

Alys Eve Weinbaum

Hortense Spillers and the Ungendering of (Re)productive Racial Capitalism

ABSTRACT This article theorizes the reproductive dimensions of racial capitalism. It begins by bringing into conversation Black Marxist theories of racial capitalism and Marxist feminist theories of social and biological reproduction proffered by Cedric Robinson and Silvia Federici respectively. It demonstrates that since its inception, racial capitalism has depended on processes of *racialized (re)productive accumulation* that are ongoing but not yet fully theorized. At the center of the essay is a close reading of Hortense Spillers's 1987 contribution "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." Though Spillers is not generally regarded as either a Black Marxist or a Marxist feminist, the essay argues that she ought to be recognized as a theorist of racialized (re)productive accumulation—a process that begins aboard the slave ship, persists on the plantation, and endures into the present. Racialized (re)productive accumulation exploited *she* whom Spillers often denotes as "the captive female," and, also, paradoxically, *ungendered* her. Ultimately, through examination of the process of ungendering in Atlantic slavery, the essay suggests that Spillers opens up new ways to think about the history of racial capitalism, (re)productive dispossession, and the possibility of its refusal. The article concludes by considering how Spillers's complex insights about the process of ungendering might yet be mobilized to secure truly substantive forms of reproductive justice.

KEYWORDS Hortense Spillers, racial capitalism, slavery, primitive accumulation, reproductive justice

The concept of *racial capitalism*, first advanced by political scientist Cedric J. Robinson in 1983, has since the 2000 republication of his *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* taken on new life. Over the past two decades racial capitalism has come to function as a heuristic device that is of aid to scholars who treat the constitutive racializing processes that initially fueled and that continue to shape global capitalist expansion. Especially in the fields of American history and American studies, adaptation of Robinson's heuristic has sparked scholarship on the evolving forms of

anti-Black dispossession that characterized slavery and colonialism (Baptist; Beckert; Fuentes; Johnson, *River*; Johnson, *Wicked*; Morgan, *Reckoning*; Paugh; Smallwood; Sweeney) and animate the afterlife of both formations (Day; Haley; Jung; Lowe; Vergès). In some intellectual genealogies (including Robinson's own), theorization of racial capitalism is attributed *avant la lettre* to W. E. B. Du Bois, C. L. R. James, and other Black radicals who followed in their footsteps (Robinson focuses on Richard Wright and Eric Williams, for instance). Such thinkers center slavery and colonialism when narrating the emergence of modern capitalism, even though they do not employ the conceptual terminology that Robinson would subsequently develop. More recently, historian Walter Johnson has offered a related but expanded term: *slave racial capitalism* (Johnson, *River* 6). With the addition of *slave*, Johnson eschews arguments that Atlantic slavery is either feudal or precapitalist, advancing instead an argument that slavery is constitutive of both American and global capitalism.

In Marxist feminist scholarship—which ought to be but has rarely been in direct dialogue with the abovementioned work on racial capitalism—reproductive labor is cast as intertwined with productive labor. Marxist feminists in the 1970s and 1980s (Federici, *Revolution*; James; Eisenstein; Barrett; Mies; Vogel) and contemporary social reproduction theorists (Bhattacharya; Arruzza, Bhattacharya, and Fraser) maintain, albeit differently, that the labor force simply would not exist without the ongoing exploitation of reproductive labor—both the biological labor involved in reproducing laborers and the domestic and care work that are either hyper-exploited or entirely unremunerated because these forms of labor take place in the home, in private (Boris and Parreñas). Without the biological reproduction of workers and the social reproduction of the relations of production, Marxist and socialist feminists both past and present argue that capitalism, as we know it, ceases to exist.

Building on these insights, scholarship on human reproduction (here I include my own and that by feminist science and technology scholars who have shaped the discussion of reproductive technologies) suggests that today there exist forms of *in vivo* reproductive labor and products that are directly commodified and therefore enter global circuits of exchange alongside traditional forms of productive labor and its products (Almeling; Deomampo; Dickenson; Cooper; Cooper and Waldby; Franklin; Twine; Waldby; Weinbaum, *Afterlife*; “Reproducing”). Gestational or surrogate labor, eggs, stem cells derived from umbilical cord blood, and so-called designer babies stand out among a quickly expanding array of commodities that are currently for sale around the globe.

The contemporary transnational exchange of reproductive labor and products challenges existing distinctions between production and reproduction. To describe the current form of capitalism in which human biological life itself is for sale, the descriptive term *biocapitalism* is useful.¹ In my reading, the prefacing *bio* ought to remind us (though, unfortunately, this is not always what it is used to do) that gestational labor, eggs, stem cells, and babies (and too, a range of additional bodily products such as organs and blood) are routinely bought and sold, and that reproductive labor and its products are continuously dispossessed, extracted, and accumulated. Existence of global markets in reproductive labor and its products compels me to advance a second semantic shift, one I began to employ in the 1990s and continue to find useful (Weinbaum, “Marx”). By placing parentheses around the prefacing *re* in *(re)production*, I call attention to the transit of reproduction into what was previously regarded as territory belonging exclusively to production and productive labor. In this way I signal *(re)productive* labor’s actual domain in the past (under slavery) and in the present (under biocapitalism) and highlight the evolving array of *(re)productive* commodities that are for sale transnationally.

In the present article one of my principal aims is to bring together the two areas of scholarly inquiry that I have briefly sketched above: (1) that which recognizes that capitalism is rooted in *racialized* extraction and dispossession and therefore ought to be understood as always already *racial* capitalism; and (2) that which demonstrates that *(re)productive* labor and products are central to capitalist expansion, which therefore ought to be recognized as both racial capitalist and biocapitalist.² In bringing these two scholarly inquiries together, I demonstrate that racial capitalism is subtended by various forms of what I will henceforth call *racialized (re)productive accumulation*. Racialized *(re)productive* accumulation is most robustly manifest in Atlantic slavery, specifically in the practice of forced sex and *(re)production* or so-called slave breeding that sustained slavery over three centuries, and especially after the 1807 closure of the transatlantic slave trade and the turn to intensified interstate slave trafficking.³ Once successfully harnessed, *(re)productive* labor was used to create not only an enslaved labor force but also vast empires built on trade in sugar, cotton, and tobacco. Although racialized *(re)productive* accumulation enabled capitalist expansion, it has seldom been considered alongside other forms of what Marx famously labeled “so-called primitive accumulation.”⁴ One of my main arguments is that it clearly ought to be. Racialized *(re)productive* accumulation is part and parcel of racial capitalism. It was a key feature of what Laura Briggs (in this issue) insightfully labels “the pre-accumulation process,” it perpetuated slave racial capitalism

over several centuries, and it continues to power both racial capitalist and biocapitalist accumulation and expansion into the present.

The Italian Marxist feminist Silvia Federici's now iconoclastic treatise, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation*, offers a provocative story of capitalism's origins that provides important groundwork for the present argument about racialized (re)productive accumulation. Through a richly detailed historical narrative based on a variety of archives, Federici demonstrates the intensive dispossession of women's reproductive bodies and labor power beginning in the fifteenth century, and explores the violent destruction of what she calls the "reproductive commons" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁵ By centering the enclosure of reproductive bodies and the dispossession and extraction of sexual and reproductive labor across the medieval and early modern periods in Europe and its emerging colonies, Federici radically reconceptualizes the traditional Marxist story of capitalism's inception. Mirroring and at the same time filling in gaps in the Marxist account of so-called primitive accumulation, Federici shows readers that capitalism required enclosure of women's sexuality and wombs to get going, and that it is unsustainable without continuous sexual and (re)productive extraction and dispossession. Privatization of women's sexuality and wombs reached a dramatic apex in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This was most palpable in the demonization and destruction of witches and a host of witchy women who individually and sometimes collectively refused their subjection to processes of reproductive enclosure over the *longue durée* that Marx described with uncanny accuracy, but without the feminist sensibility that might have rendered his words prescient, as a protracted "bloody birth." Such witches, scolds, gossips, vagabonds, healers, midwives, and farmers of the commons were subjected in shocking numbers to torture and murder by drowning, fire, dismemberment, and other ruthless means.

I find *Caliban and the Witch* gripping for several of the same reasons as *Black Marxism*. It, too, offers nuanced engagement with traditional Marxism and audaciously matches *Capital's* epic sweep. It boldly contests dominant Marxist pieties about the evolution of contemporary capitalism out of a feudal or premodern world. And yet, for present purposes I also find Federici's blind spots illuminating. Most significantly, Federici only incidentally treats the racialization of the reproductive violence about which she writes. In situating processes of racialization solely in the contexts of European colonialism and slavery, and in thus viewing racialization as a function of European contact with non-Europeans, Federici replicates rather than interrogates Marx's analytical myopia. This is the same myopia that is roundly critiqued

by Robinson and by those who have built on his insights. As Robinson explains, although Marx correctly recognized that intra-European social distinctions (such as those marking out the Irish and the Slavs) created the social divisions that rationalized the initial identification and exploitation of laboring populations, he failed to recognize these divisions as not only racialized in character but also as subject to processes of continuous recalibration. As Robinson observes, Marx failed to see that *all* forms of capitalist accumulation, past and present, depend on processes that racialize the distinctions between the exploited and the exploiters—distinctions that must be continuously reinvented over time and across geographies to enable capitalist expansion. To put a fine point on it, processes of racialization are neither exclusive to colonization and slavery, nor are they incidental by-products of the meeting of phenotypically distinct populations. Rather, race is invented and mobilized to rationalize the social and economic hierarchies that power racial capitalism globally and across time (Robinson, chaps. 1 and 2). Even though Federici includes in *Caliban* a chapter on conquest and slavery in South America, she does not regard processes of racialization as constitutive to capitalist expansion. The upshot: Federici’s story of reproductive enclosure lacks an account of the imbrication of reproduction and racialization (what I elsewhere describe as “the race/reproduction bind” [Wayward, chap. 1]) wherever and whenever (re)productive enclosure, dispossession, and accumulation occur.

It is for the above reasons that when theorizing racialized (re)productive accumulation I have found it necessary to construct a supplementary relationship between Federici’s and Robinson’s theories. In doing so, I offer correctives to the work of each: I add an account of a specifically (*re*)productive form of accumulation to Black Marxist scholarship on racial capitalism such as Robinson’s. And I add an account of *racialization* to Marxist feminist scholarship on biological and social reproduction such as Federici’s. In elaborating these correctives, I lean on watershed feminist histories of slavery that began to appear in the 1980s (Beckles; Bush; White; Hine, “Female,” “Rape”) and that have been richly expanded over the last three decades (Berry; Camp; Morgan, *Laboring*; Paugh; Turner; among others). These histories focus on sex, reproduction, motherhood, and kinship in slavery, and decisively demonstrate that what I am calling racialized (re)productive accumulation constituted *the* engine of slave racial capitalism, especially in the nineteenth century. While feminist histories of slavery mainly treat enslaved women’s resistance, in the present article, rather than examine women’s historical agency, I instead analyze the role played by a process of *ungendering* in rationalizing and therefore enabling the materialization of an economic system

dependent on racialized (re)productive accumulation. I focus my work in this way not because I believe that theorizing racialized (re)productive accumulation is somehow more important than telling the story of women's resistance to enslavement. Rather, I focus thus because the process of ungendering in slavery that I elaborate here has not yet been fully treated in existing work on slave racial capitalism, or, more generally, in histories of racial capitalism.

In accounting for the process of ungendering in slavery, I seek to advance a theory of racial capitalism that recognizes its dependence on the abstracting and dehumanizing calculations that enable the exchange relationship that drives all forms of capitalism. At the same time, I seek to open our collective imagination about the forms of revolt that refuse to stop at what Hortense Spillers refers to as "the gender question" (more on this "question" shortly), and that therefore attend to the *possibility* that Spillers imagines inheres in the historically violent unhinging of gender and reproduction. Overall, through focus on the process of ungendering in slavery, I hope to do three things: (1) Expand on existing discussions about the relationship between capitalism and slavery; (2) offer an expressly (re)productive account of racial capitalism in past and present; and (3) follow Spillers in speculating about what might yet lie beyond the reach of racial capitalism and the processes of racialized (re)productive accumulation that subtend it.

Ungendering (Re)production

As readers will have surmised from my title and what I have observed thus far, the ideas about ungendering that I engage with here emerge from a reading of Spillers's watershed 1987 article, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." While Spillers is often considered a key contributor to Black feminism, in building my analysis of racialized (re)productive accumulation out of a reading of Spillers's ideas about the process of ungendering, I suggest that Spillers ought to be included within the pantheon of Black radical thinkers that Robinson dubbed Black Marxist. Spillers's theorization of ungendering in slavery and beyond raises interlinked and heretofore unexamined questions about the relationship of racial capitalism to the long history of (re)productive extraction, dispossession, and accumulation.⁶ These include questions about the ungendering of (re)productive labor performed by she whom Spillers refers to throughout her article as "the captive female,"⁷ questions about the stamp of a process that was begun in Atlantic slavery on the forms of (re)productive accumulation that continue to fuel racial capitalism (and by extension biocapitalism) in the present, and, not least, questions about the liberatory possibility that

inheres in the process of ungendering—a process that Spillers casts as both violent and simultaneously open to radical reappropriation.

For some readers the idea of ungendered (re)production may feel counterintuitive and thus present a potential stumbling block. In vivo creation of eggs, in utero creation of embryos and their gestation, and the labor of parturition are conventionally viewed as activities performed by female bodies. And yet treating (re)production as a process of ungendering makes good sense when Spillers's formulations are situated not only within the history of Atlantic slavery but also within Spillers's moment of writing and publication. During the 1980s (re)productive labor, for the first time since Emancipation, was being actively dispossessed, extracted, and accumulated. Whereas in slavery, accumulation of racialized (re)productive labor and products was organized by enslavers, slave traders, and New World planters seeking to turn a profit, in the 1980s (re)production began to be organized by those seeking a “cure” for the “problem” of infertility; by those hoping to (re)produce genetically related offspring in wombs not their own; by gay, lesbian, and queer individuals and couples desiring to create kin; and, not least, by individuals and corporations involved in brokering the sale of gestational surrogacy, the necessary raw materials (ova, sperm, and embryos), and a range of required technologies including genetic screening and selection, cryopreservation of gametes and embryos, artificial insemination, and in vitro fertilization that together enable fulfillment of consumer desires.⁸

According to histories of reproductive technological development, assisted reproduction technologies (or ARTs) began to be used in human reproduction after initial development for use in the breeding of domestic animals (Franklin). By the early 1990s surrogacy was becoming increasingly common in the United States and elsewhere (Markens; Jacobson; Spar; Twine). By the start of the new millennium (and therefore coincident with renewed interest in Robinson's theory of racial capitalism), paid gestational surrogacy had become a highly visible practice, one frequently represented and commented on in popular media. Complex and at once sensational legal cases resulting from breached surrogate contracts were discussed by TV pundits, and surrogacy was routinely treated in fiction and film (Latimer, *Reproductive*; Weinbaum, *Afterlife*). The pervasive use of surrogate labor over the past two decades has sparked development of transnational markets in a range of related commodities (Almeling; Cooper; Cooper and Waldby; Deomampo; Rudrappa; Thompson; Waldby; Weinbaum, “Reproducing,” *Afterlife*).⁹ Today ova, sperm, embryos, genetic testing and selection, stem cells and stem cell banking, and, not least, “designer babies” can be purchased globally. Indeed, what some describe as “global fertility chains” bind our

world (Nahman, Parry, and Vertommen), enabling a coordinated transnational response to international consumer demand for the (re)production of genetically related offspring and the hyper-exploitation of (re)productive laborers.

Significantly, many of the same ARTs that were referred to as “new” in the 1980s are today becoming not only common but banal. ARTs are thus being used in divergent ways, both to shore up hegemonic kinship structures and social identities (Mamo; Smietana, Thompson, and Twine; Thompson), and, albeit far more rarely, to challenge them. Given the swift technological development that has taken place over little more than three decades, it is retrospectively evident that during the period in which Spillers wrote “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe,” ARTs were already beginning to enable both a historically significant consolidation of the gendered organization of kin making, and pointing toward the possibility of untethering gender from (re)production. As Spillers appears to have realized, the ARTs that had begun to appear held out the potential to give rise to “the different social subjects” (80) whom she optimistically heralded as emergent in her article’s final paragraphs—the same paragraphs that have been regarded as both cryptic and radical by readers, especially those invested in feminist, queer, and trans studies and politics.

While Spillers argues that the process of ungendering impacted all African captives and their descendants, she hones in on the repercussions of ungendering for the captive female and her descendants. As she elaborates, ungendering marked individuals and simultaneously left a cultural and ideological mark on a nation built out of centuries of Black women’s (re)productive dispossession. This cultural and ideological mark is manifest in a range of reproductive discourses, and especially in those that reflect and refract racialized idea(l)s of “motherhood” and “womanhood.” For instance, the infamous Moynihan Report inflicted such a forceful blow on Black women at the time of its publication that the impact continues to be felt across generations. Indeed, as many have pointed out, this impact is evident in decades of punitive and dehumanizing US social policy targeted at Black mothers and their children.¹⁰ In Spillers’s titular formulation, she expands her point about the Moynihan Report further, pushing it into the domain of language by observing that the process of ungendering in slavery today structures the distinctly “American grammar” of her article’s title. This American grammar can be thought of as a hegemonic way of thinking, talking, writing about, and ultimately materializing the racialized gender formations that organize the relations of (re)production in racial capitalism both in the past and present.

To understand the process of ungendering as cultural, ideological, material, and at once time traveling, it is helpful to recall that, although “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” principally treats the Middle Passage, the slave trade, and the New World plantation, it is bookended by meditations that shift readers into Spillers’s present moment in order to explore “the afterlife of reproductive slavery.”¹¹ For instance, Spillers begins her article with a discussion of the mistaken attribution of a supposedly matriarchal function to enslaved women in social scientific work and social policy recommendations, noting the repercussions of the positing of a “black matriarchate” emergent out of slavery on Black women and their families. Because Spillers shuttles readers back and forth across time, I regard her article as an exemplary expression of what I elsewhere describe as “Black feminism’s philosophy of history”—an account of the unfolding of time that refuses ideas of linear progress and simultaneously reveals the imbrication or constellation of the slave past and the racial capitalist present (Weinbaum, *Afterlife*). In depicting slavery and her present moment of writing as involved in a complex relationship of historical reciprocity, Spillers argues that the Moynihan Report endures and resonates because it is representative of an entire “class of symbolic paradigms” (66) that together ensure slavery’s lasting impress on the language used to describe and materialize our world. Ultimately, Spillers argues that the American grammar of her title encapsulates the problem that is her article’s focus: existence of ungendering as a medium of violence and a technology of power that was brewed up in slavery and that persists in the racial capitalist (and therefore biocapitalist) present.

Although Spillers’s contributions are most often regarded as psychoanalytically orientated, I am here suggesting that her meditation on American grammar allows her to advance a decidedly historical and materialist argument. As Spillers elaborates, an American grammar ungendered the captive female and continues to shape the material conditions in which (re)producers live and labor. To intervene in this situation, it is therefore necessary to expose the violence that inheres in the process of ungendering and to consider its alternative affordances. As Spillers quips, “The problem before us is deceptively simple” (66). There is a long tradition, one that the Moynihan Report taps, that dehumanizes descendants of enslaved (re)producers through destruction of both Black motherhood and kinship. While in slavery, bonds of kinship were severed by law and custom; in its wake (Sharpe), motherhood is foreclosed through targeted deployment of representations ranging from “the black matriarch” to “the welfare queen” and a rapidly proliferating range of pathologized figures, including the pregnant Black person charged with “genocide” for seeking an abortion

in a post-*Roe* nation (Dana-Ain Davis; Latimer, “Abortion”; Roberts). Our task in the face of “the deceptively simple” problem before us is to comprehend the role played by the process of ungendering in the afterlife of reproductive slavery, to reappropriate the process, and to imagine other possible outcomes.

Feminist historians of slavery have treated the non-maternal and kinless status of the enslaved (re)producer through scholarship on *partus sequitur ventrem*. As they explain, this ancient doctrine originally derived from Roman law that was reanimated in Atlantic slavery to ensure that children born to enslaved women would follow the status of those who gave them life (Morgan, “Partus”; Dorsey; Berry). Beginning in the middle of the seventeenth century, *partus sequitur ventrem* was reanimated to ensure that children born to slaves residing in English, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies were regarded as lively commodities divisible into their useful bodily parts and processes. In short, like their “mothers,” enslaved “children” were treated as alienable and fungible.¹² A child’s price was calculable in a marketplace that reduced each to an exchange value.

In being forced to (re)produce their own and their children’s kinlessness, enslaved women were subjected to the paired violations that sociologist Orlando Patterson argues made human beings into slaves: “natal alienation” and “social death.” What Spillers’s meditation on the process of ungendering adds to work by feminist histories of slavery and to Patterson’s account of slave making is the understanding that both natal alienation and social death are processes of ungendering. As Spillers observes, the ungendering of enslaved (re)producers enabled legal evisceration of kinship, disaggregation of gestation and parturition from “motherhood,” and the related disavowal of the existence of Black “femaleness” and “womanhood.” Notably, Spillers theorizes the process of ungendering as both recursive and reiterative. The body of the captive female had to be transformed into property in order to be subsequently used to accumulate more property. The accumulation process was repeated across generations to maintain slave racial capitalism. This two-pronged accumulation process resulted in the (re)production of slaves whose forced participation in the (re)production of more slaves further powered the systems of dispossession, extraction, and accumulation.¹³ Put otherwise, ungendering *engendered* more ungendering and thus ongoing racialized (re)productive accumulation.

At the same time that enslaved (re)producers were legally stripped of their rightful recognition as “mothers,” Spillers notes that their “ethnicity” was “concentrated” (67) through their subjection to the chattel making logic of *partus sequitur ventrem*. *Partus sequitur ventrem* recursively “ethnicized”

(Spillers's preferred term) the (re)producer and in this way signaled her exile from the dominant gender formation—the racialized gender formation that equated femaleness with whiteness and organized the division of productive and reproductive labor into realms of public and private. Expanding on the work of feminist historians before her and anticipating the direction their work would take, Spillers suggests that the maintenance of a racialized gender division of labor during slavery was predicated on stabilization of the equation of womanhood with legal recognition of inclusion in domestic arrangements that divided space and labor into public and private, and thus into the forms required by (white) patriarchy. In recursively ethnicizing the (re)productive laborer as “Black,” *partus sequitur ventrem* shored up idea(l)s of white motherhood and womanhood for all those who were exempted from enclosure within the doctrine's logic. As Spillers pointedly observes, in a world divided into racialized and gendered realms of public and private, “mothering . . . is the only female gender there is” (73). Circling back to her opening gambit in order to link her insights about the hegemony of white domestic space to her insights about the hegemony of American grammar, Spillers adds, “Motherhood and female gendering/ungendering appear so intimately aligned . . . [that they] speak the same language” (78).

According to the grammatical rules about which Spillers wrote, in slavery both motherhood and womanhood are exclusively white/European. Motherhood was a privilege conferred on those residing within a racialized (as white) and gendered (as female) domestic space that was ruled over by a (white) patriarch willing to bestow a patronym on those he regarded as kin. As Spillers specifies, by contrast to white/European women, enslaved (re)producers were “not regarded as elements of the domestic” (72). Such recognition would imply their belonging within a racialized and gendered metonymic chain from which they and their progeny were necessarily excluded. This chain linking together (white) motherhood, (white) womanhood, (white) paternity, (white) kinship, (white) genealogy, and, not least, (white) futurity had to be maintained in order for the “black matriarch” of the Moynihan Report to emerge as a living atavism, a figure out of time and yet pathologically stuck within its maw—a figure descended from the captive female held responsible for instigating the supposed crisis besetting “the black family,” the pathological kin group imagined by Moynihan and those who influenced and were influenced by his work (Moynihan).

Use of enslaved (re)producers as engines of capital accumulation negated the possibility that gestation and parturition could be regarded as mother-making activities that conferred on them conventionally gender-marked identities and attendant bonds of kinship. As Spillers observes, instructively

employing quotation marks around words whose meaning is thrown into question by the imposition of *partus sequitur ventrem*: “If ‘kinship’ were possible, the property relations [set in place in slavery] would be undermined, since the offspring would then ‘belong’ to a mother” (75). This last observation is underscored by Spillers when she subsequently adopts an admonishing tone: “One treads on dangerous ground in suggesting an equation between female gender and mothering” (78) in slavery. From the vantage point of enslavers, enslaved (re)producers were commodities characterized by the unique capacity to (re)produce chattel and thus amass surplus value for their owners. Ultimately, Spillers brings readers to the realization that by prohibiting enslaved (re)producers from laying claim to their children (and therefore to legally recognized kinship and genealogical futurity), the laws of slavery placed the captive female “out[side] of the traditional symbolics of female gender” (80) and into “an enforced state of breach in which ‘kinship’ loses meaning since it can be invaded at any moment . . . by the property relation” (74).

To summarize the imbricated arguments about the process of ungendering that I seek to excavate from Spillers rich text: (1) forced participation in (re)production recursively transforms the enslaved (re)producer into an ungendered and ethnicized (or racialized) source of chattel; (2) the enslaved (re)producer is denied the legal status of mother and therefore denied inclusion within womanhood, both of which emerge as presumptively white/European; and (3) *partus sequitur ventrem* brands the children of enslaved (re)producers as property that may be forced to (re)produce property across generations. By contrast to the mid-twentieth-century French feminist Simone de Beauvoir, who argues in her existential treatise on “the second sex” that “the woman” gives birth to herself as “a mother” in the act of giving birth to a child (540–88), no falsely universal power of self-actualization was available to the enslaved (re)producer.¹⁴

Ungendering the “Human-as-Cargo”

Up until this point, I have discussed the process of ungendering on the New World plantation. And yet, according to Spillers, ungendering does not begin on the plantation but, rather, in a different space and time: in the hold of a slave ship packed with African captives whom Spillers labels *human-as-cargo*. As Spillers observes, ungendering of the enslaved (re)producers was preceded by an a priori intellectual and specifically geospatial and mathematical calculation that first occurred in the minds of enslavers as they contemplated how best to maximize profit by filling ships bound for the New World not with gendered bodies of varied origin, mother tongue,

custom, and age but, rather, with abstracted quantities of what Spillers famously denotes as *flesh*. Though numerous scholars engage Spillers idea of flesh (seeking to come to terms with its distinction from *body*), for present purposes I treat flesh as the primary by-product of Middle Passage—a by-product that is at once material, geospatial, mathematical, abstractable, and, above all, ungendered. To transform flesh into valuable property that takes up a given amount of space in the ship’s hold, an atomizing calculation must numerically reduce the gendered *body* of the captive to a precise quantity of *flesh*, and then assess the amount of space said flesh will occupy within a strategically packed hold.

Of course, the calculation that reduces flesh to a quantity of human-as-cargo not only takes place in slavery but in all economic exchanges that occur in capitalism. What is unique to commodity exchange in slavery is the calculation of human value in relation to that of all other commodities, living and inanimate. It is only in the process of exchange as it takes place in slavery, in other words, that the humanness and thus the social identities to which the inhabitant of the allotted space within the ship’s hold had previously laid claim are put under erasure or into what Spillers calls a “state of breach,” from which there is no exit, at least from the point of view of property holders. As Spillers elaborates, the captive female stowed aboard the slave ship alongside other captives, *she* who considered *herself* and will have been recognized by others as an “indigenous” woman or girl, is transmogrified in and through the abstracting calculation made by enslavers, and then in and through the forced experiences of Middle Passage, into a quantity of flesh—a quantity of human-as-cargo that is dispossessed of home/land, mother/tongue, kin/ship, history, age, body, and, not least, gender.¹⁵

At the end of a passage spanning several paragraphs that begins with a discussion of the famous Brookes Plan in which Captain Perry, an antislavery investigative reporter, illustrates in detail how the owner of the vessel known as the *Brookes* calculated the space that each captive who was forced to board his ship would be allotted in the ship’s hold (“let it now be supposed that every man slave is to be allowed six feet by one foot four inches for room, every woman five feet ten by one foot four, every boy five feet by one foot two, and every girl four feet six by one foot”),¹⁶ Spillers concludes,

Those African persons in “Middle Passage” were literally suspended in the “oceanic,” if we think of the latter in its Freudian orientation as an analogy for the undifferentiated identity: removed from the indigenous land and culture, and not-yet “American” either, these captive persons, without names that their captors would recognize, were in movement across the Atlantic, but they were also

nowhere at all. Inasmuch as, on any given day, we might imagine, the captive personality did not know where s/he was, we could say that they were the culturally “unmade,” thrown in the midst of a figurative darkness that “exposed” their destinies to an unknown course. . . . We might say that the slave ship, its crew, and its human-as-cargo stand for a wild and unclaimed richness of possibility that is not interrupted, not “counted”/“accounted,” or differentiated until its movement gains the land thousands of miles away from the point of departure. Under these conditions, one is neither female, nor male, as both subjects are taken into “account” as quantities. The female in “Middle Passage,” as an apparently smaller physical mass, occupies “less room” in a directly translatable money economy. But she is, nevertheless, quantifiable by the same rules of accounting as her male counterpart. (72)

While most readers take up Spillers ideas about the creation of flesh (and thus the body/flesh distinction) in order to engage the ontological question of the destruction of “the Black” as human subject (Bey; Sexton; Snorton; Wilderson, *Red*, “Reciprocity”), in relating her ideas about the creation of flesh to the abstracting economic calculation that filled the hold of the slave ship, I maintain that Spillers not only theorizes an origin point for ontological anti-Blackness in *Middle Passage*. She theorizes the centrality of the process of ungendering to the workings of racial capitalism tout court. For it was while honing in on the packing of the *Brookes’s* hold that Spillers brings readers to the salient realization that Atlantic slavery was predicated on a mathematical, geospatial, economic, and abstracting process of ungendering that ultimately enabled the commodification of human beings. As she succinctly observes, “the scaled inequalities” that are recommended by the owner of the *Brookes* and observed by Captain Perry “complement the commanding terms of the dehumanizing, ungendering, and defacing project” (72) that was Atlantic slavery.

Overall, the above passage reveals the role of a meticulous *counting/accounting* in the transformation of the captive female into a quantity of flesh and thus into an ungendered quantity of human-as-cargo. Erasure of the captive female’s gender identity is part of the process of commodifying the human being, and thus part of the process on which the smooth workings of slave racial capitalism depended. Related accounts of the work of mathematical abstraction and numeracy in the slave trade have been elaborated by historians Stephanie Smallwood (chaps. 2 and 3) and Jennifer Morgan (*Reckoning*, chaps. 1 and 2) through detailed analyses based on their readings of ship’s logs and captains’ ledger books among other available archives. Each offers formulations that inform and thicken the present interpretation of

Spillers. Smallwood writes, “Traders reduced people to the sum of their biological parts, thereby scaling life down to an arithmetical equation and finding the lowest common denominator” (43).¹⁷ Drawing on Spillers, I add to Smallwood that the “lowest common denominator” is in fact ungendered flesh. When aggregated, ungendered flesh constituted the “complete” cargo; it functioned as a measure of the total surplus value that would be realized in specie and notes when the ship reached its destination, its hold was unpacked, and the contents sold. For Morgan, the numeracy that animates logs and ledgers leads to an understanding of the silences that characterize the archives of slavery. As she explains, captains’ inattention to the presence of women on their ships, their failure to record the gender of their cargo, cannot be dismissed but rather must be interpreted as an important symptom of the numerical logic on which the trade was predicated. Whereas Morgan reads erasure of female captives from the written record as “a crucial originary moment when . . . gendered categories of meaning became constitutive of the most profoundly inscribed racial subordination,” drawing on Spillers I add that erasure of gendered categories from the archives of slavery (and from too much of the scholarship that is based on them) testifies loudly to the power of the process of ungendering. As Morgan further speculates, inattention to the presence of women on board ships may paradoxically speak to the violent and wonton sexual (ab)use to which enslaved women and girls were subjected: “For slave traders, refusing to record the sex ratios on board their ships was perhaps part of their ideological strategy for rationalizing the trade” (49). I find that Morgan’s observation is anticipated by Spillers who writes, “The sexual violation of captive females and their own express rage against their oppressors did not constitute events that captains and crews rushed to record” (73).

Through discussion of the ungendering that is part and parcel of the abstracting calculation of commodification, Spillers compels readers to recognize that the logic that filled the hold of the ship was forwarded on the plantation, where it again was used to rationalize dispossession, extraction, and accumulation. More specifically still, once the process of ungendering was set in motion, it could be episodically mobilized to rationalize the consumption of enslaved (re)productive labor and its products. Indeed, the process of ungendering was structural. Its reiteration was a constitutive feature of an American grammar that ultimately enabled the materialization of both an economic system and a national culture across time. The rules of this American grammar structured and materialized the Brookes Plan, the implementation of the doctrine of *partus sequitur ventrem*, the Moynihan Report and the public policy emergent from it, and the entire class of symbolic

paradigms on which the report drew, to which it contributed, and that it advances.

Because I hope that this article contributes not only to scholarship on Spillers but also to that on racial capitalism, I pause to summarize its arguments in familiar Marxist terms: “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” ought to be treated as an addition to Marx’s theory of so-called primitive accumulation that centers interconnected processes of racialization and ungendering. This is because it simultaneously extends, blends, and critiques Marx’s story of capitalism’s inception, Robinson’s concept of racial capitalism, and Federici’s account of enclosure of the reproductive commons. As it does so, it shows us that racial capitalism is predicated on an abstracting mathematical, geospatial, and economic calculation that negates gender in the process of packing the hold of the slave ship, forecloses the captive female’s claim to “motherhood” and “womanhood” by forcing her participation in (re)productive labor governed by the doctrine of *partus sequitur ventrem*, and ultimately precludes the enslaved (re)producer’s recognition as a rights-bearing human subject who might otherwise be entitled to the status and protections (albeit always partial) afforded by inclusion in the racialized and gendered relations of legally recognized kinship and domesticity. In sum, according to Spillers the (re)production of both chattel and kinlessness (or social death and natal alienation) are together tethered to the process of ungendering that was set in motion both when the captive female’s body was transformed into flesh and when it was forced to participate in the reproduction of the relations of (re)production that subtend slave racial capitalism.

No Stopping at the Gender Question

Twenty years after publication of “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book” Spillers joined a group of Black feminist scholars including Shelly Eversley, Farah Griffin, Saidiya Hartman, and Jennifer Morgan to collectively reflect on its stakes. One question the group took up was Spillers’s relationship to the poststructuralist feminist theory that was being celebrated in the 1980s as she wrote. Spillers’s response to this question is instructive in that she retrospectively understands herself not to have written with the intent of critiquing then dominant theories inattentive to race and racism (though she does this so well!). Rather, she recalls writing in order to identify and explore the problem of “black women stopping at the gender question” (Spillers et al. 304). “Stopping at the gender question,” failing to push beyond gender as principal object of investigation and most valued analytical lens was a necessity for Spillers

because of the “refusal of certain gender privileges to black women historically” (Spillers et al. 304). Put otherwise, Spillers recalls recognizing that because ungendering was and remains central to ongoing dehumanization of Black women, she found it necessary to push beyond gender. She did this by neither assuming gender as a given analytic priority nor as an identity available to all comers. And she therefore did not rely on the presumption of universal access to recognition as either a mother or a woman. As she elaborates further, in writing her watershed article she sought “to go *through* gender to get to something *wider*” (304, my emphasis). Spillers assumed neither gender’s presence nor the relevance of the feminist frameworks proffered by those who surrounded her in the academy. Rather, she found that she was preoccupied with questions about what had been gone through to create an exclusively white claim to the status of human being, and, especially, what had been too readily assumed about the racialization of both human motherhood and womanhood. Indeed, Spillers retrospectively describes her focus as being identification of the racialized and gendered exclusions that were and continue to be enacted to solidify a raced (as white) and gendered (as male) construct of the “human” precisely because she recognized that for the captive female and her descendants gender was and remains episodically evaporated, foreclosed, refused, denied, disavowed, or entirely negated.¹⁸

By contrast to those who presumptively regard gender as available for the taking—albeit as always already insufficient as the only mark of a subject’s identity—Spillers sought to go *through* gender to get to something *wider*. Indeed, it was in this spirit that she created her account of an American grammar structured around a racialized process of ungendering. As she explains, when writing “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” she searched for “a vocabulary” that would enable her undertaking, but found that such a vocabulary was not “immediately available” (Spillers et al. 301). Identification of what was missing, moreover, led to realization that she would need to gesture toward the invention of a “new syntax” that might yet enable her work. This new syntax, or what she also describes as a new “semantic field/fold” (“Mama’s Baby,” 80), would ideally enable revelation of the process of ungendering to which the captive female was subjected in Middle Passage, on the New World plantation, and beyond.

Notably, the process of ungendering is not only connected to violence but also to what Spillers forecasts (in the passage that is quoted above) as “a wild and unclaimed richness of *possibility*” (72) that is unwittingly unleashed by the abstracting mathematical, geospatial, and economic calculations that first made slave racial capitalism go. On the one hand, the italicized term,

possibility, signals the devastating reality to which the doctrine of *partus sequitur ventrem* was attached in slavery. This is the speculative economic possibility that enslavers sought to realize by laying claim to the wild and unclaimed riches extracted from flesh forced to (re)produce the system of slave racial capitalism when the slave ship “gain[ed] the land thousands of miles away from the point of departure” (72). On the other hand, the term *possibility* gestures toward so much more. Indeed, it directs attention to the captive female’s potential transgression, resistance, and refusal of forced participation in racialized (re)productive accumulation and thus to an audacious insistence on the *possibility* of existence beyond the dehumanizing conditions that have been imposed. In doing so, it suggests that the process of ungendering might simultaneously constitute a profound violation and an opening. It might be an immediately violent and violating process and a process with unknown outcome—a process that is double-edged in that it heralds alternative forms of fungibility and lability, and thus alternative modes of being in and relating to the world that are irreducible to the abstracting calculations that subtended slavery. Put simply, ungendering might be a wayward process that affords rich future *possibility* even though it has historically been used to reap violence.

This is the “wild and unclaimed richness of *possibility*” that Black studies scholars such as C. Riley Snorton and Tiffany Lethabo King (among others) have located in Spillers’s work. As Snorton influentially argues in *Black on Both Sides*, the process of ungendering that transpires in slavery can and should be linked to transness and, conversely, transness to Blackness. As King powerfully attests in *The Black Shoals* and elsewhere (Wilderson and King), writing in partial counterpoint to Afropessimists (Wilderson, *Red*; Sexton) who often position Spillers (in my view mistakenly) as a fellow proponent of their position, Blackness is neither an exclusively negative nor debilitating product of enslavement.¹⁹ It is always also a fungible and therefore defiant source of oppositional ontological, social, and political formation. As King elaborates, “there is *possibility* and *futurity* when one is rendered outside of human coordinates” (“Abolishing” 79). In sum, the process of ungendering that is slavery’s fount and legacy holds within it the *possibility* that those caught up in the process might yet challenge, refuse, exceed, or perhaps even transcend the confines of the forms of capitalism that are enabled by racialized (re)productive accumulation.

By way of conclusion, I track further into the realm of *possibility* to speculate about reproduction untethered from gender and to consider the import of this in the context of the contemporary movement for reproductive justice. Thoughts limned here are admittedly in process and thus are ones I hope

to continue to think through alongside others committed to realization of substantive reproductive freedom in the United States and elsewhere around the world. In brief, I follow Spillers in imagining what an insurgent understanding of the “wild and unclaimed richness of *possibility*” that is afforded by the process of ungendering might ideally contribute to collective thinking about a shared future that might yet represent a radical rupture with the form of ongoing racialized (re)productive accumulation that I have argued today characterizes both racial capitalism and biocapitalism (Weinbaum, *Afterlife*; “Reproducing”; “Slave Episteme”).

A Different Reproductive Future?

At the very end of her article Spillers swerves (Butler 29) off the main road she has traveled and explores in her final paragraphs the “new syntax” or “semantic field/fold” that she has argued might be afforded by our coming to terms with the imposition of the myth of the “Black matriarchate,” or what she in this instance labels the myth of “Mother Right” (80) using language adopted from anthropologist Claude Meillassoux. As Spillers elaborates, for enslaved (re)producers and their descendants, “Mother Right” emerges from a perverse torquing of white reason. In the Atlantic world such a supposed *right* is a “negating feature of [Black] human community” (80) insofar as racialized (re)productive accumulation remains an ongoing process that systematically refuses motherhood to Black (re)producers and either entirely forecloses or violently devalues Black kinship in its attempt to decimate Black humanity. But Spillers observes, “Mother Right” must also be recognized as a patently false imposition, a grammatical rule that ought to be broken or entirely refused. “Mother Right” (like “Black matriarchate”) disavows as it misnames the process of ungendering in slavery and beyond. Therefore, “Mother Right” ought to be deconstructed and not only displaced but also replaced, so that it becomes possible to clear space for thinking about racialized reproduction beyond gender and thus in relation to what amounts to an alternative humanist project of futurity. As Spillers announces in concluding her article, once the “play of paradox” that characterizes the process of ungendering is revealed and understood, it becomes “our task to make a place for . . . [the] different social subject” who represents the legacy of this process going forward (80).

As Spillers elaborates in the retrospective exchange about her essay discussed above, when she invoked this “different social subject,” she did not intend to allude to “a thing that is somehow male *and* female” (Spillers et al. 304). Rather, she was imagining “a kind of humanity that we seem very far from” in retrospect, but that she nonetheless “used to think black culture

was on the verge of creating” (304). Despite her acknowledgment of her reservations (“used to think . . .”) about the immanence of an unprecedented “kind of humanity,” Spillers nonetheless acknowledges that in 1987 she optimistically ended her watershed article on a final, future-oriented note. This note chimes deeply with Afrofuturist (and Afro-optimist) sensibilities that were in the mid-1980s just beginning to take form in other quarters (Brown). Thus, Spillers is channeling the zeitgeist when, in her article’s concluding paragraphs, she cosmically forecasts Black futurity in an alternative idiom, one that pushes through gender as we know it to renegotiate the fraught relationship among Blackness, reproduction, and motherhood to get at something wider. Indeed, Spillers closes by forecasting Black futurity in a subjunctive idiom that requires cessation of ongoing racialized (re)productive accumulation and the violent dispossession and extraction that have subtended it.

Drawing out her final cosmic note in order to improvise on it, Spillers surmises that “the African-American male” has been “handed” by the captive female and her descendants in ways he cannot escape and that have removed him from “the fiction of the father” (“Mama’s Baby,” 80), from the fiction of paternal power that has been and remains reserved for white men. To grab hold of an “aspect of his own personhood” that might yet liberate him from this fiction, it is the “heritage of the mother that . . . [he] must regain” (80). For “the African-American male,” Spillers explains, *possibility* inheres in the ability to say “‘yes’ to the ‘female’ within” (80). As others including Snorton have noted, with this remark Spillers appears to call for “the African-American male” to embrace the *possibility* that is opened up by the historical process of ungendering “handed” through time by the captive female whose gender was negated in Middle Passage, who was refused recognition as mother, and whose descendants are today identified by any number of dehumanizing names, including those monikers with which Spillers opens her article: “‘Peaches’ and ‘Brown Sugar,’ ‘Sapphire’ and ‘Earth Mother,’ ‘Aunty,’ and ‘Granny’” (65).

For Black women descended from the captive female forced to (re)produce her own and her children’s kinlessness, Spillers suggests that the path to liberation is related but distinct. For these “different social subjects” the liberatory project entails reclamation of “the monstrosity” foisted on enslaved (re)producers and their descendants. Black women’s liberation, she clarifies, will not be realized by “joining the ranks of gendered femaleness” (80). Rather, it will require “gaining the insurgent ground” occupied by those who dare to self-name, self-make, and ultimately “rewrite . . . a radically different text for female empowerment” (80). No doubt, this “radically

different text” closely resembles Spillers’s own. It is a text that deconstructs, displaces, and replaces a disabling American grammar that has in the past been used to abet the process of ungending. It is a future text, as Fred Moten suggests in an allusive nod to Spillers (and to Luce Irigaray, Spillers’s French feminist contemporary), that must be recognized as part of the Black radical tradition precisely because it entails “a cutting and abundant refusal of closure.” As Moten explains, “This refusal of closure is not a rejection but an ongoing and reconstructive improvisation . . . this reconstruction’s motive is the sexual differentiation of sexual difference” (288).²⁰

In an uncanny convergence, Loretta J. Ross, one of the founders of the movement for reproductive justice, suggests that a set of parallel moves should be made in its pursuit. In a 2017 article, Ross argues that reproductive justice as both a framework and praxis ought to encompass analysis of the experiences and needs of all people, not only cis women.²¹ She specifies that she is thinking about what it means for reproductive justice to encompass the human rights of trans people, gender-nonbinary people, and those who seek to push beyond gender in order to live other possibilities (291). In short, Ross suggests that reproductive justice ought to be capacious enough to risk embrace of the *possibility* that Spillers understood to inhere in the process of ungending, in the unhinging of reproduction from gender when imagining “the new social subjects,” born in slavery’s wake, who seek “to go *through* gender to get to something *wider*.”

Though admittedly the bulk of Ross’s article is concerned with advancing women’s reproductive freedom—a project that takes on renewed urgency in our post-*Roe* moment—in my preferred reading it also embraces the “wild and unclaimed richness of *possibility*” that Spillers first located in the process of ungending. And perhaps this is unsurprising as Ross expressly invokes Spillers in a key passage in which she appears to take up insights gleaned from Spillers in her ongoing battle against reproductive injustice in the context of racial capitalism. As Ross observes, in working toward reproductive justice it is necessary to begin with the needs of Black women and from there create a praxis that redresses the wrongs done to all pregnant people and all potentially reproductive bodies (301). These wrongs began with the Black body’s ungending in slavery and its reduction to flesh. Today’s wrongs include a host of related violations such as the Black body’s transformation into a laboratory for social and medical experimentation (surgical procedures, drug trials, forced sterilization and cesarean section, non-consensual testing with long-term contraceptives such as Depo-Provera, etc.), disproportionate incarceration and shackling during childbirth, destruction of the social contract through so-called welfare reform, and, not least, denial of access to

adequate childcare, health care, housing, food and clean water as well as all the other material resources that are not simply desired but required by every pregnant person and by all those who hope to become parents or seek access to resources that allow them to remain childless. In short, to achieve reproductive justice, Ross argues, racial capitalism must be confronted and the intersection of reproduction, womanhood, and motherhood reworked. Put otherwise, we must follow Spillers in embracing the “wild and unclaimed richness of *possibility*” that inheres in the historical ungendering of (re)production—and this is so, even though this process was used to fuel slave racial capitalism and continues to fuel the practices of racialized (re)productive accumulation on which racial capitalism’s expansion depends.

In the preceding pages I have followed Spillers in suggesting that ungendering is key to racial capitalist accumulation and that it might yet open up rich possibility in the afterlife of reproductive slavery. In doing so, I have taken to heart the fact that Spillers ends her article with the bold idea that the ungendered (re)productive processes that powered slave racial capitalism in the past may yet prove to be just fungible enough to open up new ways of being in, relating to, and materially reproducing our world. At the same time that Ross’s invocation of Spillers clears space for expansive conceptualization of reproductive justice, my reading of Spillers suggests that those involved in realizing substantive reproductive freedom must push beyond all-too-familiar liberal calls for an invigorated politics of inclusion. As Spillers reminds us, what is needed in slavery’s wake is not a proliferation of gendered identities, but rather a new syntax that might yet allow us to not only deconstruct the past but also displace and replace long-standing relationships of historical reciprocity between the process of ungendering and racialized (re)productive accumulation. In theorizing (re)production in racial capitalism, Spillers compels us to inquire into how the processes of ungendering that she identified and examined have shaped our world and continue to shape the workings of contemporary global markets for (re)productive labor and products. To this end, we must examine how the existing movement for reproductive justice might yet involve refusal of ongoing racialized (re)productive accumulation as it functions within contemporary biocapitalism. Such refusal will necessarily entail analysis of the complex processes that currently enable the circulation of all the human biological commodities (re)produced by contemporary laborers whose bodies have been reduced to “the lowest common denominator” that Spillers labeled flesh. For it is as commodified flesh that surrogates, egg vendors, and many others enter the transnational marketplace to sell their bodies, their bodily processes, and the products of their *in vivo* labor. Where a thorough and

strategic account of the ungendering of contemporary racialized (re)productive accumulation will take us is a heretofore unexplored question that cannot be adequately answered by scholars and/or activists who rely on anachronist pieties about distinctions between productive and reproductive labor, and the supposed feminization of labor in globalization. As Spillers makes clear, truly substantive reproductive freedom requires the dismantling of the inner solidarity of slavery, racial capitalism, biocapitalism, and racialized (re)productive accumulation and acceptance of the risk involved in refusing to stop at the gender question. ■

Alys Eve Weinbaum is professor of English in the Department of English and adjunct professor in Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies at the University of Washington, Seattle. She is author of *The Afterlife of Reproductive Slavery: Biocapitalism and Black Feminism's Philosophy of History* (2019), which won the Sarah A. Whaley Book Prize for groundbreaking scholarship on women and labor from the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) and an honorable mention for the Gloria Anzaldúa Book Prize for transnational scholarship in Women's Studies also from the NWSA; and *Wayward Reproductions: Genealogies of Race and Nation in Transatlantic Modern Thought* (2004).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This article has benefited from dialogue that transpired over several months among members of the Reproducing Racial Capitalism workshops that Jennifer L. Morgan and I together convened in 2022 and 2023. I thank all the participants for their insight and radical imagination. I am indebted to Stephanie Clare, Brent Edwards, Caleb Knapp, Chandan Reddy, Lynn Thomas, Sasha Turner, Julia Wurr, and SJ Zhang for offering detailed feedback on various iterations of this article. Finally, a big thanks to Alexandra Meany for research assistance.

NOTES

- 1 The related term, *biocapital*, is usually attributed to Kaushik Sunder Rajan. Although Rajan does not explore the (re)productive character of biocapital/ism, this is the focus of the feminist scholarship in science and technology studies alluded to here.
- 2 "Slave breeding" is the "biotechnology" that facilitated the (re)production of slave racial capitalism. For this reason I elsewhere argue that contemporary slave racial capitalism ought to be retroactively recognized as a form of biocapitalism (Weinbaum, *Afterlife*).
- 3 Some scholars are wary about using a term that associates slaves and animals, while others recall that the term *slave breeding* was used by slave traders, owners, plantation managers, and abolitionists, and is necessary to accurate historicization (Morgan, *Reckoning*; Berry; Paugh; Smithers). The term I use in this article *enslaved (re)production*, has the advantage of both accurately describing and simultaneously shorthanding economic processes without forwarding dehumanizing language.

- 4 Rosalind C. Morris suggests that Marx's German term, *Ursprüngliche Akkumulation*, ought to be but has not been routinely translated as *originary accumulation*. Morris regards mistranslation as instructive in that it emphasizes the recursive and ongoing character of processes that enable capitalism's reproduction and the simultaneous construction of these processes as natural and inevitable. This insight is useful in that it illuminates the representation of the radical transformation of the relations of (re)production as always already foreclosed. Throughout this essay, I use the dominant translation because it remains most recognizable.
- 5 As Federici explains, *Caliban* represents work begun in the 1970s in collaboration with Leopoldina Fortunati that first appeared in Italian in 1984. Notably Federici and Fortunati formulated their ideas around the same time as Robinson and Spillers. Brief accounts of primitive accumulation are interspersed throughout Federici's subsequent writings. In these later works (*Witches*, 2018; *Re-Enchanting*, 2019; *Beyond*, 2020) she uses the term *reproductive commons*.
- 6 Spillers is not the first to consider the processes of ungendering in racial capitalism. Angela Davis develops similar arguments based on her assessment of the dehumanizing labor that all slaves performed. Oyèrónké Oyewùmí argues that in Yoruba society gender functioned as a Western imposition and did not exist as a meaningful social category prior to European colonization and the slave trade. Though this argument has been roundly challenged (see, for instance, Nwokeji), it remains an important reminder that African social formations were distinct from contemporaneous European ones.
- 7 On occasion, Spillers also refers to the "African female subject" (68) and the "African female in captivity" (73). Notably, she never questions the gender of the Africans who gave birth to captives caught up in the slave trade.
- 8 Recent scholarship explores the pitfalls and liberatory possibilities of assisted reproductive technologies (ARTs) (Mamo, *Queering*; "Queering Reproduction"; Smetana, Thompson, and Twine; Thompson; Keaney; Clarke and Haraway; Vertommen in this special issue) and examines how both normative and nonnormative kin making are caught up in racial capitalist logics and biocapitalist circuits of exchange. To be clear, I do not intend to argue against consumption and use of ARTs but rather to underscore the inevitability of enmeshment of contemporary (re)production in racial capitalism.
- 9 Gestational surrogacy uses a "donor" egg or most often an egg purchased from a "vendor" whose phenotypic traits the consumer hopes to recreate in a prospective child. Gestational surrogacy allows for the breakup of (re)productive labor into its constituent parts and enables involvement of a maximal number of (re)producers in the (re)production of the product. Today, gestational surrogacy is so dominant that it is simply referred to as surrogacy. Indeed, so-called traditional surrogacy involving a surrogate's own egg was largely phased out in the early 1990s in an effort to avoid legal challenges to "ownership" or "custody" of the child (re)produced.
- 10 Spillers's argument is amplified in Dorothy Roberts's account of the myriad ways in which the child welfare system destroys Black families (*Torn*).
- 11 "The afterlife of slavery" was first theorized by Saidiya Hartman (*Lose*). I expand Hartman's concept to highlight its reproductive logic, what I call "the afterlife of reproductive slavery."

- 12 When “motherhood” is thrown into uncertainty, so too is “childhood.” Habiba Ibrahim draws on Spillers to argue that “childhood” is a life stage foreclosed to those directly impacted by enslavement and its aftermath.
- 13 Robert Nichols (“Disaggregating”; *Theft*) observes that land dispossession is a recursive form of so-called primitive accumulation because land must first be made into property in order to be dispossessed. Here I suggest that a similar dynamic characterizes (re)productive accumulation insofar as the (re)producer must first be made into flesh.
- 14 According to Angela Davis (“Reflections”), ungendering of the enslaved laborer is not opposed to but rather complements the hyper-sexualization that rationalizes the rape of the enslaved, an act of terror that is further incentivized by the (re)productive logic of slavery. It is perhaps because Spillers shared with Davis this insight about the complementarity of ungendering and rape in slavery that Spillers homes in on racialized (re)productive accumulation, a process that effectively necessitates both sexual (ab)use *and* the womb’s enclosure through *partus sequitur ventrem*.
- 15 In reminding readers that African captives were “indigenous” (72), Spillers suggests the complicity between slavery and colonialism and effectively sets the stage for consideration of the connection between Blackness and Indigeneity, and Black studies and Indigenous studies in subsequent scholarship (King, Navarro, and Smith; King, “Black”; Lowe).
- 16 Or, as the owner of the *Brookes* recommends, taking the mathematical reduction one step further: “five females [ought to] be reckoned as four males, and three boys or girls as equal to two grown persons” (Spillers 72).
- 17 Smallwood is also concerned with the process of abstraction as it pertains to the filling of the ship’s hold: “Slaves became, for the purpose of transatlantic shipment, mere physical units that could be arranged and molded at will—whether folded together spoonlike in rows or flattened side by side in a plane” (68).
- 18 In this sense Spillers was working alongside Sylvia Wynter (“Beyond”; “Unsettling”).
- 19 Spillers also distances herself from Afropessimism (Spillers, “Hortense Spillers”).
- 20 In Hegelian terms “this reconstruction’s motive” is the negation of the negation (Moten 288). Publication of “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” coincides with heightened anglophone interest in and critique of French feminist theory, including the work of Luce Irigaray.
- 21 Reproductive justice is based on three interconnected principles: the right to have a child under conditions of one’s choosing, the right not to have a child, and the right to parent in an environment free from individual or state violence (Ross and Solinger 9).

WORKS CITED

- Almeling, Rene. *Sex Cells: The Medical Market in Eggs and Sperm*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.
- Arruzza, Cinzia, Tithi Bhattacharya, and Nancy Fraser. *Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto*. London: Verso, 2019.
- Baptist, Edward E. *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*. New York: Basic Books, 2014.

- Barrett, Michele. *Women's Oppression Today: Problems in Marxist Feminist Analysis*. London: Verso, 1980.
- Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage, 1952.
- Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. New York: Vintage Books, 2014.
- Beckles, Hilary McD. *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997.
- Berry, Daina Ramey. *The Price for Their Pound of Flesh: The Value of the Enslaved, from Womb to Grave, in the Building of a Nation*. Boston: Beacon, 2017.
- Bey, Marquis. "The Trans*-ness of Blackness, and Blackness of Trans*-ness," *TSQ* 4, no. 2 (2017): 275–95. <https://doi.org/10.1215/23289252-3815069>.
- Bhattacharya, Tithi, ed. *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*. London: Pluto, 2017.
- Boris, Eileen, and Rachel Salazar Parreñas, eds. *Intimate Labors: Cultures, Technologies, and the Politics of Care*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.
- Brown, Jayna. *Black Utopias: Speculative Life and the Music of Other Worlds*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021.
- Bush, Barbara. *Slave Women in Caribbean Society: 1650–1838*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990.
- Camp, Stephanie. *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women and Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Clarke, Adele E., and Donna Haraway. *Making Kin Not Population*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 2018.
- Cooper, Melinda. *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008.
- Cooper, Melinda, and Catherine Waldby. *Clinical Labor: Tissue Donors and Research Subjects in the Global Bioeconomy*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Davis, Angela Y. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves." *Black Scholar* 3, no. 4 (1971): 2–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00064246.1981.11414214>.
- Davis, Dana-Ain. "Trump, Race, and Reproduction in the Afterlife of Slavery." *Cultural Anthropology* 34, no. 1 (2019): 26–33. <https://doi.org/10.14506/ca34.1.05>.
- Day, Iyko. *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Deomampo, Daisy. *Transnational Reproduction: Race, Kinship, and Commercial Surrogacy in India*. New York: New York University Press, 2016.
- Dickenson, Donna. *Body Shopping: Converting Body Parts to Profit*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2008.
- Dorsey, Joseph C. "Women without History: Slavery and the International Politics of *Partus Sequitur Ventrem* in the Spanish Caribbean." In *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World*, edited by Verene Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles, 165–207. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2000.
- Eisenstein, Zillah R., ed. *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*. New York: Monthly Review, 1979.
- Federici, Silvia. *Beyond the Periphery of the Skin: Rethinking, Remaking, and Reclaiming the Body in Contemporary Capitalism*. Oakland, CA: PM, 2020.

- Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2004.
- Federici, Silvia. *Re-enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*. Brooklyn: PM, 2019.
- Federici, Silvia. *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. Oakland, CA: PM, 2012.
- Federici, Silvia. *Witches, Witch-Hunting, and Women*. Oakland, CA: PM, 2018.
- Franklin, Sarah. *Dolly Mixtures: The Remaking of Genealogy*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.
- Fuentes, Marisa J. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.
- Haley, Sarah. *No Mercy Here: Gender, Punishment, and the Making of Jim Crow Modernity*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016.
- Hartman, Saidiya. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007.
- Hine, Darlene Clark. "Female Slave Resistance: The Economics of Sex." *Western Journal of Black Studies* 3, no. 2 (1979): 123–27.
- Hine, Darlene Clark. "Rape and the Inner Lives of Black Women in the Middle West." *Signs* 4, no. 4 (1989): 912–20.
- Ibrahim, Habiba. *Black Age: Oceanic Lifespans and the Time of Black Life*. New York: New York University Press, 2021.
- Jacobson, Heather. *Labor or Love: Gestational Surrogacy and the Work of Making Babies*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016.
- James, Selma. *Sex, Race, and Class: The Perspective of Winning*. Oakland, CA: PM, 2012.
- Johnson, Jessica Marie. *Wicked Flesh: Black Women, Intimacy, and Freedom in the Atlantic World*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020.
- Johnson, Walter. *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- Jung, Moon Ho. *Coolies and Cane: Race, Labor, and Sugar in the Age of Emancipation*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.
- Keaney, Jaya. *Making Gaybies: Queer Reproduction and Multiracial Feeling*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2023.
- King, Tiffany Lethabo. "Black 'Feminisms' and Pessimism: Abolishing Moynihan's Negro Family." *Theory and Event* 21, no. 1 (2018): 68–87. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/685970>.
- King, Tiffany Lethabo. *The Black Shoals: Offshore Formation of Black and Native Studies*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019.
- King, Tiffany Lethabo, Jenell Navarro, and Andrea Smith, eds. *Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Blackness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020.
- Latimer, Heather. "Abortion Regulation and the Afterlife of Reproductive Slavery; or, A Call to Make Abortion Natural Again." *Feminist Studies* 48, no. 2 (2022): 342–66. <https://doi.org/10.1353/fem.2022.0030>.
- Latimer, Heather. *Reproductive Acts: Sexual Politics in North American Fiction and Film*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2013.
- Lowe, Lisa. *The Intimacies of Four Continents*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017.

- Mamo, Laura. *Queering Reproduction: Achieving Pregnancy in the Age of Technoscience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.
- Mamo, Laura. "Queering Reproduction in Transnational Bio-economies." *Reproductive BioMedicine and Society Online* 7 (2018): 24–32. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6287057/>.
- Markens, Susan. *Surrogate Motherhood and the Politics of Reproduction*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
- Meillassoux, Claude. "Female Slavery." In *Women and Slavery in Africa*, edited by Claire C. Robertson and Martin A. Klein, 49–66. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983.
- Mies, Maria. *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labor*. London: Zed Books, 1986.
- Morgan, Jennifer. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.
- Morgan, Jennifer. "Partus Sequitur Ventrem: Law, Race, and Reproduction in Colonial Slavery." *Small Axe*, no. 55 (2018): 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1215/07990537-4378888>.
- Morgan, Jennifer. *Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Kinship, and Capitalism in the Early Black Atlantic*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021.
- Morris, Rosalind C. "Ursprüngliche Akkumulation: The Secret of an Original Mistranslation." *boundary 2* 43, no. 3 (2016): 29–77. <https://doi.org/10.1215/01903659-3572418>.
- Moten, Fred. *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action." 1965. In *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy*, edited by Lee Rainwater and William L. Yancey, 47–94. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1967.
- Nahman, Michal, Bronwyn Parry, and Sigrid Vertommen. "Introduction: Global Fertility Chains and the Colonial Present of Assisted Reproductive Technologies." *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 8, no. 1 (2022): 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.28968/cftt.v8i1.37920>.
- Nichols, Robert. "Disaggregating Primitive Accumulation." *Radical Philosophy* 194 (2015): 18–28.
- Nichols, Robert. *Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020.
- Nwokeji, G. Ugo. "African Conceptions of Gender and the Slave Traffic." In "New Perspectives on the Transatlantic Slave Trade." Special issue, *William and Mary Quarterly* 58, no. 1 (2001): 47–68. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2674418>.
- Oyewùmí, Oyèrónké. *The Invention of Women: Making African Sense of Western Gender Discourse*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
- Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Pugh, Katherine. *The Politics of Reproduction: Race, Medicine, and Fertility in the Age of Abolition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Rajan, Kaushik Sunder. *Biocapital: The Constitution of Postgenomic Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006.

- Roberts, Dorothy. *Torn Apart: How the Child Welfare System Destroys Black Families—and How Abolition Can Build a Safer World*. New York: Basic Books, 2022.
- Robinson, Cedric J. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- Ross, Loretta J. “Reproductive Justice as Intersectional Activism.” *Souls* 19, no. 3 (2017): 286–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10999949.2017.1389634>.
- Ross, Loretta J., and Rickie Solinger. *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017.
- Rudrappa, Sharmila. *Discounted Life: The Price of Global Surrogacy in India*. New York: New York University Press, 2015.
- Sexton, Jared, “People-of-Color-Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery.” *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (2010): 31–56.
- Sharpe, Christina. *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Smallwood, Stephanie. *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from African to American Diaspora*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Smietana, Marcin, Charis Thompson, and France Winddance Twine. “Introduction: Making and Breaking Families—Reading Queer Reproductions, Stratified Reproduction, and Reproductive Justice Together.” *Reproductive BioMedicine and Society Online* 7 (2018): 112–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rbms.2018.11.001>.
- Smithers, Gregory D. “American Abolitionism and Slave-Breeding Discourse: A Reevaluation.” *Slavery and Abolition* 33, no. 4 (2012): 551–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144039X.2011.622119>.
- Snorton, C. Riley. *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.
- Spar, Debora L. *The Baby Business: How Money, Science, and Politics Drive the Commerce of Conception*. Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2006.
- Spillers, Hortense. “Hortense Spillers: Afro Pessimism and Its Others.” Video lecture, Institute for Critical Social Inquiry at The New School, New York, June 9, 2021. Vimeo video, 1:31:04. <https://vimeo.com/551629648>.
- Spillers, Hortense. “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book.” *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (1987): 65–81.
- Spillers, Hortense, Saidiya Hartman, Farah Jasmine Griffin, Shelly Eversley, and Jennifer L. Morgan. “‘Whatcha Gonna Do?’: Revisiting ‘Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book’: A Conversation with Hortense Spillers, Saidiya Hartman, Farah Jasmine Griffin, Shelly Eversley, and Jennifer L. Morgan.” *Women’s Studies Quarterly* 35, nos. 1–2 (2007): 299–309. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/whatcha-gonna-do-revisiting-mamas-baby-papas/docview/233638049/se-2>.
- Sweeney, Shauna. “Gendering Racial Capitalism and the Black Heretical Tradition.” In *Histories of Racial Capitalism*, edited by Destin Jenkins and Justin Leroy, 58–84. New York: Columbia University Press, 2021.
- Thompson, Charis. *Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005.
- Turner, Sasha. *Contested Bodies: Pregnancy, Childbearing, and Slavery in Jamaica*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017.

- Twine, France Winddance. *Outsourcing the Womb: Race, Class, and Gestational Surrogacy in a Global Market*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Vergès, Françoise. *The Wombs of Women: Race, Capital, Feminism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020.
- Vogel, Lise. *Marxism and the Oppression of Women*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983.
- Waldby, Catherine. *The Oocyte Economy: The Changing Meaning of Human Eggs*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019.
- Weinbaum, Alys Eve. *The Afterlife of Reproductive Slavery: Biocapitalism and Black Feminism's Philosophy of History*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019.
- Weinbaum, Alys Eve. "Marx, Irigaray, and the Politics of Reproduction." *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 6, no. 1 (1994): 98–128.
- Weinbaum, Alys Eve. "Reproducing Racial Capitalism." *Boston Review Forum* 44, no. 2 (2019): 85–96.
- Weinbaum, Alys Eve. "The Slave Episteme in Biocapitalism." *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 8, no. 1 (2022): 1–25.
- Weinbaum, Alys Eve. *Wayward Reproductions: Genealogies of Race and Reproduction in Transatlantic Modern Thought*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.
- White, Deborah Gray. *Ar'n't I a Woman? Female Slaves in the Plantation South*. New York: Norton, 1985.
- Wilderson, Frank B. III. "Reciprocity and Rape: Blackness and the Paradox of Sexual Violence." *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 27, no. 1 (2017): 104–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0740770X.2017.1282122>.
- Wilderson, Frank B. III. *Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of US Antagonisms*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Wilderson, Frank B. III, and Tiffany Lethabo King. "Staying Ready for Black Study: A Conversation." In *Otherwise Worlds: Against Settler Colonialism and Anti-Blackness*, edited by Tiffany Lethabo King, Jenell Navarro, and Andrea Smith, 52–73. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020.
- Wynter, Sylvia. "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's 'Woman.'" In *Out of the Kumbia: Caribbean Women and Literature*, edited by Carole Boyce Davies, 355–72. Chicago: Africa World, 1990.
- Wynter, Sylvia. "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, after Man, Its Overrepresentation—an Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257–336. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015>.