

## I. Two concerns

a) My account of intersectionality doesn't do justice to the case of Indigenous men, for even though they are not privileged along any dimension, they are still *men*, not just *male*. The fact that they are *men* is important in providing an account of the kind of oppression they face. We who care about social justice "must make specific reference to their maleness and to the ways in which they are constructed as *Indigenous men*... We want to be able to theorize how it is possible to turn advantage into disadvantage and understand the confluence of forces needed to pull this off." (Karen's notes)

This is connected to something Mills says that I didn't respond to in my comments: "What about movement up and down the racial ladder? This is another area where no ready gender parallel comes to mind...how, within Haslanger's apparatus, should we conceptualize positive and negative changes of white and nonwhite racial status, given that their geographical origins will not have changed?" (19)

b) There is a tension between my account of oppression/subordination in the definitions of race/gender and in my account of oppression. In my accounts of race & man/woman, subordination is coarse-grained and affects members of the group as a whole; but on my account of oppression subordination is fine-grained and affects subgroups differently.

Question 1: Would it be possible to be privileged *qua man* but subordinated *qua Black man*? Isn't someone who is subordinated *qua Black man* thereby subordinated *qua man*? But how, on my account, can someone be subordinated *qua man* (rather than privileged)?

Question 2: Can we always decompose the mechanisms that subordinate or privilege individuals in intersectional positions? Is the subordination of a Black man *qua Black man* decomposable, even analytically, into a confluence of racial subordination and gender privilege?

## II. Intersectionality

Contrast intersectionality of experience/identity and intersectionality of oppressions. Theater gels metaphor works better for intersectionality of experience/identity, not so well for oppressions. Is there an account or even another metaphor? I agree something better is needed.

Broader background questions:

How does categorization work and, more specifically, how do social categories interact?

How does power work and, more specifically, how do multiple axes of power interact to create structures of subordination?

I don't think we can answer this a priori; it will depend on empirical investigation of the particular context. It is likely to work differently in different settings. Tilly: we must keep in mind that

...social processes are path-dependent – that sequences and outcomes of causal mechanisms vary by space-time setting, that the order in which things happen affects what happens, that the small-scale or large-scale collective experience accumulates or congeals as culture... (Tilly 1998 (mmm), 50)

Categories (race, gender, etc.) are formed through different processes and have different conditions for stability, persistence, etc. Compare different nationalities, religions, classes, sexualities, etc.

[Durable Inequality] claims that explanation consists of identifying reliable causal mechanisms and processes of general scope within particular social phenomena. Causal mechanisms are events that alter relations among some set of elements. Processes are frequent (but not universal) combinations and sequences of causal mechanisms. Social mechanisms are sometimes cognitive, involving changes in perception, consciousness, or intention. They are sometimes relational, involving shifts in connections among social units. They are also sometimes environmental, involving alterations in the surroundings of social units. Explanation then consists of locating robust cognitive, relational, and environmental mechanisms within observed episodes. Tilly 2000 (edo), 493

We can make a few general observations though:

Power comes in multiple (and incommensurable?) forms.

Power is not simply additive.

Nevertheless, can we **over-simplify tremendously** to get a feel for how power might accumulate and transfer along categorical lines? (This over-simplification may distort rather than illuminate....)

Oppression occurs in structures that distribute social capital unjustly. Let 'social capital' be a placeholder for the various sorts of power society distributes: economic, status, respect, access to resources & relationships, etc. (think of Young on the many faces of oppression or Ortner on gender hegemony). For the moment, let's suppose that we can represent power in terms of a common currency: like poker chips. People occupying different roles in a structure are given a different amount of chips, and it costs to move between roles. Some chips you get by virtue of being a man, or a woman, some by virtue of being of a particular race, etc. In the US, Blacks get fewer chips than Asians, for example.

Most roles are designated to be occupied by individuals with a particular combination of race/gender/class. In changing roles, you are charge different amounts depending on your social category and what role you are coming from. So women can occupy a man's role, e.g., a woman can become a CEO, but it is harder than it would be for a man: not only does she have fewer chips to start with, but she has to pay out more chips to get there; a Black woman entering into a White man's role is going to be even harder, given that she has so few chips to start with and will have to pay extra for being a woman and being Black. White men lose substantial chips when entering a White woman's role and even more when they enter a nonwhite woman's role.

Movement up and down the race/gender ladder happens in complicated ways. Consider a male member of an out-group. Presumably the roles approved for him in the dominant culture will be men's roles. But these roles also cost a lot of chips to enter, especially from an out-group position. These are chips that he doesn't have. He is male and lacks power. Is he a man?

### III. Indigenous males: Are they powerless men?

In the case of Indigenous men there are several issues:

- Do we really need to say they are *men* and not just *male* in order to do justice to the case? Could we say that Indigenous males are prevented from being men? (Not just that they are emasculated, for they may have never had power.) And this is the/a problem?
- Is it really true that they have no social privilege? Who cleans the toilets in their house? Who gets up at night when the child is throwing up and cleans up the mess? What are the rates of domestic violence? If men have access to legal privileges in the dominant culture, don't they get those? I need to know more about the example. (This would potentially provide some social capital in local context that then would be completely spent because access is only to privileged positions in the dominant culture.)

To do justice to the case we need more information. However, I don't see the problem with saying that Indigenous males are not men (they don't regularly satisfy the dominant social conditions for being a man), though they may function sometimes as men. In fact, I think there are some advantages to this account. Carolyn Steedman in her book on class *Landscape for a Good Woman* (1986) says:

The legal impropriety of my existence, and the sudden covert revelations of this impropriety permitted sightings of fractures within the system we inhabit, which is variously called patriarchy, or a sex-gender system, or the law. There are these two ways of understanding the law, the space between two meanings, and their meeting place. (72)

Perhaps we have in the case of Indigenous males a gender that is neither man nor woman (cf. eunuch, berdache), a space between two meanings (man, woman). If they are denied the meanings that go with being a man, then this is revealing of how the gender system places racial and ethnic conditions on membership. And this strikes me as capturing important facts about how intersectionality works. So it would help me to see why exactly we *do* need to provide an account that accommodates wholly subordinated/powerless *men*.

Alternatively, perhaps I could say that, parallel to race, the categories of men/women occur when interpretations of sex situates individuals in a binary hierarchy, allowing that either men or women can be situated as dominant.

Karen also suggests that in analyzing oppression we need to look forward (temporally: what will be produced). I like this a lot, but I'm not sure how it helps us address the problem she raises.