hemisphere away from Australia by sea, South Africa was of course part of the same imperial project and was shaped by similar normative assumptions, often carried by administrators who saw colonial service on both continents. Not surprisingly, then, the conventional landscape of the diamond fields has been portrayed as overwhelmingly patriarchal and heterosexual – communities of tough and ruthless men, served and serviced by subordinate women. Weiss's work shows how this ideology was made tangible through domestic accoutrements such as fine tablewares, imported over many miles of rough roads to give the semblance of domesticity in the incongruous setting of a hastily constructed bush camp. Later, as the colonial foothold is strengthened, these structures of domesticity are given more substance through the bungalowed villages built for Diamond Field administrators, each a ground plan for heterosexual normality. But, as Weiss shows, this carefully constructed mythology is blown apart by the custom of same-sex mine marriages that emerged in the segregated barracks for male laborers in South Africa's mine compounds. Here, older and younger men formed emotional and sexual bonds, moving seamlessly from homosocial relationships to heterosexual bonds when their terms of servitude were up. Again, close study of the evidence, unshackled from a priori assumptions, shows just how misleading generally held assumptions of a heterosexual world order can be.

Abandoning assumptions of a normative heterosexuality, then, frees interpretation from the confines of closed domestic spaces. In turn, this opens up the possibilities of sexual effects that are manifested at a range of scales. Three studies in this volume show how this can work at, respectively, the scale of the settlement, the urban quarter, and the city as a whole. By opening up scale in this way, an archaeology of sexuality can take on board a vast new array of material evidence.

Mgoli is a complex of buildings on a nineteenth-century Zanzibar slave plantation and one of the Omani colonial footholds on the East African coastlands. Although the main, five-roomed stone structure was clearly the primary residence of the plantation owner, Sarah Croucher (Chapter 5) develops a compelling argument that a second building, forming the opposite side of a compound, was occupied by a woman held in concubinage to the plantation owner. This architectural interpretation is supported by the excavated artifact assemblages, complementing both documentary evidence and oral traditions on the island. Croucher's archaeology challenges normative assumptions about both the layout of Islamic colonial households and the roles of women and their opportunities for achieving social position and power. Concubines, Croucher shows, were trained to use their sexuality to advance their opportunities and to overcome some aspects of servitude.

San Jose's nineteenth-century Market Street precinct is a case study for sexual effects at a larger scale, with two city blocks serving as home for some 1,000 Chinese immigrants from the early 1860s until a catastrophic fire in 1887 (Voss, Chapter 11). Here, as with Chinese immigration generally in the nineteenth-century United States, sexuality was controlled and directed by legislation. Severe restrictions on female immigration created all-male shared households within the Market Street precinct and split families, with wives remaining in China's Guangdong province. As with the all-male barracks within South Africa's mine compounds,

these local conditions of colonialism shaped consequent social and economic structures that are essential to interpreting the archaeological traces, whether these are building structures, spaces, or artifact assemblages. As with women living as concubines in contemporary Zanzibar, Chinese men in San Jose's Market Street precinct fashioned specific and creative ways of ameliorating the conditions of their servitude.

New Orleans ratchets up the scale of sexual effects to the city itself: "New Orleans as a feminine figure is remarkably vivid and persistent, and of a particular character. New Orleans is not simply feminine; the city is imagined as a sexually experienced woman wise in the ways of commerce. Sometimes she is the welcoming, aged courtesan. Other times she is a tragic, fallen figure" (Dawdy, Chapter 16). Shannon Dawdy's chapter explores the ways in which this cityscape became both gendered and sexualized. She focuses on the New Orleans district of Storyville, famed from 1897 until 1917, when it attracted the full force of the U.S. Navy's moral opprobrium. Again, the key to this interpretation is freedom from assumptions of heterosexual, domestic normality. Dawdy shows how the combination of a stable and growing class of propertied, free women and an influx of large numbers of unattached male travelers of all classes created an urban economy dominated by the demand for sexual services. This, in turn, shaped the physical structure of the city and the utilization of its buildings, and the attendant urban mythology that lived on for decades despite, or perhaps because of, the Navy's prurience.

Once the assumption of domestic heterosexuality is knocked off its interpretative pedestal through close studies such as these, the valency of sexuality and gender must be seen as closer to heart of colonialism and empire. Essays in this volume demonstrate this for the Phoenician world, Brazil, Honduras, and colonial Louisiana; there can be little doubt that these cases could, and will, be matched by many more.

Ana Delgado and Meritxell Ferrer compare two Phoenician colonial settings, the southern Iberian Peninsula and western Sicily, between the eighth and sixth centuries BCE. Artifact assemblages from Cerro del Villar, close to modern-day Malaga, provide evidence of ethnically mixed domestic groups, an interpretation that is supported by foodways and funerary practices. Delgado and Ferrer argue that domestic groups combining women of indigenous, colonial, and mestiza origins represent distinctive gender relations shaped by Phoenician colonialism in ways that have not been adequately appreciated. Pedro Funari and Aline de Carvalho make a similar point in the very different context of Palmares, an inland settlement of runaway slaves in seventeenth-century Brazil. Funari and de Carvalho track the historiography of Palmares and its shaping influences. These interpretations have invariably been shaped by a normative heterosexuality, and none is satisfactory; Funari and de Carvalho make the case for looking to polyandry as the organizational keystone of Brazil's history as colony, and in empire.

Russell Sheptak, Kira Blaisdell-Sloan, and Rosemary Joyce's reexamination of the evidence for gender in colonial Honduras shows how both archaeological and documentary evidence point to changing concepts of masculinity as central to the nature of the interaction between indigenous communities and the Spanish Empire. Excavations at the town of Ticamaya tracked how the position of militarized young men changed within the community as their cohorts gained in importance in the

face of the Spanish military threat. This was reflected in artifact sets such as arrow points and urban defensive structures. Parallel documentary evidence, read in the context of the archaeological data, revealed the complexity of identities and gender relations at the frontier.

Diana DiPaolo Loren has a similar set of questions for Colonial Louisiana. Here, the indigenous community was the Natchez and the colonial power French, rather than the Spanish. Nonetheless, the centrality of gender and sexuality in the confusing, turbulent world of the frontier places the interpretation of the Grand Village of the Natchez in the same frame as Honduran Ticamaya. Loren explores the paradox that intermarriage between native women and French men was permitted to allow for the growth of the colonial population; at the same time, historical documents authored by government officials and missionaries resound with anxieties regarding the impact of interracial intimate relations on French subjects. The ambiguity that this paradox generated is expressed in the materiality of these intimate sexual relationships, in the dress and body adornment of Natchez women, and in the desire that this engendered in French men:

Glass beads were the materialization of intimate relations with the French, relations that had reshaped their community and sense of self. . . . To wear glass beads was to transform the body, to physically embody new understandings of self that were actualized through their intimate associations with the French. The French did not share these same fashions of adorning the body with glass beads; it was too far from what sumptuary laws dictated regarding how they held and performed their bodies. These sartorial differences were at the heart of the creation for the desire for Natchez bodies, beaded, adorned, resonating in seductive ways that were strongly heard in colonial narratives. (Loren, Chapter 7)

It is also clear that the sexual effects of colony and empire can have indirect consequences, well away from any frontier of direct interaction. This is well demonstrated by Kathleen Hull's work in epidemiology (Chapter 8). Her case study shows that the Awahnichi experienced substantial disease-induced population decline approximately fifty years before face-to-face engagement with nonnative people in their traditional territory in the Yosemite region of California's Sierra Nevada. It provides perspective on choices made by native people in more traditional colonial settings and the potential consequences of forced change in such practices within institutional colonial contexts in other times or places.

The theme of violence, coercion, and persecution runs through many of the chapters in this volume: Casella's exploration of the institutionalized violence and repression directed against woman and children in convict-era Australia, itself part of a wider colonial society predicated on violence; Weiss's documentation of the racial and sexual oppression of early segregated labor practices in colonial South Africa; Croucher on the gendered repression of Omani colonialism and the ways in which women were obliged to use their sexuality to carve out small zones of personal autonomy; Voss's labor regimes, many of which were based on coercion or designed as instruments of wide-scale repression; Sheptak, Blaisdell-Sloan, and Joyce and the sexual repression and violence of Spanish colonialism in Honduras, essential to the survival of the dominant invaders; and Funari and de Carvalho's review of the historiography of Palmares, forged in the violence of enslavement, resistance, and

conquest – persecution that continues in homophobic attacks and the repression of open discussion of sexual effects in contemporary Brazil.

Three case studies can serve to demonstrate the range of gendered violence and coercion at the heart of colonial and imperial projects. The male gladiator is an icon of gendered violence. Renata Garraffoni uses the archaeology of epigraphs to reexamine the standard interpretation of gladiatorial identity. Her interest is in understanding the complexity of the gladiator's position in the nexus of gender, sexuality, and violence. This method – and evidence – frees the interpreter from the views of the elites whose views dominate the conventional textual sources. The gladiators' tombstones, erected by their wives or friends to commemorate their deaths, provide evidence of the complexity of human relations in the Roman past. Garraffoni argues that a gendered approach to the tombstones can help us to rethink some aspects of the gladiators' daily lives from a different point of view.

In contrast with the raw violence of spectacle is the coolly considered psychological violence of the female prison, which Eleanor Casella shows was designed and built with the clear purpose of ensuring that women could hear their children playing while being denied any contact with them. Because the prisoners' work area was accessed by passing the wooden fenced children's area and internally separated from it by a thin brick wall, convict women had to work all day to the sound of the Nurseries. "Allowed no official contact with their infants, these women inhabited an institutional landscape designed to engender a painful yearning for the affectionate bonds of motherhood" (Casella, Chapter 3).

Then there is the violence of representation and interpretation and the use of monuments and records to obliterate or distort the historical record and to buttress a patriarchal reading of the past. This is exemplified in Patricia Rubertone's essay on monumentalization in New England. Rubertone argues that the monumental oversights that underrepresented native women were one of the many ways colonialism attempted to shape their lives. Their underrepresentation in monuments marginalized their influential roles as community leaders and cultural nurturers. Such symbolic violence was intended to divorce them from the landscape by imposing gendered behaviors that discouraged their movements in public space.

### **TOWARD A METHODOLOGY OF SEXUAL EFFECTS**

How can these insights, interpretations, and exemplars be welded together as a working methodology for an archaeology of sexuality? The cases in this volume, with their geographic and chronological span, provide a good opportunity for a thought experiment. By treating this set of assemblages as a set, organized along appropriate vectors, the underlying methodologies that they share become apparent. Equally important, key limitations also become clear, pointing to the further development that will be required to delimit a complete methodology for identifying and studying sexual effects in archaeology.

There are twenty-four distinct assemblages that span the chapters in this volume, ranging from collections of ceramics to the layout of buildings in urban spaces. Most are conventional archaeological sources, some less so. Each is defined and described in Table 19.1, which also references the chapter that provides the full description and context of the evidence.

Table 19.1. Archaeological assemblages, by chapter

Assemblage	Chapter	Description
Ross Prison children's toys	3	Anticipated assemblage of children's toys in area of building designated as a nursery
Ross Prison design	3	Architectural design and excavated layout of prison buildings
Half-Way House assemblage	4	Mixed assemblage from residential area, including ceramics, glassware, and faunal remains
South African mine barracks	4	Design of mine barracks, contemporary documents, and oral accounts of gifts and domestic belongings
South African overseer village	4	Architectural design of model village, spatial layout of settlement, and individual house designs
Zanzibar compound	5	Residential compound, including house of plantation owner, other buildings and spaces
Zanzibar woman's assemblage	5	Assemblage of personal belongings, including women's jewelry
Eivissa figurines	6	Collection of clay figurines from domestic settings and funerary contexts
Natchez dress and adornment	7	Documentary and archaeological evidence for personal adornment, including glass beads
Awahnichi site distribution	8	Distribution and density of archaeological sites across the landscape
Orinoco ceramics	9	Indigenous and imported ceramics from mission assemblages
Ticamaya arrow points	10	Obsidian arrow points excavated from household settings
Ticamaya fortifications	10	Modifications to buildings within settlement to provide for improved fortification
Spanish colonial documents	10	Contemporary accounts of the frontier by military forces
Presidio of San Francisco	11	Excavated assemblages from living areas within fortified military area
Market Street in San Jose	11	Design of building and spaces across a set of city blocks
Phoenician households	12	Domestic assemblages and food remains from households
Gladiators' epigraphs	13	Sets of engraved tombstones with brief epigraphs in memory of deceased
New England monuments	14	Monuments erected to memorialize indigenous communities in colonized landscapes
Palmares	15	Archaeological assemblages, architectural evidence, and documentary sources for settlement
New Orleans	16	Archaeological assemblages and contemporary accounts of city
Tweerivieren Bushmen	17	Anthropometric records and body casts of sample of indigenous people
Goodwin's photographs	17	Archival collection of photographic negatives and prints of indigenous people
Moche sex pots	18	Collection representative of tradition of anthropomorphic clay figurines and vessels

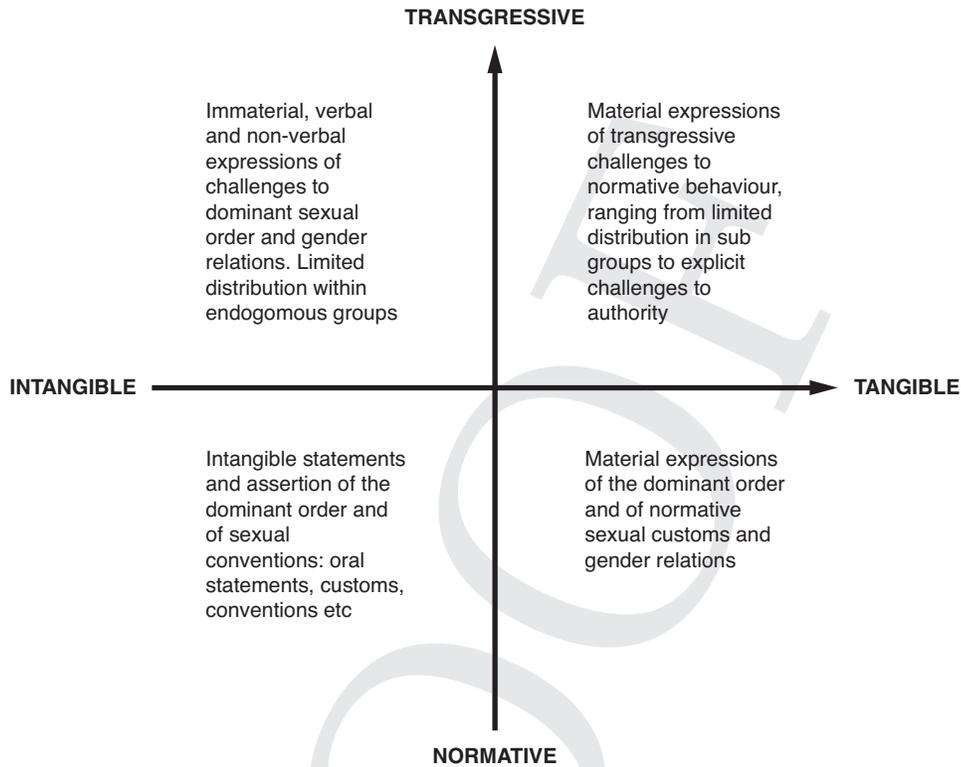
As Voss points out in her introductory essay to this volume, the cultural contingency of sexuality challenges the value of any comparative analysis that assumes a normative stability; having deconstructed assumptions of heterosexuality, and of sexual effects as confined to private and contained spaces, it would hardly be appropriate to impose an alternative fixed framework. This means that comparison is better based on characteristics of instability, on vectors, understood as directions of movement.

One such vector is the movement from the normative to the transgressive. This is to recognize that sexuality ranges from the intensely personal to the overtly public and is closely related to asymmetries of power. It acknowledges the play between desire and repression and connects with widely used analytical concepts, such as the distinction between public and hidden transcripts and between domination and resistance. An example of a stridently normative statement from this collection of evidence is the design of the overseers' village on South Africa's nineteenth-century Diamond Fields, telling all the world that heterosexual domesticity was the essence of civilized order. An example of transgression is the illicit desire that Natchez women's dress provoked in French colonists. Other cases can be arranged in intermediate positions along the normative–transgressive vector.

A second vector is the degree of tangibility of the expression of sexual effects, ranging from enduring and deliberately conspicuous expressions (such as the fortifications at Ticamaya or the monuments in the New England landscape) to manifestations that may be sensory and without material or verbal traces. Because materiality is at the heart of archaeological method, understanding the dynamics of this vector is central to the concept of an archaeology of sexuality: "Sexuality is understood as the most material and bodily realm of social life yet simultaneously is considered to be ephemeral and immaterial, leaving little lasting trace. Archaeologists studying sexuality must grapple with this paradoxical formulation as we seek to interpret the material traces of the archaeological record" (Voss, Chapter 2).

These two vectors can be expressed as intersecting axes (Figure 19.1). This, in turn, creates four quadrants, each of which anticipates different kinds of expressions of sexual effects. The most widely understood, from an archaeological perspective, is the lower right quadrant; material expressions of the dominant order. Work in this area, of course, has a long tradition that embraces a range of theoretical positions. The lower left quadrant – intangible statements of the dominant order – is also well understood, but more from other disciplinary perspectives such as history and anthropology. Here, the methodological challenge is to work across the disciplinary boundaries to ensure rounded interpretations. The more difficult areas of work are in the upper two quadrants, understanding material and immaterial expressions of transgression, ranging from challenges to the dominant order through to closed and interpersonal sexual effects that may leave no material trace.

In turn, this organizational framework can be used to arrange the twenty-four data sets of interest here (Figure 19.2). Not surprisingly, most fall into the familiar quadrant of material expressions of normative conventions and behaviors. The design of the Ross Prison and of the South African overseer village are assertive, highly visible statements of patriarchal control. San Jose's Market Street and the monumentalized New England landscape are equally visible but, perhaps, more

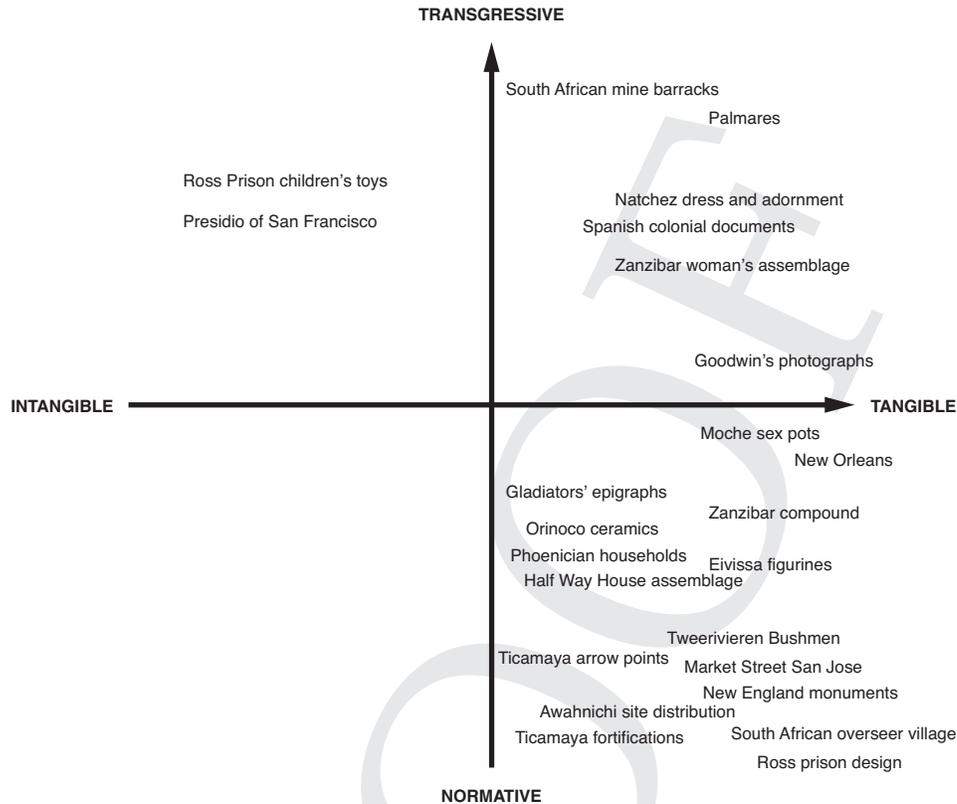


**FIGURE 19.1.** Grid One: vectors (directions of movement) in an archaeology of sexual effects.

contestable, whereas Tacimaya arrow points and fortifications and Awahnichi site distributions are clearly normative but less tangible. The New Orleans cityscape and Moche sex pots are material expressions that function close to the boundary between the normative and the transgressive.

There is also a good representation of material expressions of the transgressive. The limit cases here are the South African mine barracks and Palmares. The former combined sexual homosocial relationships, expressed in just-tangible gift exchanges as expressions of commitment and affection, with the participants' ability to move seamlessly into heterosexual household arrangements as circumstances changed. Palmares has challenged Brazilian and colonial normative assumptions since the seventeenth century and continues to do so today.

The paucity of cases that fall in the upper left and lower left quadrants reflect the "paradoxical formulation" at the heart of an archaeology of sexual effects, and therefore the key methodological challenge for an archaeology of sexuality. Sexuality may operate, simultaneously, at the sensory and interpersonal level and in the public and explicit domain: illicit sexual relationships between women in the Ross Prison (Casella 2000) and the use of penal architecture to impose a moral order; homosocial and sexual partnerships in the mine barracks and ideals of Victorian heterosexual domesticity in the bosses' village. Even the most normative assertions of required gender relations and sexual behavior may be intangible – for example, order of preference in ceremonial processions, bodily gestures, and oral expressions



**FIGURE 19.2.** Grid Two: data sets plotted according to tangible–intangible and normative–transgressive vectors.

of respect and authority. Although the limits of materiality are a problem for many areas of archaeological interpretation, they are a particular difficulty for an archaeology of sexuality that aspires, as do the contributions to this volume, to understand the continuities between intimate and public expressions and behaviors.

How can this set of cases be “stretched” to achieve a methodological suite that covers the full extent of both vectors and that can operate in all four quadrants that their intersection creates? My own work looking for the role of race, gender, and the subaltern expressions of slaves and the underclass at the Dutch and British Cape of Good Hope serves as a point of departure for bringing this methodological suite together.

A Dutch East India Company outpost was established at the Cape in 1652, and soon became the basis for a colony that pushed steadily inland. British forces captured the Cape in 1795; the Cape became a British colony in 1806 and remained so throughout the nineteenth century. The economy was underpinned by slavery from the early years of Dutch settlement through until emancipation in 1838. Of relevance here are the ways in which archaeological, architectural, and documentary sources can be used to understand both the ways in which colonial control worked as a system of dominance and the forms of expression and resistance of subalterns, whether slaves or underclass (Hall 2000).

In exploring this, I found Stallybrass and White's development of Bakhtin's classic concept of carnival particularly helpful. Stallybrass and White show how dominant statements – assertive building designs, monuments, or elite artifact sets contain a “consciousness” of the unseen statements of those whom they dominated and suppressed (Hall 1992: 392): “a recurrent pattern emerges: the ‘top’ attempts to reject and eliminate the ‘bottom’ for reasons of prestige and status, only to discover, not only that it is in some way frequently dependent on the low-Other but also that the top includes the low symbolically, as a primary eroticized constituent of its own fantasy life. The result is a mobile, conflictual fusion of power, fear and desire in the construction of subjectivity: a psychological dependence upon precisely those Others which are being rigorously opposed and excluded at the social level” (Stallybrass and White 1986: 5).

Three dimensions of the traces of Dutch and British colonialism at the Cape show how the “low-Other” can be discerned across both categories of material evidence, and scale.

In 1791, in the closing years of the Dutch East India Company administration, one Philip Anhuizer bought a property in Barrack Street, Cape Town, which he owned and occupied until his death in 1829. Over these four decades, a rich accumulation of domestic debris built up in the house's courtyard well. On his death, a standard probate record of Anhuizer's possessions was drawn up and lodged in the government archive. Comparison of the archaeological assemblage and the probate record revealed suggestive discrepancies: “the list of personal possessions from Layer Three of the well reveals men (military badge, cane, shoes) but also women (hairpin, brooch, small bells, shoes, thimbles, cotton reels, a doll and a doll's tea service). The probate record, on the other hand, is an overwhelmingly masculine document. The image that emerges from the list of personal possessions is of Philip Anhuizer himself: perhaps suffering from gout (the crutches), sword and pistol beside him while reading his bible and occasionally peering at his silver watch through his spectacles. His wife, Cecilia van der Kaap, is excluded from the image, and his slave laborer, housemaid and cook are only in the list because they were Anhuizer's property. Similarly with the underclass. In both the probate record and the street directories, Anhuizer, his house and his possessions are almost as one. But the assemblage from Layer Three of the well hints at other presences: the common soldiers who left behind buttons and a uniform badge and the servants and slaves who lived off mutton stew and snoek” (Hall et al. 1990: 83).

Anhuizer's townhouse, in common with others in the street, had a symmetrical façade, probably with baroque-style ornamentation (it is captured, in altered form, in an early photograph). This style was characteristic of the Cape manor house of the eighteenth century and is celebrated today as the “Cape Dutch” architecture of the colonial countryside. Conventional interpretations of this form of building have been of a male-dominated world, with little evidence of either women or the slaves who, by the end of the eighteenth century, accounted for some two-thirds of the population of Cape Town: “the image of the benign patriarch, sitting at ease beneath the oaks, in front of his whitewashed façade, smoking his long clay pipe and contemplating civilization against the barbaric chaos of Africa” (Hall 1994: 1). This representation, however, disguised “the webs of consanguinity and conjugality” that

tioned these gabled buildings together into a tight set (Hall 1994: 2). Once assumptions of patriarchy were abandoned in favor of the dynamics of race, class and gender, new connections become apparent. A close reexamination of deeds and other records of ownership in the archive revealed that, rather than being commercial transactions between unrelated men, eighteenth-century Cape farms, enabled by slave labor, were linked to just eight dominant families through female ties: “the emerging elite of the colonial countryside formed webs of economic and social relationships around connections between women who were marked out by their claim to racial purity and superiority. . . a gendered segment within a burgeoning gentry class, these women facilitated capital accumulation and carried the identity of difference from the transgressive miscegenation that was an inevitable consequence of the expanding colonial frontier. The gables themselves can be read as a metaphor of fecundity contained within the discipline of order” (Hall 1994: 3).

The concept of containing disorderly conditions such as fecundity within symmetrical structures extended to the founding cityscape of Cape Town, as with comparable town layouts in the Netherlands, Dutch Manhattan, the Dutch West India Company base in Brazil, and colonial Indonesia (Hall 2000). Street plans linked men to other men and were described in this way in contemporary travelers’ accounts. The urban grid structured and directed formal processions and sumptuary declarations of male status, such as elaborate funeral processions. In contrast, elite women were contained within houses, churches, and other acceptable venues for public display. What becomes evident through immersion in this evidence, whether archaeological, architectural, or documentary, is the repetition of these assertions of order; the overdetermination in the insistence on geometry and symmetry, status, order, and movement in the correct sequence. Behind this, however, is a constant presence of fear and violence: violent arguments between men over the seating of their wives in church; punishments for breaking sumptuary codes; public punishments and execution for those challenging the Dutch East India Company’s regulations; the fear of slaves “running amuck”; the constant terror of unseen runaways and renegades descending from the vastness of Table Mountain and setting fire to the town by night (Hall 1997, 2000).

These instances – at the scale of assemblage, household, and cityscape – reveal the “bumps, dents and bruises in the patriarchal façade; signs that can be used in extrapolating past relations of gender” (Hall 1997: 227–228). The consciousness of the “low-Other” is evident in absences and inconsistencies (the contrast between Anhuyzer’s probate record and the revealing rubbish in his backyard well), in ambiguities and misrepresentations (of the patriarchal Cape countryside, disguising the key role of women in differentiating race and class), and in repetition and overdetermination (the insistence on geometry and order in the layout and ceremonials of the cityscape, seeking to drown out the fear of disorder, violence, and imminent destruction). These are “points of vulnerability, places where the heavy, muffling shrouds of domination become unstitched, the point of disappearance of the subaltern, the *aporia*” (Hall 1999: 193).

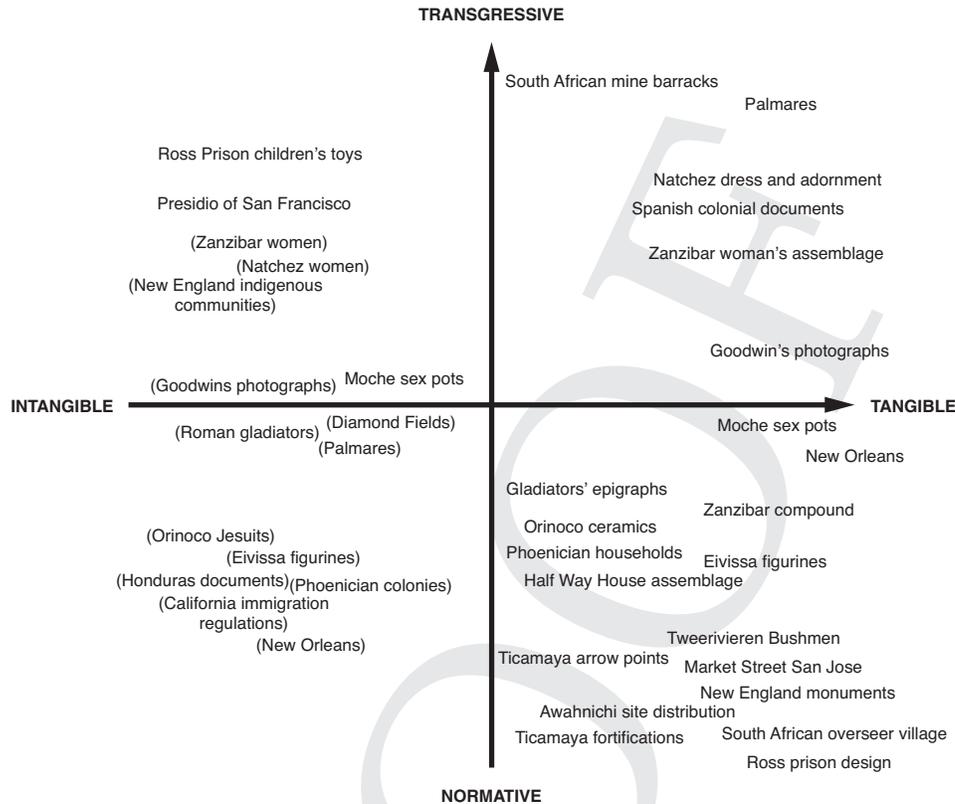
Returning now to the cases in this collection – and testing them for traces of the “low-Other” through hints of absences and inconsistencies, ambiguities and misrepresentations, and repetition and overdetermination – reveals some

intriguing bumps, dents, and bruises in their heterosexual and patriarchal façades (Figure 19.3). These can be organized against the two largely empty quadrants, defined by intangible expressions of normative orders and by intangible expressions of transgressive sexual effects.

Voss and Casella, in their respective considerations of the San Francisco Presidio and the nursery area of the Ross women's prison, consider the implications of absences in the archaeological record. At the Presidio, there was no artifactual trace of indigenous communities in the inner areas, despite the high likelihood that such people worked for, and interacted with, the Spanish in these areas. At the Ross Prison, there was no material trace of children, despite the clear designation of the area in the documentary record (and in contrast with sites such as the Half-Way House Hotel; Weiss, Chapter 4). This leads Casella to ask whether, in prison conditions, artefacts could have other uses and meanings, and, therefore, whether large, metal serving spoons found in the Nursery Ward could have been toys rather than food utensils: "as objects that could be bounced, banged, sucked – but crucially, not swallowed – perhaps these kitchen implements served as 'toys' for the infant and toddler residents of the Nurseries? Ultimately, the invisibility of childhood within this excavated assemblage raises questions on the nature of a carceral childhood, where the absences themselves created a unique spatial cartography of power." Reading artefacts in this way is to move beyond the standard, utilitarian functionalism of archaeology (pots are for preparing food, spoons are for eating) and to interpret material things as "subaltern objects" that acquire their meaning from the relationships of dominance and subservience in their particular contexts.

Once the possibilities inherent in archaeological collections are opened up in this way, other suggestive ambiguities become evident. As Rubertone shows, the monumentalized New England landscape did not result in the simple closure on the question of indigenous history and claims to identity that had been hoped for, and a transgressive undercurrent of resistance, a "hidden transcript" in James Scott's (1992) terms was nurtured in the shadow of the monuments. This recalls my own argument that the patriarchal façades of the manor houses that monumentalized the South African colonial landscape nurtured their "shadow" in the networks of women that perpetuated elite connections and the slaves who enabled the economy.

Freeing artefacts from the constraints of direct interpretations, as well as using context and other forms of evidence to tease out ambiguities, inconsistencies, and contradictions, opens up further possibilities in other cases in this collection. Croucher touches the surface of the complex relationships between women living and working in the compound at Mgoli; the four wives of Abdalla bin Jabir, and the non-Arab concubine living across the inner courtyard in her separate building: "daily practices in the space between the stone house and the Trench C house would have engaged relationships between women who had children of equal status, who performed the same daily tasks, and who had access to the same material wealth. What separated them most may have been the manner in which they participated in sexual relationships with the same man – for a concubine, these practices may have run the gamut from open seduction of the master, partly for her own pleasure, in the 'private' space to the rear of the main stone house, to deeply coercive sexual acts



**FIGURE 19.3.** Grid Three: intangible expressions of normative order and transgressive sexual effects.

between a man and a woman he had enslaved” (Croucher, Chapter 5). This suggests, in turn, the overdetermination of personal adornment, and the sexual effects of the jewelry associated with concubinage at the site. Similarly with the complex relations between Natchez women and French men on the banks of the Mississippi River: “Anxieties regarding fear and desire seep from numerous archival accounts, with most accounts agreeing on the notion that the bodies of Natchez men, women, and children were visually, spiritually, and sexually different from their own” (Loren, Chapter 7). Many of these French men were subservient to the rigors of colonial order and discipline and would have been caught in a complex set of intersections of race, gender, and class. As with the metal spoons in the Ross Prison Nursery and the concubine’s jewelry at Mgoli, the glass beads that adorned Natchez bodies would have had an excess of meaning that far surpassed their utilitarian value.

Transgressive sexual effects are, by their nature, less evident in any form of record than intangible expressions of normative expectations and behaviors, and so it follows that, once we recognize the valencies of ambiguities, contradictions, and overdetermination, the wider possibilities of the normative domain will become apparent. Again, the cases in this collection demonstrate this wider potential well.

Sheptak, Blaisdell-Sloan, and Joyce’s study of Spanish colonial Honduras shows the value in tracking between documents and the material records. In this case, sexuality

is a highly visible structuring principle because, they suggest, of the legal ruling required when children were born as a result of sexual liaisons between colonizers and indigenous people. Although the material record has left collective traces – the obsidian arrowheads left by anonymous young men, the new fortifications raised by unidentified villagers – the documents often name people whose actions or circumstances require reporting or some kind of action. This leaves open intriguing, and still unexplored, possibilities in understanding the intangible significations of the dominant order at the Spanish colonial frontier. For example, what of the “Christian Spanish woman” from Sevilla, mentioned in a report from the field in August 1535, whose husband had been killed in an earlier military action and who had been taken as a wife by an indigenous leader resisting colonization. As Sheptak, Blaisdell-Sloan, and Joyce (Chapter 10) note, the recurrent theme of the “captive woman” invoked “ideas of kinship, shame, and honor. They were strategic, if violent, means by which new societies were forged.” Recognition of the ways in which people were distributed across colonial and imperial landscapes in ways such as these extends considerably the reach of interpretation of normative sexual effects.

Looking more deeply at both the evidence from the Orinoco frontier and at turn-of-the-century New Orleans shows, in a similar fashion, how the wider plays of then-normative sexual effects can be extrapolated. Tarble de Scaramelli (Chapter 9) notes a common interest between Jesuit priests seeking to embed colonial control and indigenous women adjusting to the needs of the new order: “under the colonial regime some indigenous women were empowered by their productive capacities both in the biological and agricultural realms and sought to negotiate social mobility through conversion to Catholicism, commodity production for personal economic gain, and, in some circumstances, sexual favors, concubinage, or marriage outside of their birth community. . . . by gaining the confidence of the women and children, the Jesuits attempted to overcome some of the resistance to the mission regime and, at the same time, undermine the traditional forms of status and political power. It appears that some of the women used these circumstances to their benefit, in a strategy to gain social mobility in the mission context.” Dawdy (Chapter 16) shows that the role of women was equally complex in the changing nature of New Orleans, with women gaining control of key properties ahead of the city’s reputation for its sexuality: “New Orleans went from being a gendered *space* to a sexualized *place*. . . . The businesswomen of New Orleans facilitated masculine consumption and the production of a homosocial landscape. Men experienced the city together, as men.”

These subtleties of interpretation allow the exploration of the full vector of tangibility across varying forms of normative practices. A number of other cases can be extended in similar ways: Punic Eivissa (the meaning of the linkage among procreation, death, and cremation at a time of significant social and economic change); Phoenician colonies in Iberia and western Sicily (the linkage between domestic routines and concepts of eternity through funerary rituals); California (the over-determination in the continual regulation of sexual behavior via legislation). Incorporating the consciousness of other meanings that extend beyond the immediate reading of material culture provides a key contribution to a fuller methodology of sexual effects.

Always interesting are those cases that fall on the boundary, in this instance between intangible expressions of normative and transgressive sexual effects. Both the residents of the Diamond Fields' model Victorian village and Goodwin's use of photography a generation later have this quality. Shepherd's interpretation of Goodwin's state of mind can serve for both: "Can we talk of pornographies of death and desire? Is there an erotics of exhumation and display at work here, in these tales of living and dead Bushmen (as in a set of practices articulated by a logic of desire)? At what point do we pass beyond the limits of representation, or is there no limit to the pursuit of information and the requirement that all shall be bared, all shall be uncovered?" (Shepherd, Chapter 17). This is the patriarchal colonial gaze, implicated with desire for the Black native body that was eventually to provoke preventative legislation in apartheid South Africa's Immorality Act of 1950.

The Moche sex pots, the lives of Roman gladiators, and Palmares straddle this boundary. Were the sex pots expressions of a dominant order, or were they defiant challenges to assumptions of sexual privileges? "One of the first Moche ceramics I saw up close was an unusually large female effigy at the Field Museum. It had a rather ferocious face, an enormous protruding vulva, and an unmistakable clitoris. This pot grabbed my attention; but like other researchers before me, I felt silenced by a figure at once graphically explicit and entirely ambiguous" (Weismantel, Chapter 18). How did Roman gladiators reconcile the requirements of playing the archetype of masculinity in the imminence of death with the affectionate relationships indicated by some of their epigraphs? How can we best understand the complex and often contradictory responses that knowledge of Palmares has always provoked, and continues to provoke today?

### **CONCLUSION: RESOLVING THE PARADOX**

The methodological schema that I have outlined here is one of several potential ways of addressing the challenges in developing a fuller approach to the archaeology of sexual effects. But what any schema must do to be helpful is to resolve the paradox with which I opened this chapter: the quality of being at once intensely private, personal, and sensory and also public and definitive of the structures of social and economic organization. A review of the cases used across the range of projects that constitute the chapters in this book shows that they are successful in cutting free of the assumptions of a standard and universal heterosexual world and in mapping and probing different normative and tangible expressions of sexual orders. They are, however, less adroit in finding transgressive sexual effects and, particularly, less tangible expressions of sexuality and gender. I have suggested that this problem can be overcome – and the paradox resolved – by looking for the expression of the "low-Other" that is contained within the dominant expression, the "mobile, conflictual fusion of power, fear and desire in the construction of subjectivity" that is evoked so powerfully in Stallybrass and White's (1986) seminal paper.

My final mapping of the contents of this volume against the two vectors of the normative–transgressive and the tangible–intangible summarizes the ways in which I have stretched the cases in this book to suggest the presence of the "low-Other"

(my extrapolations are shown in brackets in Figure 19.3). As described in this chapter, each extrapolation contributes to the richness of our understanding of sexual effects and demonstrates the vitality and potential of this area of archaeological enquiry.

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