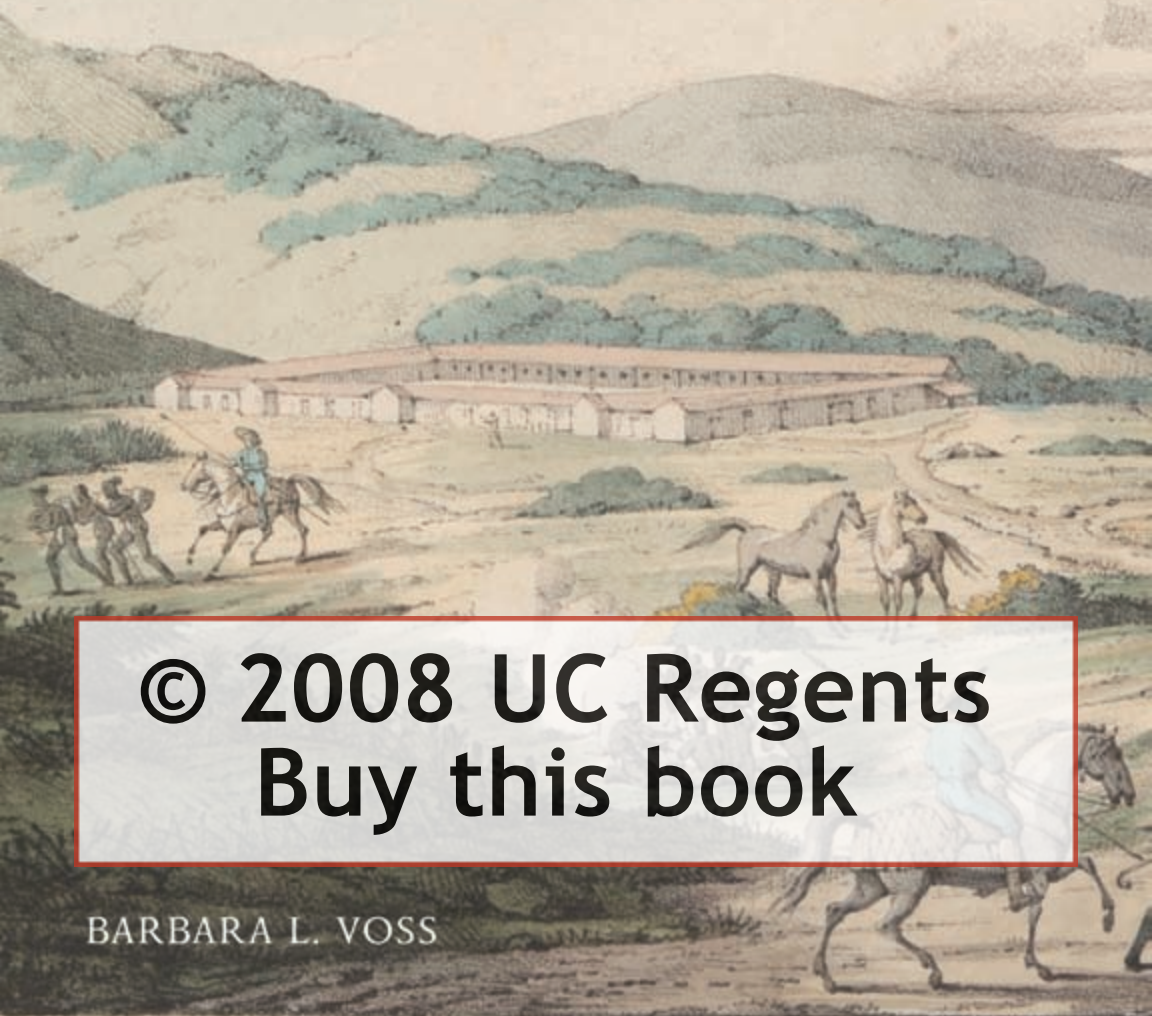


# THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF ETHNOGENESIS

RACE AND SEXUALITY IN COLONIAL SAN FRANCISCO



**© 2008 UC Regents  
Buy this book**

BARBARA L. VOSS

University of California Press, one of the most distinguished university presses in the United States, enriches lives around the world by advancing scholarship in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Its activities are supported by the UC Press Foundation and by philanthropic contributions from individuals and institutions. For more information, visit [www.ucpress.edu](http://www.ucpress.edu).

University of California Press  
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California

University of California Press, Ltd.  
London, England

© 2008 by The Regents of the University of California

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Voss, Barbara L., 1967–.

The archaeology of ethnogenesis : race and sexuality in colonial San Francisco / Barbara L. Voss.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN: 978-0-520-24492-4 (cloth : alk. paper)

1. Ethnology—California—Presidio of San Francisco.
2. Sex role—California—Presidio of San Francisco.
3. Ethnicity—California—Presidio of San Francisco.
4. Excavations (Archaeology)—California—Presidio of San Francisco.
5. Social archaeology—California—Presidio of San Francisco.
6. Presidio of San Francisco (Calif.)—History.
7. Presidio of San Francisco (Calif.)—Race relations.
8. Presidio of San Francisco (Calif.)—Social life and customs.
9. California—History—To 1846. I. Title.

F868.S156V67 2008

305.309794'6109034—dc22

2007011566

Cartography of maps 1–12 developed by Landis Bennett.

Manufactured in the United States of America

17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09 08  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

This book is printed on Natures Book, which contains 50% post-consumer waste and meets the minimum requirements of ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992 (R 1997) (*Permanence of Paper*).

“Found any gold yet?” the driver called out from the UPS truck passing by the excavation site. I’ve come to recognize these catch phrases about buried treasure and dinosaur bones for what they are: not evidence of the public’s ignorance about archaeology, but a tentative opening gambit in a conversation between strangers.

“Not yet,” I called back, trying to sound welcoming. “But we are finding some interesting things. Want to come take a look?”

In the Presidio of San Francisco, an urban park that is part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, public participation and interpretation are core components of our archaeological research (fig. 2). Since 1997, I have partnered with the Presidio Archaeology Center to bring university field schools to the Presidio to study the remains of the Spanish-colonial settlement for which the park is named. We excavate along well-traveled streets and jogging paths, in parking lots and the narrow yards surrounding decommissioned military housing (now rented out to civilian tenants). During a typical six-week excavation, our field school commonly receives more than two thousand visitors, some of whom volunteer in our field lab, becoming members of the research team. Our public program rests on two core concepts: an open site and a conversational approach. There are no barriers that keep visitors from entering the research area; they are free to come into our workspace and observe in whatever manner they prefer. Interactions between archaeologists and visitors follow the flow of normal conversations: the visitors’ questions direct the content and tone of



FIGURE 2. Archaeologist Bea Cox shows park visitors a recently recovered artifact.

the discussion, and the archaeologists share what we are doing that day and what we have found. Rather than giving a prepared speech, we focus instead on each visitor's interests as well as our own.

The content and length of these conversations vary widely. Some people are interested in the park's history; others ask about the archaeological process. Many have information they'd like to share with us about their own historical research, their genealogy and heritage, or their experiences with archaeology. We—the archaeologists—are often the object of fascination: who are we, how did we get permission to dig here, how much schooling do we have, do we get paid, do we like what we do?

For me, the most challenging interactions are those that turn to the topic of historical identity. Such conversations often start with the query, "So, who lived here?" or, more commonly, "Are you excavating Indians?" These straightforward questions have complicated answers. Yes, Native Californians lived here, both before colonization and also in sizeable numbers during the Spanish-colonial and Mexican eras. If the person seems particularly interested in in-

digenous history, I might mention how the colonial military brought workers here from throughout central California, so that in addition to the Ohlone Indians (the local tribe), there were Coast Miwok, Bay Miwok, Patwin, Yokuts, Salinans, and others at El Presidio de San Francisco.

And, I add, there were the colonists themselves. For some people, the term “colonist” is sufficient, but others will ask, “The Spanish, right?” Spanish by nationality, I answer, but from villages in what today is northern Mexico. Some are perplexed: “So, they were Mexicans?” You might say that—a mixed population, people primarily of Mexican Indian and African ancestry. The term “African” always gets people’s attention. “Were they slaves?” Not here, I respond, fumbling through a description of the large population of free black people in eighteenth-century northern Mexico, some of whom were recruited as colonists to California. And Mexican Indians? If I’m feeling expansive, I’ll trot out the historical anecdote recorded by one foreign (European) visitor to the early settlement, who reported that indigenous Mexican languages were spoken at the Presidio as much as Spanish was.

At some point in these conversations, I usually begin to feel uneasy. It is important to dispel California’s myth of Spanish conquistadors and put Mexican Indians, African Mexicans, and Native Californians at the center of California’s Spanish-colonial and Mexican history. Yet only two decades after arriving here in Alta California, the colonists, themselves formerly colonized peoples, ceased to think of themselves in these racial terms. Abandoning the *sistema de castas*, Spain’s colonial race laws, they embraced a shared colonial identity: Californio.

In these conversations about historical identities at the Presidio—with site visitors, at public lectures, in the classroom, with colleagues at the Presidio Archaeology Center, at academic conferences—I frequently find myself either without words or frustrated by the limitations of the words I do have. Social scientists have long demonstrated that the notion of “race” has no scientific basis,<sup>1</sup> so why do I persist in describing some of the people whose lives I study as “African” four centuries after they were taken from that continent, and two centuries after they rejected that designation? When a descendant of the colonial population pulls out a well-worn map to show me which villages in Spain his ancestors came from, how do I reconcile that conversation with the historical documents I’ve read that list his great-great-great-great-great grandparents as *mulatos* and *indios* from mining towns in Sonora, Mexico?

The only discernable “truth” about historical identities in Spanish-colonial and Mexican Alta California is that they were constantly changing. Other researchers have reached similar conclusions: “We were struck,” write Brian Haley and Larry Wilcoxon (2005:433, 442) of their genealogical research on colo-

nial families in Santa Barbara, “by how abundant and well documented identity changes in particular family lines were. . . . They cross supposedly impermeable boundaries. . . . Their social history demonstrates and explains identity’s continuous reformulation.” Such transformations lead us to ask how or why it is that certain forms of social identification came to be meaningful and accepted in particular moments, both historically and in the present day.

Colonization is one historical phenomenon that generates conditions under which existing patterns of social identification lose their relevance and new social identities emerge, both with consent and by force. From the fifteenth century onward, European colonial powers moved and relocated colonized peoples from one part of the globe to another in the service of the military, economic, and religious goals of their empires. The case of El Presidio de San Francisco, while rich in its specific historical context, is also relevant to considerations of global empire, diaspora, indigeneity, and colonial identification.

The importance of archaeological research on ethnogenesis is thus found not only in abstract theories of social life but also in these specific historical contexts. Archaeologists have often treated identities as stable categories (gender, ethnicity, race, class, or age) that can be used to sort people and the artifacts they leave behind into groups for comparative analysis. We have been less attentive to the permeability and mutability of these categories. We have been more concerned with how we can assign an artifact to a specific racial, ethnic, or gender group than with understanding the role of material culture and everyday routines as resources that people use to both stabilize and transform their identities. For archaeology to be able to contribute to a better understanding of the macro-historical phenomena that shape peoples’ lives—colonization, imperialism, the expansion of capitalism, labor regimes, consumerism, intercultural exchange—we must discover ways to talk about social identities that embrace change as well as stability, permeability as well as boundedness, fluidity as well as fixity, and social agency as well as social structure.

As an archaeological and historical investigation of ethnogenesis among military settlers who lived at El Presidio de San Francisco, this book presents the findings of over thirteen years of field and laboratory studies as well as archival and historical research. Most of the book focuses on this rich body of evidence and my interpretations of it. To begin, however, this chapter establishes a conceptual foundation for the study, first discussing epistemological and theoretical tensions in archaeological research on identities and then tracing the historical specificity and interdependence of specific tropes of identity (ethnicity, race, nation, class, gender, sexuality). The last section turns to the book’s specific subject, ethnogenesis, examining the relationship between my own use of this concept and its use by other scholars.

## Social Identity: Similarity, Alterity, and the In-Between

By taking identity as its central focus, this study enters a contested field. Not only do anthropologists and archaeologists fiercely debate what constitutes a particular identity, but there are also epistemological and political implications of taking “identity” as an object of knowledge. The research presented here examines the formulation and transformation of identities in what has come to be known as the post-Columbian “modern world” (after Martin Hall [2000]), in which identity practices were dramatically reconfigured through the intertwined development of European nationalism, imperialist expansion, global capitalism, and the Enlightenment cult of the rational, self-interested individual. “This kind of self-consistent person,” Katherine Verdery (1994:37) writes, “who ‘has’ an ‘identity’ is a product of a specific historical process: the process of modern nation-state formation.” She argues that “the idea that to have ‘identities’ is normal” is an outgrowth of the “ever-greater efforts by state-makers to keep track of, manage, and control their ‘populations.’” The constellations of identifications and social categories that adhere in present-day social life are indeed a partial legacy of statism, colonialism, capitalism, and individualism: such terms and categories were and continue to be met with, altered by, and woven into other practices of social identification and differentiation.

To study identity is to embrace paradox. As Stuart Hall observes, the recent explosion in scholarship on identities is conjoined with critiques and deconstructions of such inquiries, with a particular rejection of the notion of an integral, originary, and unified subject who “has” an identity. Despite the acknowledged limitations of the concept of identity, it has yet to be supplanted by new concepts that are better to think with. Identity is, then, “an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all” (Hall 1996:2). Indeed, the core question of this study—how was a heterogeneous population of colonized subjects transformed into a unified (although not uniform) colonizing force?—is unaskable without reference to the relations of sameness and difference that connote some form of social identity. It was through subject positions such as race, gender, sexuality, generation, institutional location, and geopolitical locale that such persons were able to forge claims to subjectivity and survival in their new situations as colonizing agents of the Spanish crown (after Bhabha 2004:2).

I understand identity as the means through which social subjects are constructed into relationships of taxonomic similarity and difference in comparison with other subjects. Consequently, identity is multiscalar. It is simultaneously personal and collective, generated through internal experiences and imposed from external disciplining practices and institutionalized structures. Identity is

generative, not passive, which is why we might wish to talk of identification rather than identity. Practices of identification follow and (re)produce the contours of power in social life. The desire to better understand how power is operationalized has perhaps inspired and sustained the current florescence of research on identities and personhood, not only in archaeology but also throughout the social sciences and the humanities.

Identities are suspended within the tensions between similarity and alterity, or sameness and difference. To identify is to establish a relationship of similarity between one thing or person and another, and self-reflexively to position oneself in such an affinity with others. In this sense, practices of identification call attention to perceived similarities and, in doing so, achieve an erasure or elision of other kinds of variability. These erasures of variations pose an internal threat to the stability of identities, requiring continual “work” (in the sense of the multifaceted deployment of social power) to maintain the coherence of relations of similarity. Much of this identity work occurs through attention to other relations of difference (alterity, exclusion, separation, othering), what is widely termed the “constitutive outside” that “forms the corona of difference through which identities are enunciated” (Meskell 2002:280).<sup>2</sup> What any hypothetical “we” may have in common, our identification with each other, may have as much to do with our perception of shared difference from a real or imagined “other” as with any intrinsic similarity among ourselves. Practices of identification must thus be understood as continually operating within that “difference which must be acknowledged, but also sameness which must be conceded” (Young 1995:92).

Studies of identity have increasingly interrogated this tension between alterity and similarity, drawing attention to the ambiguity and lack of closure that such tension brings to social identities. There has been a particular effort to trouble the binaries that lend the appearance of stability to categories of identity and otherness (for example, colonizer/colonized, white/black, or man/woman) along with related power-laden dichotomies that buttress such divisions (such as culture/nature, orient/occident, and so on).<sup>3</sup> Homi Bhabha calls special attention to hybridity, to the “‘in between’ spaces [that] provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation” (2004:2), while Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) highlights the transformative potential of geographic and conceptual borderlands, and Stuart Hall exhorts us to develop “a new cultural politics which engages rather than suppresses *difference*” (1989:29). Others point out how hybridity and other markers of ambivalence (such as borderlands or “third spaces”) have been used to regulate and control social subjects rather than to liberate them (Chatan 2003; Meskell

2002; Mitchell 1997; Verdery 1994; Young 1995). The reactionary potential of hybridities and frontiers has considerable relevance to this study, for the military settlers who founded and lived at El Presidio de San Francisco inhabited such middle spaces of identity and location. Exploring the ways in which these ambiguously situated subjects navigated the politics of identity and empire contributes an important perspective to ongoing dialogues about the potentialities and limitations of life “in between.”

By examining a historically known instance of ethnogenesis, this study also contributes to the movement away from conceptualizing identity as something stable, categorical, and inherent to bounded groups and individuals. However, models of personhood and community that emphasize the partitive, situational, and contingent aspects of social identity should not be misread to suggest that identity is an “anything-goes” dimension of social practice. Although socially constructed, identities operate as “social facts” (Durkheim 1982). They become embedded in the organizational structures, histories, and procedures of institutions and other social collectivities. Consequently, identities come to have objective effects on the lives of social subjects. Even before birth, modern subjects are interpolated into particular modes of identification (race, gender, nation, kinship, and so on). Ongoing disciplines of identification are embedded within social interactions because identities are relational and depend on recognition and legitimation.

The challenge is to interrogate the interplay between the coercive and voluntary aspects of identity practices, and to do so with attention to specific historical contexts. This is especially important in studies of what Gavin Lucas has aptly named the “trinity” of race, class, and gender. Often mistakenly viewed as stable and universal aspects of social life, these categories of persons must be understood as “historical formations specific to the period being discussed” that “are not so much categories of analysis, but subjects of analysis” (Lucas 2006:181, 185). One of the explicit aims of this book is to denaturalize and de-essentialize aspects of identity that are often experienced as fixed and stable. Tracing the shifting permutations of race, ethnicity, gender, and status in colonial San Francisco exposes the historical contingency not only of any given person’s “identity” but also of the underlying postulates through which social identities are constructed.

### Fluidity and Fixity

How can studies of historical identity navigate the tension between the fluidity and fixity of social identities? This study participates in the current moment’s fascination with the malleability of identities. From transnationalism, ethnogenesis, creolization, hybridity, and passings of all sorts to queerness, trans-

genderings, and transsexualities, there is an abiding interest in those who have crossed and are crossing social boundaries. Identities are “plural and changing” (Casella and Fowler 2005:2), “never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices, and positions” (Hall 1996:4). This deconstruction of identities corresponds to a shift from taking individuals or predefined groups as primary units of analysis to understanding that personhood and community are similarly partitive, permeable, contingent, dispersed, and situational (Fowler 2004; Mauss 1990; Ramamurthy 2003; Strathern 1990).

In one sense, this interest in the disunification of identity can be understood as an appropriate corrective to those approaches that have viewed identity as stable categories determined by macro-scale phenomena. I suspect, however, that this curiosity about identity transformation and transgression is more than a reaction to the shortcomings of past research. Could it be related to a certain perplexity about the apparent durability of certain kinds of identity categories that were once expected to become less relevant (or even disappear) in the wake of feminism, civil rights, globalization, and economic development? For most, gender, race, nationality, and class are experienced as “facts in the field” that must be navigated with care. Identities are “fixed” through social, institutional, and governmental practices that are often beyond the effective reach of individual agency. That those who cross such boundaries are frequently subject to harassment, persecution, and violence exposes the ways in which power is deployed to stabilize hierarchies of social difference.

It is thus worth returning to the interface between structure and agency in practices of identification. Some specific examples point to useful directions. Laurie Wilkie, writing of African Americans living at the Oakley Plantation of Louisiana before and after the abolition of slavery, considers “how imposed identities were adopted and maintained by these families both as coping mechanisms and as a means of empowerment” (2000:xv). Gerald Sider, tracing the effects of first Spanish, then British, and finally U.S. colonization of the American Southeast, notes how Native Americans claimed “forms of differentiation [that] were imposed ‘from above’ . . . as part of processes of asserting their own interests and of resisting—and colluding with, evading, and accommodating to—domination” (1994:112). Of indigenous responses to the Spanish conquest of the Americas, Michel de Certeau writes that “they [the Indians] subverted them [colonial regimes] not by rejecting or altering them, but by using them with respect to ends and references foreign to the system they had no choice but to accept. They were *other* within the very colonization that outwardly assimilated them” (1984:xiii).

New identity groupings and categories continue to emerge, including the Californios. But what are the conditions that enable new practices of identity to appear? How do some emergent identities become stabilized, institutionalized, and imbued with historical traditions that belie their recent formation (Anderson 1993; Hill 1996; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983)? While such phenomena are multiscalar, the examples just listed suggest that interfaces between the local and the global, and between personhood or community and institutions of power, are particularly potent sites where identities are simultaneously imposed, negotiated, and transformed. It is by attending to the “microphysics of power” (de Certeau 1984:xvi) within the ongoing negotiation of governmentality and discipline (Foucault 1975, 1978) that we are most likely to obtain glimpses of the ongoing play between fixity and fluidity in the articulation of social identities.

### Practice and Performance

Theoretical pluralism is an epistemological asset for archaeology generally and for the study of past identities especially (Longino 1990; Wylie 1992b, 1996a). Social theories provide models for analyzing and interpreting observed archaeological phenomena; they aid archaeologists in conceptualizing and coping with our research findings. As Victor Buchli notes, “there is a tendency to envision these conceptual tools as actually representing what is going on rather than simply a provisional means of coming to terms with what has been experienced” (2000:186). Theoretical pluralism reinforces the contingency of any social theory by calling forward multiple perspectives on the past. My own approach is informed by feminist and queer theory and engendered archaeologies in conjunction with historical materialism, critical race theory, postcolonial studies, and culture contact archaeology. My understanding of identities is especially indebted to Michel Foucault’s (1975, 1978, 1980) historicization of identity and to poststructuralist theories of social iteration that locate the articulation of identities in repetitive practices and performances (Bourdieu 1977, 1980; Butler 1990, 1993a; de Certeau 1984; Giddens 1984).

Theories of social iteration model the historical production of identities through the recursive relationship between structure and agency. In this context, structures are understood not as external forces or ideas but rather as the products and media of social agency. Structures simultaneously enable certain forms of social action and constrain others and thus might be conceptualized as a metaphor for the workings of top-down power in social life. Yet structures are produced through the agency of social subjects (what might be considered bottom-up power) and so are not separate from the workings of everyday life. Agency, Anthony Giddens (1984:14) writes, is the capacity to “make a difference” in the sense that alternative historical consequences could have resulted

had a social subject followed another course of action. Theories of social iteration provide a model for conceptualizing this back-and-forth relationship between the endless stream of on-the-ground actions involved in daily life and the ways that social subjects participate in the production of the very structures that enable and constrain their lives. In this way, theories of social iteration emphasize the historicity of culture. Social identities are not external or prior to the situations and interactions in which they appear, but are continually enacted, reproduced, and transformed in social life.

Pierre Bourdieu conceptualizes this relationship between agency and structure as the interplay between practice and habitus, the latter likened to a conductorless orchestra (1977:72) whose members play their instruments according to durably installed, generative principles of regulated improvisation. Habitus guides but does not determine the routines of daily life, which themselves participate in the ongoing formation and transformation of the habitus. Because habitus also conditions perception, social subjects experience the objective conditions of their lives through the subjective practical knowledge obtained through practice. In demonstrating how habitus and practice are mutually constituted, Bourdieu's analyses turn particularly to the material activities of daily life: the patterned use of space and time; sequences of repeated actions; the selection, production, and use of material culture; the preparation, presentation, and consumption of food; the selection and wearing of clothing. It is perhaps no surprise that his model of practice and habitus has been widely adopted by archaeologists, for many of the bodies of evidence recovered in archaeological investigations consist of material residues that accumulated as by-products of such quotidian practices and routines.

One of Bourdieu's many contributions to the study of social identities is his landmark research (1984) on class distinctions and taste in 1960s France. The study sought to understand how habitus, in the form of cultivated dispositions, was revealed in the consumption of cultural goods. Bourdieu proposes that "taste" is the practical knowledge through which social subjects exercise preferences among the universe of stylistic possibilities. In exercising taste, social subjects assert and reproduce their own position in the social order, for their preferences are shaped by the objective conditions of social stratification and the relations of production as well as the subjective experiences of practice. "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make" (Bourdieu 1984:6). This model of the relationship between taste and status focuses attention on the production and deployment of "cultural capital" (noneconomic assets, such as education, that are resources in the ongoing negotiation of social life). As the role of habitus and practice in the expression of taste has been

extended beyond class distinctions to include race and ethnicity (Bentley 1987; Yelvington 1991), archaeologists have become better able to investigate the ways that consumption practices participate in the reproduction and, at times, the transformation of the social order.<sup>4</sup>

While Bourdieu's theories of practice and habitus (and related models of taste, cultural capital, and practical knowledge) are widely used in archaeological research, another theory of social iteration—Judith Butler's theory of gender performance—is less commonly deployed (Voss 2000b).<sup>5</sup> Whereas Bourdieu interrogates the production and reproduction of culture broadly and ethnicity and class specifically, Butler deconstructs the categories of gender, sex, and sexuality, arguing that these are mutually produced through a heterosexual matrix that requires a division of persons into two gender categories and simultaneously legitimizes sexual desires for the opposite gender. Through this matrix, those with nonnormative gender identities and those whose sexual desires and practices deviate from heterosexuality are simultaneously constructed as abject others. The heterosexual matrix is sustained by defining itself against those practices and identities that it stigmatizes, thus relying on the abject for its own existence (Butler 1993a, 1993b, 1999).

Butler also questions the distinction between biological and cultural aspects of sexuality and gender. The line between what is "cultural" or "natural" about gender and sexuality is highly contested and debated. Butler argues that what is perceived as "natural" is delineated and fixed through cultural practices and that it is more productive to see the distinction between natural and cultural as a disciplining practice that seeks to establish certain aspects of identity as irreducible and unchangeable (1999:7–12). "There is," Butler notes, "an insistent materiality of the body, but . . . it never makes itself known or legible outside of the cultural articulation in which it appears" (quoted in Breen and Blumenfeld 2001:12).

Like Bourdieu, Butler turns to models of iteration (in this case, of social performances) to account for the historical production and instability of gendered and sexual identities that have the appearance of being essential and stable. This appearance of continuity, she posits, is an illusion created by an endless series of mimetic repetitions, much as a film projector creates an illusion of continuity by flashing a rapid sequence of still images on a screen. Thus, "there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (Butler 1999:33). These gendered and sexual performances are not volitional but rather are "a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame" (43). It is within the gaps between these repetitions that Butler identifies potential for agency, as subjects may be able to subtly transform these mimetic perfor-

mances through subversive practices like mimicry, satire, drag, exaggeration, and so on (1993a:121–140; 1999:173–177). Just as Bourdieu envisions that social subjects may transform habitus through improvisation within repetitive practices, Butler asserts that “to operate within the matrix of power is not the same as to replicate uncritically relations of domination. It offers the possibility of a repetition of the law which is not its consolidation, but its displacement” (1999:40).

Butler’s and Bourdieu’s theories of the iterative production of social identity are both complementary and contradictory. Bourdieu centers his analysis on ethnographic cultures and on internal divisions within such cultures, especially class but also ethnicity and race; Butler, while clearly attentive to such hierarchies, is primarily concerned with the production and reproduction of gendered and sexualized subjects, especially those whose appearances, dispositions, and practices are rendered abject through normative discourses and laws. Further, Bourdieu’s emphasis on material practices (what people do) is complemented by Butler’s focus on discourse and representation. Together, their research provides conceptual resources that enable a more integrated approach to social identity.

This is not to deny the very real epistemological differences in their studies, however. Bourdieu’s post-Marxist stance emphasizes the ways that power is deployed through capital (economic, cultural, political) in an empirically knowable, although subjectively experienced, world. Butler, in contrast, engages heavily with Foucault, psychoanalytic theory, and poststructuralist methodologies of discourse analysis that deconstruct the ontological stability of the material world. Their divergent methodologies produce what historian Lisa Duggan (1995) has termed “the discipline problem”: broken pots, faunal remains, collapsed structures, burials, soil residues, and other evidentiary sources in archaeology rarely resemble the literary works or films that are privileged in Butler’s performance theory; nor has Bourdieu’s practice theory been widely adopted outside the social sciences. However, this common dichotomy between discourse and practice, though heuristically useful, is another binary that warrants deconstruction and refusal; more pragmatically, historical archaeology’s promiscuous engagements with objects, images, and texts (Voss 2007) require a theoretical pluralism that can account for both materiality and representation.

Theories of social iteration have been most widely critiqued for emphasizing the reproduction and persistence of hegemonic structures of power rather than articulating clear programs for achieving social change (Ortner 1996:1–20). Bourdieu’s improvisations, as well as Butler’s parody, mimicry, gaps, and passings, afford a somewhat narrow scope for intervention by social subjects who are themselves produced within these very structures. This study of ethno-

genesis provides an opportunity to stretch such theories into examinations of changefulness and to consider whether modifications in practices and performances of social identity, such as the appearance of Californios, are indeed transformative or alternatively might reproduce the social order within which they emerged.

### Power and Position

Power, Foucault writes, forms “a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions” (1978:96). This understanding of power as diffuse and distributed provides a vantage point from which to consider how agency is positional, that is, how subjects experience different capabilities and constraints through their locations in various social structures and institutions (Foucault 1975, 1978). Giddens differentiates, for example, between the capabilities held by agents and institutions, yet emphasizes that subordinates always have some capability to influence their superiors (1984:5–16). De Certeau (1984:xviii–xx, 35–37) similarly offers the metaphors of strategy and tactic. Strategies involve relationships of force that are possible for subjects who can act from a place of power. From this place (both metaphorical and physical), they can command space, resources, and authority, which enable a deliberateness and forethought in the exercise of agency. Tactics, in contrast, are the realm of the disenfranchised and dispossessed, those who have no base from which to prepare or strategize and who must seize the opportunities of the moment: “the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong, [and] thus lend a political dimension to everyday practices” (de Certeau 1984:xvii).

The importance of positionality in social negotiations of identity is further illustrated by Gerald Sider. Culture, he notes, is often described as a web, perhaps most famously by Clifford Geertz (1977:5): “Believing . . . that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs.” Sider calls attention to

a small but crucial point: suspended on the spider’s web are two kinds of creatures, often with two different fates, the spider and its prey. Moreover, the spider spun its web not just for itself but “for,” as it were, its prey, who may or may not have known what it “meant” to alight upon it, at least when it first landed. Webs of significance are spun in the real and changing world *and are often spun for different, not similar others*: spiders rarely get caught in other spider’s webs. (1994:115)

Writing of identity changes in North America during and after colonization, Sider continues the metaphor to observe that the fly, the moth, and the bug

lose distinction and simply become prey to the spider, just as differentiations among enslaved Africans and African Americans are collapsed by the racial category “black” and Native American tribal affiliations erased by the term “Indian” (1994:117; see also Jackson 1999). Identities are not a location of shared culture; they are sites “where people struggle to create different and ongoing conceptual and material histories within and against the same general history” (Sider 1994:116).

### Materialization

Foucault, Weber (1978), Geertz, and Sider’s webs of power and culture provide still one more point of consideration, namely, that relationships between predator and prey are mediated through the materiality of the strands of the web itself, which vary not only in their thicknesses and adhesiveness and interconnections but also, through their anchor points, in their articulations with other substances and surfaces. There is an entanglement (after Thomas 1991) among social subjects and the materiality of the world. While transformations of social identity are often examined as changes in discourses of belonging and alterity (for example, Anderson 1993; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), there is much to be gained from an approach that takes materiality as central to the ongoing negotiation of social life. In this vein, I follow the theoretical slippage articulated by Arjun Appadurai:

Even if our own approach to things is conditioned necessarily by the view that things have no meanings apart from those that human transactions, attributions, and motivations endow them with, the anthropological problem is that this formal truth does not illuminate the concrete, historical circulation of things. For that we have to follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories. . . . Thus, even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a *methodological* point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context. (1986:5)

From an archaeological perspective, this “methodological fetishism” (Appadurai 1986:5) takes on even greater significance as archaeological research often traces the diachronic continuities and changes that occur over time. The materiality of earlier practices can have durable (though not deterministic) effects on subsequent practices, perhaps most dramatically illustrated by the construction of buildings and structures whose persistence continues to alter patterns of movement over decades or even millennia. Likewise, concerted efforts to erase the material traces of past practices (such as “redevelopment” projects

writ large or small, discussed further in chapter 7) may signal dramatic moments of social change. This book will take methodological license to examine how material practices and objects participated in colonial ethnogenesis, with the disclaimer, of course, that this refers not to the animation of the inanimate but rather to the entanglements that bind people, things, and places together.

Materiality functions on a dual register: it is the substance that serves as a resource in practices and performances that transform or trouble social identities, yet materiality is also deployed to “fix” identities and institutionalize otherwise volatile social constructions into social facts. Perhaps the most apparent of these material strategies is the naturalization of social identities and hierarchies through reference to imputed traits of the physiological body (Yanagisako and Delaney 1995):

Oh, now and then you will hear grown-ups say, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the Leopard his spots?” I don’t think even grown-ups would keep on saying such a silly thing if the Leopard and the Ethiopian hadn’t done it once—do you? But they will never do it again, Best Beloved. They are quite contented as they are. (Kipling 1996:28)

The projection of identity onto the body ought not to be dismissed as “just so stories,” for such dispositions can come to materialize the very effects that they purport to describe. If, for example, ideas of frail femininity discourage girls from physical exertion, they will indeed become “the weaker sex” (which once again illustrates the interdigitation of materiality and discourse). Poverty and wealth, and the strains related to various labors, whether menial or clerical, also produce bodies marked by their circumstances. Further, physical characteristics do not need to be empirically “real” to be mobilized in service of social hierarchies, as demonstrated, for example, by nineteenth-century European studies of craniometry. Social identities are never completely apart from the bodies, however constructed and fashioned, of the social subjects to which they refer.

Objects, from the unmovable walls of buildings to the smallest portable charms, also participate in the materialization of identity through their association with persons and groups and the leaky distinctions (Haraway 1997) between bodies and technologies. “Objects—buildings, dress, foods—are called on to prove that volatile and contingent social identities are stable and intrinsic” (Upton 1996:4). Colonial regimes often attempt to establish a “tight connection between status and its material signifiers” (Hall 2000:72), although such connections should not be misunderstood as a singular relationship akin to a mathematical equation (Hodder 1982; Miller 1987; Spector 1993). The

powerful role played by material culture in the ongoing negotiation of social identities is in fact a result of its dual properties. The meanings of things are never fixed, and hence objects can be taken up for different purposes by different users; but the materiality of objects provides a durability and persistence quite different than the ephemeral qualities of speech, dance, or music—which are also stabilized through recourse to physical media (such as writing or recording). In this study of identity transformations, it is particularly important to ask how material practices such as bodily movement, architecture, household objects, food, dress, and adornment served as resources that shifted the terms of identification.

### Overdetermination

There has been a tendency to balkanize the study of identities by isolating specific aspects of identity without considering the ways that social identities are experienced holistically. Owing in great part to the insights of women of color and Third World feminist activists and scholars, recent decades have seen a notable increase in calls for a theoretical and analytical reintegration of identity categories, especially race, class, and gender.<sup>6</sup> As Anne McClintock (1995:5) notes, identities are increasingly understood as categorical distinctions that “come into existence in *and through* each other. . . . I do not mean to imply that these domains are reducible to, or identical with, each other; instead they exist in intimate, reciprocal, and contradictory relations.” Such relations among practices of identification are variably conceptualized as enunciations, articulations, intersectionality, modulations, ethnosexual frontiers, mutual constitutions, and enmeshments.<sup>7</sup> This perspective foregrounds the perplexities of subjectivity: “Many identities vie for importance in daily life” (Staats 1996:163).

In the growing understanding of social identities as mutually constituted and enmeshed, little attention has been paid to exactly how power—of all kinds—participates in these articulations. Ann Stoler provides one such instance in her analysis of white endogamy in colonial Indonesia: “Ratios of men to women followed from how sexuality was managed and how racial categories were produced rather than the other way around” (2002:2). This statement suggests that a diachronic perspective may yield important insights into the historical articulations of various forms of differencing (after Verdery 1994). There is also a need to attend to the synchronic enmeshment of identities: “identity names . . . possess phenomenal power—inherent in their nature as single-word signifiers of complex and heterogeneous significations—to mask both the multidimensionality and the very nature of the identities they denote” (Larson 1996:545).

It is here that the concept of overdetermination proves particularly useful as an analytical tool. I visualize social identities as having social properties analo-

gous to the physical attributes of icebergs: what is enunciated on the surface of social discourse is only a small fraction of the identification, which obtains its mass and momentum from its vastly larger, submerged components. The introduction mentioned the example of the Spanish-colonial occupational term “soldado” and its unspoken, but nonetheless ever-present, production through gender (male), age (adult, but not elderly), physique (able-bodied), nationality (Spanish), colonial status (not indigenous and usually not African), rank (ordinary, nonelite), level of respectability (honorable), class (unlanded, of modest means), and economic prospects (future landowner). Most implications of being a *soldado* lurk beneath the surface of the designation, and, because these are shadowed, they are less susceptible to overt examination. Like the naturalization and objectification of identities that occur through materiality, overdetermination is one of the ways that volatile identities come to appear inevitable and intractable.

In that sense, using the concept of overdetermination risks a certain slippage, in that the contributing components to a specific configuration of identities might give the mistaken impression that such identities are closed and complete rather than always in production through practices and performances. Here again the historicity of Butler’s and Bourdieu’s theories of iteration—the gaps and uncertain pauses in which the possibility of failed or skewed repetitions are present—provides a means to hold open the contingency of social identity. To return to the metaphor of the iceberg, we might consider the gradual remodelings of surface and substance, the sudden fragmentations and reassemblings, which result from changing encounters with warmth or chill and from abrasions and even collisions.

Methodologically, overdetermination encourages us to continually peer into the depths of identification practices while simultaneously taking note of subtle (and not so subtle) changes in readily apparent identity practices. In the case of Californio ethnogenesis, overdetermination draws attention to the immense significance of a change from racially based identification practices to identities referencing a regionalized ethnicity. What other transformations in social life were occurring during this period so that older forms of identification lost relevancy and others became salient? How were the “subsurface” components of racialized identities reconfigured in order to enable and stabilize Californio identity?

## Interrogating Ethnicity

Ethnicity became an important means of social differencing in Spanish-colonial San Francisco. What, then, is ethnicity? Although I concur with Fraser Neiman

(1999:139) that “attempts to offer strict definitions [of ethnicity] are likely to generate more heat than light,” it is nonetheless important to examine how this category has been understood, both the category itself and its relation to other practices of identification.

### Culture Concept to Boundary Maintenance to Primordial Bonds

In 1969, Norwegian anthropologist Fredrick Barth published a slim edited volume titled *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. More than any other work, this book caused a fundamental shift in how social scientists approach the study of ethnicity. Before the 1960s, ethnic groups were generally viewed as static reflections of shared cultural norms such as language, traditions, ancestry, and territory. Ethnicities were viewed as inherently inward-looking and tradition-bound, which lent support to political arguments that ethnic affiliations were barriers to modernization and progress. In archaeology, this approach to ethnicity was explicitly formulated in the concept of “archaeological culture”: a set of co-occurring artifacts and stylistic traits thought to “correlate with particular peoples, ethnic groups, tribes, and/or races” (Jones 1997:15).<sup>8</sup>

Barth’s *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969) powerfully inverted conventional views of ethnicity. Societies, he argued, are inherently polyethnic. Ethnic groups develop not in isolation but through intense, ongoing interaction. What defines an ethnic group, then, is not the cultural “stuff” shared among its members, but differentiation between “us” and “them.” Such ethnic boundaries are inherently permeable and constantly in negotiation. Cultural traits, language, territory, and ancestry may be utilized as resources during these ongoing negotiations, but “only those which the actors themselves regard as significant” (Barth 1969:14) are employed in this way. Because ethnicities are defined through external boundaries, ethnic groups are internally heterogeneous, so much so that even within a single family, each member has a different relationship to the ethnic identity (Barth 1994).

Barth’s view of ethnic groups as self-defining, subjective social entities was hailed as the first postmodern approach to identity, one that continues to reverberate in postcolonial scholarship.<sup>9</sup> An emphasis on ethnic boundaries also slowly displaced the archaeological culture concept, sometimes resulting in dramatic reinterpretations of the archaeological record.<sup>10</sup> Sympathetic critiques called for greater attention to power dynamics in ethnic boundary definition: Barth’s emphasis on self-definition slights the ways in which ethnic ascription by outsiders places firm constraints on the mutability of ethnic boundaries.<sup>11</sup>

The reformulation of ethnicity as something defined through intergroup ne-

gotiation rather than intragroup cohesion sparked a substantive debate about the relationship between subjectivity, culture, and ethnicity. Barth's model is now understood as an instrumentalist approach in which ethnicity is viewed as a means to an end, especially to secure and protect economic and political interests (Barth 1969; Cohen 1974). Instrumentalist models provide little means of distinguishing ethnicities from other social collectivities (for example, religions, political parties, or trade guilds) and fail to account for the profound emotional strength of some ethnic attachments. The response to these weaknesses has been a resurgence of interest in intragroup cohesion and the development of primordialist theories of ethnicity, which draw on psychoanalytical theories of a universal human need for connection and belonging. In this view, ethnicity is viewed less as a strategic alliance and more as an involuntary attachment ascribed at birth and reinforced by shared experiences throughout the life course.

Debates between primordialist and instrumentalist approaches to ethnicity have filled the pages of social science journals for decades without conclusive resolution. There is, however, a loose consensus that ethnicity, as a form of "consciousness of difference" (Vermeulen and Govers 1994:4), is distinct from other forms of social identity in that it references some combination of cultural difference and ideologies of shared ancestry, history, and tradition. But history is never "the objective source and cause of ethnicity" because ethnicity involves "a struggle to appropriate the past" (Barth 1994:13). Ethnicity thus consists of overlapping sets of loyalties and obligations that operate at multiple scales, "a series of nesting dichotomizations of inclusiveness and exclusiveness" (Cohen 1978:387). This interpretive gap between primordialist and instrumentalist models is a productive theoretical tension that points to the importance of the exercise of power in negotiating social identity. Neither primordialism nor instrumentalism can account for the persistence of ethnic distinctions in certain historical moments and their rapid transformation in others, nor does either model explain how "new" ethnicities—ones that might arise even in the course of a single lifetime—can generate emotional attachment, intragroup affinity, and intergroup antagonism. The study of ethnogenesis adds a temporal component to theories of ethnicity that have for too long looked primarily to synchronic social interactions.

### Race and Nation, Class and Citizen: Whither Ethnicity?

If ethnicity is forged through perceptions of common heritage or ancestry and through cultural difference from others, how is it different from race and nationality, which commonly reference the same components? Even class, often defined strictly in terms of economic status or relationship to the means of production, has been amply demonstrated to be a vehicle of cultural transmission

and differentiation (for example, Bourdieu 1984). For every “rule” that draws strict distinctions between ethnicity, race, class, citizenship, and nation, a historical or ethnographic exception can be found to prove that the situation is far more complex. The interdigitation of these forms of social identity has led some scholars to mistakenly conclude that ethnicity, race, and nationality—and, to a lesser degree, class and citizenship—are one and the same. Most commonly, ethnicity is posited as the overarching concept with race, nationality, and class viewed as different “flavors” of ethnicity (as examples, see Ericksen 1993; Nagel 2003; Sollors 1986).

I strongly disagree with this approach. As Benedict Anderson notes, all communities are imagined, but they are distinguished “by the style in which they are imagined” (1993:6). Since identities are overdetermined, the overlap between race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and citizenship can be interpreted as an indication that they are each strongly implicated in the production of the others. Collapsing together different forms of social identification has the effect of obscuring the specific power relations involved in the production and maintenance of social hierarchies (Hall 1989). In historical archaeology, privileging ethnicity has contributed to a view of modern history in which racism and poverty are increasingly made invisible.<sup>12</sup>

Unquestionably, race and ethnicity are “deeply enmeshed” (Verdery 1994:46). Both became prominent during the nineteenth-century expansion of scientific classifications of humans. In that context, race was used as a synonym for certain national, cultural, and linguistic groups and tended to emphasize hereditary physical traits. This latter aspect increased in importance with the growing influence of Darwinian evolutionary theory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the 1950s, ethnicity and race, once interchangeable, had acquired separate meanings, with ethnicity referring to perceived cultural difference and race to perceived physical difference. Today, most physical and social scientists consider race to be culturally constructed. This perception and the development of critical race theory has blurred the conceptual boundary between race and ethnicity.

Currently, race is generally understood as distinct from ethnicity in that racialization naturalizes social difference through reference to bodily attributes—notably skin color, but also hair, facial features, and physique—and racial distinctions generally rest on arguments of congenital inferiority or superiority. Race thus builds on the assumption that personhood is determined by hereditary characteristics that differ systematically according to perceived physical criteria (Ericksen 1993). Racialization sediments many forms of social identification—such as ethnicity, class, nation, and religion—by projecting cultural difference

and social hierarchy onto the bodies of social subjects. Even though race is a cultural construct, it assumes importance as a social fact because of racism.

Nation and nationality are also easily conflated with race and ethnicity, in part because of the legacy of nineteenth-century Romantic nationalism, which idealized the homogeneous nation-state (Hall 1989; Jones 1997:43; Shennan 1989). As imagined communities, nations are sustained through myths of isomorphic boundaries (linguistic, territorial, political, cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious) (Anderson 1993). Ethnicization is thus central to the formation and reproduction of nation-states. On the one hand, “claims to statehood or political autonomy [are] most often rooted in assertions of cultural distinctiveness, a unique history, and ethnic or racial purity” (Nagel 2000: 110). On the other hand, ethnic types are also developed through the efforts of governments to manage their national subjects (Verdery 1994:37). But ethnicities also work against nationalities and nationalisms when groups assert ethnic solidarities to claim rights and recognition within or across national boundaries (Calhoun 1993:211). Nationality and nationalism, then, must be seen as a particular form of social identity differentiated by its association with or aspiration to the modern territorial state and the political apparatus of governmentality (Calhoun 1993; Ericksen 1993; Kohl 1998; Pels 1997).

Class identities primarily reference economic relationships. LouAnn Wurst (1999:7) identifies three ways of conceptualizing class in historical archaeology: as an economic category, such as “middle class”; as a relative ranking of individuals according to social or economic position; and as the formation of social relations related to the means of production. In all instances, class must be understood as situational and historically constituted. Like ethnicity and nationality, class is a “culture bearing unit” (Williams 1992:609). Bourdieu, in particular, demonstrates that classes are reproduced through many of the attributes generally associated with ethnicity: shared cultural practices or dispositions, maintenance of group boundaries, and a feeling of tradition or common past along with a sense of shared future interests (1984).

The complex interrelationship between class, race, ethnicity, and nationality can be understood in part through what Charles Orser (2004) terms “class-racism”—the way that elites graft notions of inherent inferiority onto nonelites. Poverty is often discussed in racial or ethnic terms, attributing its cause to the inherent qualities of the poor themselves rather than to the structures of power and economic systems that direct the distribution of resources in a society. Audrey Horning (1999), for example, describes the imposition of an Appalachian “folk” ethnicity on rural mountain dwellers in the eastern United States as a means of justifying the seizure of their lands. Because race and ethnicity are of-

ten used as codes for class-based distinctions, it is doubly important to attend to the specific relationships between class and identity. Additionally, ethnic and racial groups are internally stratified by class, and classes are internally divided by race and ethnicity.

Ethnic, racial, national, and class-based identity terms are polysemic. Each mobilizes and references another in its deployment and interpretation. Thus a single identity term can shift in meaning from context to context and over time. As Prema Kurien (1994) and Pier Larson (1996) demonstrate, many ethnonyms were once religious, political, linguistic, or social groupings whose meanings changed with historical events. Identity names are thus imprecise, evoking a “constellation of meanings” (Larson 1996:558) through the multiplicity of past usages. Ethnogenesis is a concept that is especially useful in tracing these changes, for as “new” ethnicities emerge, they are frequently constructed with names and meanings recycled from previous usages.

### Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

Sex, gender, and sexuality are often treated as private, interpersonal, and even familial identities. By contrast, ethnicity, race, nationality, and class have been conventionally viewed as more public, political, or economic identities. Feminist politics and scholarship have challenged this false binary by exposing such distinctions as part of the naturalization of gender (Ortner and Whitehead 1981; Rubin 1975; Yanagisako and Delaney 1995) and by demonstrating the gendering and sexualization of public life (Enloe 1990). Consequently, during the past two decades, new scholarship has emerged that examines the articulations between sex, gender, and sexuality and ethnicity, race, nationality, and class. In particular, we can delineate two areas in which gender and sexuality are intrinsically tied to the production of ethnicity: one concerns how ethnicities reference shared ancestry, and the other deals with how ethnicity is mobilized to define and police gendered and sexual behaviors and identities.

It is important to first define sex, gender, and sexuality and their relationship to each other. In standard English, the word “sex” has ambiguous meanings: being male or female, the act of coitus, eroticism, and reproduction. These varied definitions reveal some of the ways in which Anglophone cultures imbricate coitus, genitalia, and gender. “Having sex” is both an activity and a state of being (Voss and Schmidt 2000:2). In feminist scholarship, “sex” is increasingly used to refer specifically to biological differences between males and females, whereas “gender” refers to culturally constructed ideas of masculine and feminine identities (Rubin 1975). This analytical distinction between biological sex and cultural gender has been especially important in denaturalizing sex roles, for if gender is culturally constructed, then it has a history (Scott 1986).

In late nineteenth-century Europe and its settler colonies (the United States, Canada, and Australia), sexuality was discursively separated from sex and gender through the scientizing discipline of sexology (Bland and Doan 1998a, 1998b; Foucault 1978; Rubin 1984). Although the research goals and practices of sexologists were diverse, they shared the premises that sexuality was an enduring determinant of a person's character and identity and that people could be classified according to these sexual dispositions. Sexual acts and practices, along with some nonsexual preferences, habits, and behaviors, were interpreted as symptomatic expressions of durable underlying sexual dispositions. Most sexual identity terms used today (for example, "pedophile," "transvestite," "heterosexual," and "homosexual") are an enduring legacy of sexology. This legacy has considerable implications for archaeological and historical research: the categorization of sexuality as a distinct aspect of social relations and the premise that sexuality is a central component of social identity may both be historical products of Western modernity. What we think of as "sexuality" may have been organized quite differently in the past.<sup>13</sup>

More recently, feminist scholars have challenged the separation between sex, gender, and sexuality; what is natural (sex) and what is cultural (gender) is not always clear, nor are sexual identities and acts always separable from sex and gender.<sup>14</sup> Butler's conceptualization of the heterosexual matrix, described earlier in this chapter, is perhaps the most prominent intervention of this kind. Without diminishing the conceptual utility of the heterosexual matrix, archaeologists and historians must be cautious not to dehistoricize what Butler intended as a comment on late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century identities in North America. Indeed, there is a historical question to be investigated regarding what other configurations of disciplinary matrices have regulated sexual and gendered identities in other times and places (Voss 2005b).

Ethnicity, race, and nationality share a "sexual substructure" (Nagel 2000:109) through reference to actual or perceived shared ancestry, heredity, and kinship. "The myth (or reality) of 'common origin' plays [a central role] in the construction of most ethnic and national collectivities" (Yuval-Davis 1996:17), binding ethnicity and nationality firmly to the social production of sex, gender, and sexuality. Consequently, "ethnic boundaries are also sexual boundaries—erotic intersections where people make intimate connections across ethnic, racial, or national borders" (Nagel 2000:113).

Ancestry is the outcome of social and biological reproduction, connected both materially and symbolically to sexual activity. In the most narrow and clinical sense, this implicates heterosexual coitus, conception, and birth. The resulting kinship networks are similarly understood in part through sexual prohibitions among members (that is, the incest taboo). Kinship, of course, is not always bi-

ological or heterosexual (Butler 2004; Spillers 1987; Weber 1978:389; Weston 1995; Yanagisako 1983); but in reproduction of all sorts, what is at stake is the ontological status of the child—its belongings and exclusions. As Nira Yuval-Davis (1996:17) notes, the most secure path to membership in a social collectivity is “being born into it.” Consequently, “the child figures in the debate as the dense site for the transfer and reproduction of culture, where ‘culture’ carries with it implicit norms of racial purity and domination” (Butler 2004:110).

The gendered and sexual implications of concerns about the intergenerational perpetuation of ethnic, racial, or national collectives can be loosely organized into three intersecting categories. First, intragroup pressures to contribute to the biological and cultural perpetuation of the group condition a subject’s reproductive positions and obligations to his or her ethnic and national collectivities (Yuval-Davis 1996). For example, the eugenics movement in nineteenth-century Britain emphasized that middle- and upper-class white women had a duty to increase and improve the English “race” not only through physical reproduction but also by adopting new standards of sanitation, medical care, and education. “The birth rate then was a matter of national importance: population was power” (Davin 1978:10). This latter sentiment is echoed in present-day debates about comparative birthrates among Israeli and Palestinian populations—what is in shorthand referred to as the “battle of the bedroom” (Americans for Peace Now 2005; Sabbagh 1998). As discussed in chapters 2 and 3, similar concerns about reproductive capabilities were at the forefront of the Spanish military’s recruitment policies for its colonization of Alta California.

Second, concerns about racial, ethnic, and national integrity are operationalized through prohibitions against racial miscegenation and anxieties about marrying out (Nagel 2003; Young 1995). Barriers to interethnic, interracial, and international sexual relationships are enforced through legal measures (until 1967, at least forty of the fifty U.S. states prohibited interracial marriage), through extralegal social sanctions, and through the cultural production of desire (Young 1995). Third, such sexual crossings can be alternatively promoted (for example, through the celebration of so-called hybrid vigor), perpetrated (as in cases of interethnic sexual violence), and instilled through representations and practices that eroticize the ethnic or racial “other.”<sup>15</sup> Such factors led Max Weber (1978:385) to observe that sexual repulsion or attraction is often expressed in ethnic terms.

The interconnection between sexuality, gender, and ethnicity is particularly pertinent in considerations of ethnogenesis. Early nineteenth-century uses of the term attributed new ethnicities to offspring from intermarriages who could not claim membership in either of their parents’ ethnic or racial groups. This attention to the emergence of creole, hybrid, and mixed-race communities con-

tinues in current research on the subject (for example, Albers 1996; Bilby 1996; Devine 2004; Pérez 2000).

Membership in and the threat of expulsion from ethnic, racial, and national collectivities are also deployed to police and control gender and sexuality. Ethnically correct masculine and feminine behavior “constitutes gender regimes that often lie at the core of ethnic cultures” (Nagel 2000:113), often articulated through concerns about the sexual honor and respectability of the community (a prominent factor in this study, as discussed in chapters 3 and 4). Well-studied examples include the mobilization of African American womanhood to further the improvement and respectability of the race during Reconstruction in the United States: “motherhood and its associated domestic sphere were things to be done correctly—not just for the sake of children, but also for the good of the race” (Wilkie 2003:80; see also Carby 1987; Collins 2000; Davis 1981). More recently, controversies about the hijab (veiling) among Muslim women reverberate within concerns about religious observance, ethnic and national pride, and resistance to Western imperialism (El Guindi 1999; Mohanty 1997; Shirazi 2001). Symbols of ethnic pride can figure prominently in contests of masculine authority and power among men of the same ethnicity (Harrison 2002; Hodder 1982; Larick 1991). Persecution of sexual others can also be deployed in the consolidation of nationalism, as in the homosexual panics of Nazi Germany and U.S. McCarthyism (Nagel 2000; Rubin 1984). Consequently, investigations of ethnogenesis must attend to the entanglements of ethnic belonging and ethnic othering with race, nation, class, gender, and sexuality.

## Ethnogenesis

This book’s focus on ethnogenesis draws attention to the ongoing transformations of social identities. Ethnogenesis should not be confused with the Biblical image of something new being created out of nothing: the word’s second root, “genesis,” refers to *genus*—a race, a species, a grouping based on shared lineage. Ethnogenesis occurs through significations and practices that reference the past and anticipate the future. It is the unpredictable outcome of practical strategies and tactics and of cultural creativity, rather than a predictable process driven by external stimuli. In this, ethnogenesis joins theories of culture contact, creolization, transculturation, and hybridity in providing conceptual alternatives to the unilinear models of assimilation and acculturation that formerly dominated research on culture change.

This section traces the origins of the concept of ethnogenesis and briefly outlines its different uses in studies of cultural change.<sup>16</sup> This study is most closely aligned with an intellectual tradition of ethnogenesis research that examines

the interrelationships between colonization, governmentality, and racism and their effects on social identity. However, within this body of scholarly work, ethnogenesis is increasingly conceptualized as a form of subaltern resistance to oppression. It is, however, equally important for studies of ethnogenesis to consider how new forms of ethnic identification can be used to assert power over others and to consolidate institutionalized forms of domination.

The concept of ethnogenesis was formulated in the mid-1800s as a response to Biblically inspired theories of racial history and racial degradation. The racial history perspective argued that migration and interbreeding had eroded the purity of divinely created races and that these mixtures were inferior to the originals. Most infamously, some authors argued that Germany represented the purest strain of the Aryan race and that the populations of France, England, and other nations had been degraded through interbreeding with indigenous Celtic and Slavic peoples. In contrast, nineteenth-century theories of ethnogenesis refused the ideology of racial purity by positing that all modern nations arose from ongoing cultural interactions and waves of migration. Each new ethnic form superseded its predecessors, making old forms obsolete; this ongoing process was viewed as a source of cultural improvement and civilization rather than degradation (Moore 2004: 3046). It is no coincidence that both racial history and the study of ethnogenesis emerged out of the anxieties that surrounded European national identities during a period when colonization and the rapid expansion of world capitalism intensified encounters between peoples once thought to be separate and apart.

Although the concept of ethnogenesis developed as a progressive alternative to historical theories of pure races, it was rapidly pressed into service on behalf of nationalist rhetoric and state control of ethnic groups within national borders. Most nineteenth-century studies of ethnogenesis sought to identify the historical ethnic antecedents of modern nations; such “cultural cores,” they claimed, had the greatest influence on national character and language. Following this approach, a scholar might proclaim that France, for example, is primarily a Roman nation or, alternatively, a Celtic one (Moore 2004: 3046). Ethnogenesis first entered archaeological research through its articulation with the archaeological culture concept and V. Gordon Childe’s interest in the effects of diffusion and migration (perhaps best exemplified by his monograph *The Aryans* [1926], which traced a prehistoric lineage between Britain and India).<sup>17</sup> In the early Soviet Union, ethnogenesis was further adapted as a methodology that could solve the “problem” of ethnic diversity within socialist states.<sup>18</sup> Studies of ethnogenesis in the Soviet Union were instrumental in state efforts to manage cultural heterogeneity within national borders. Ironically, both nationalist and Soviet approaches to ethnogenesis worked to “fix” and delimit ethnic groups and their

histories, more closely resembling theories of racial purity than the original concept of ethnogenesis as a continual flow of cultural and identity transformation.

These earlier concepts of ethnogenesis were resurrected in North America in the 1960s and 1970s through historical, sociological, and anthropological research on the ongoing transformation of contemporary racial, ethnic, and tribal identities within contemporary society. Two articles were particularly instrumental in articulating this new approach: Lester Singer's "Ethnogenesis and Negro Americans Today" (1962), and William Sturtevant's "Creek into Seminole" (1971). Both Singer and Sturtevant challenged the common premise that minority identities—in this case, African Americans and Native Americans—were defined solely by racial attributes or common ancestry. Instead, at a time when ethnic and racial differences were considered a divisive and disruptive threat to the U.S. melting pot, Singer and Sturtevant demonstrated that contemporary ethnic identities were produced *internally* through the same historical events involved in nation building, governance, and economic development.

Significantly, both writers emphasized that ethnogenesis is a continuous phenomenon, traceable in the past and ongoing in the present. Singer pointed to the then-recent emergence of the civil rights movement as a new benchmark in American Negro ethnogenesis, and Sturtevant explored the effects of Bureau of Indian Affairs policies, Christian evangelism, economic development, and tourism on the transformation of Seminole identity and the relationships between Seminole society and non-Indians. Unlike the national origins research of earlier ethnogenesis studies, which focused on linguistic continuity and cultural tradition, the approach pioneered by Singer and Sturtevant considered imperialism, the state, military conflict, and economic systems to be central forces in the transformation and reproduction of ethnic identities.

The groundbreaking work of Singer and Sturtevant set the foundation for several decades of scholarship aimed at reconstructing the historical development of ethnic groups and tribes that had been previously viewed as "people without history" (Wolf 1982). Research within this field has generally centered on three themes. First, some scholars extend Singer's studies of the ethnogenesis of racialized minority groups in the United States and elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> These studies examine how shared experiences of racial discrimination and economic marginalization forge a sense of commonality and "a new politics of resistance, amongst groups and communities with, in fact, very different histories, traditions, and ethnic identities" (Hall 1989:27). The second, and perhaps the largest cluster, of ethnogenesis studies have followed Sturtevant's lead by researching the transformation of Native American tribal identities through European colonization and nation-state formation in both North and South America.<sup>20</sup>

The third theme in ethnogenesis research focuses on the formation and per-

sistence of so-called neoteric ethnicities, such as maroon societies of runaway slaves, pan-Indian (nontribal) communities, and polyracial ethnicities such as Black Seminoles or Canadian Métis. Although these social groups are viewed as having no direct antecedents, they nonetheless present the full complement of traditions, myths, kinship systems, religious beliefs, and shared cultural practices that are often viewed as signs of authentic ethnic continuity.<sup>21</sup> Studies of these groups demonstrate not only that “the creation of ethnicities can be a fluid and rapid process” (Horning 1999:132) but also that diverse groups of unrelated peoples can rapidly forge a sense of “primordial ties and loyalties” that are as strong as those “associated with an ancient or immemorial past” (Bilby 1996:137). The ethnogenesis of neoteric communities demonstrates that even under the worst circumstances, people determined to survive may do so by reinventing culture if necessary (Anderson 1999). The research on Californio ethnogenesis presented in this book is most closely aligned with the study of neoteric identities, but it differs in taking colonial, rather than colonized, populations as its object of study.

The most important intellectual legacy of Singer and Sturtevant may be that their own research and the many studies they inspired have put to rest debates about “cultural authenticity” by demonstrating that ethnic identities are in a continual process of interaction and transformation. Ethnogenesis studies have also provided a methodological bridge between local and global scales of historical analysis (Matsuda 2004:4854), one that refuses the dichotomy “between a complex and transcontinentally active core and a static, locally bounded periphery” (Tsing 1994:282). Finally, ethnogenetic research refuses “the racialist policy” (Whitten 1996b:410) that has previously separated studies of indigenous history from research on the African diaspora.

During the past decade, researchers have increasingly argued that ethnogenesis is a form of subaltern resistance to external domination: “people’s cultural and political struggles to exist as well as their historical consciousness of these struggles” (Hill 1996:2). Along these lines, ethnogenesis is viewed as a creative means of survival among people with few options: to resist domination, oppressed peoples must “set themselves against their own history and their own experiences, must also claim the new against the old” (Sider 1994:118). Through ethnogenesis, “native peoples are active players, not only in their own cultural survival, but in the forging of the larger colonial world” (Powers 1995:5). Ethnogenesis has become a powerful metaphor for the creativity of oppressed and marginalized peoples birthing a new cultural space for themselves amidst their desperate struggle to survive.

Ethnogenesis might be one way in which the subaltern can “speak” (Spivak 1988), even as the forces of history and systems of domination seek to exploit

or destroy them. Yet conceptualizing ethnogenesis as inherently connected with political resistance and liberation ignores the reality that new forms of ethnic identification can also be used to assert power over others and to consolidate institutional forms of domination. As John Metz (1999) and Alison Bell (2005) emphatically demonstrate, ethnogenesis in British-colonial North America also took place among immigrants of European descent, who forged commonalities across differences of religion and national origin to assert a “white” identity. Stuart Hall (1989, 1996) similarly calls attention to recent assertions of British ethnicities that have been marshaled in support of racist and anti-immigrant legislation. Further, colonization led to factionalism among subjugated indigenous and diasporic populations. Such factions, which often were expressed in terms of ethnic identities, produced and were shaped by internecine struggles over trade and military alliances with colonial powers and involvement in the slave trade (Hill 1996; Sider 1994).

In other words, the claims for survival made by colonized peoples often simultaneously required asserting dominance over other colonized groups. The research presented in this book exemplifies this phenomenon: the people who came to call themselves Californios were themselves colonized peoples who were enrolled as agents of colonial expansion. If we celebrate ethnogenesis as a strategy of liberation and cultural survival, we must equally take into account its possible role as a means of achieving domination and control. What is required is, first, an understanding of power that moves beyond simple binaries of oppression and resistance; and, second, a more rigorous multiscale methodology that can articulate the connections between micro-level social practices of identification, meso-level representations of collective identities, and the macro-level effects of statism, governmentality, and institutions. The following chapters use the concept of ethnogenesis to illuminate the workings and effects of colonization and to simultaneously intervene in earlier theories of ethnogenesis that have sidestepped an understanding of how neoteric social identities can be deployed in the exertion of power over others.