

HOUSEHOLD CHORES and HOUSEHOLD CHOICES

Theorizing the Domestic Sphere in
Historical Archaeology

Edited by

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Reconstructing Domesticity and Segregating Households

The Intersections of Gender and Race in the Postbellum South

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In the coda to a remarkable work on race, feminism, and abolition, Karen Sánchez-Eppler (1993:133) turns to an object of domestic material culture to make her point: the object, a “topsy-turvy doll,” was quite popular in nineteenth-century America. It is effectively two dolls in one—one end an elegant, white “missy” and the other a manifestation of the well-used stereotype of the “wild-eyed pickaninny.” The skirt on this doll covered the head of one manifestation when the other was in view, making it a horrific metaphor for racialization in America; the two are inextricably attached and cannot exist without the other, while simultaneously they are unarguably in two different worlds as they cannot be seen together (this is perhaps a precursor to the “separate but equal” policies that would become a defining aspect of the modern South).

As a doll, this piece of material culture implicates childhood and the home as important loci for learning about race and imposing racialized hierarchies and stereotypes. Although it should come as no surprise to those familiar with personal race narratives about childhood that have been used in a variety of academic settings (e.g., Flores 1998; hooks 1990:41–49; McLaurin 1987; Roediger 1991:3–5; Walton 1996), it is interesting that archaeologists continue to examine households primarily as the terrain of gender construction and sexual power. I cannot argue that this line of inquiry has been, and will continue to be, an important mode of analysis within historical archaeology (see e.g., Gilchrist 1999; Spencer-Wood 1994, 1996). I can propose, however, that we take heed of the countless racial theorists who have placed childhood and the household as an important nexus in the racial/gender project—a nexus of resistance and criticism as well as hegemony. In addition, I posit historical archaeology as a well-suited discipline to examine the historical interconnectedness of race and gender, especially when examining the radical yet, at times, subtle changes that took place within the rubrics of race and gender following the trauma that was the American Civil War and into the dawning of modern America.

In this chapter I set out to accomplish three things: to explore the historical support for the entanglement of gender, race, and modernity; to examine the way that households (their function and definition) transformed in the American South in response to changes in the aforementioned entanglement following the Civil War; and to propose ways for historical archaeologists to look for material manifestations of this entanglement and their changes. This work cannot, of course, fully satisfy all the questions surrounding race, gender, and class at a given moment in time at a given site. Rather, it is a preliminary attempt to bring to archaeology the call for “empirically detailed, hands-on historical studies . . . that ‘front-stage’ one or two phenomena but always allow the others room in the script” (Di Leonardo 1998:22).

HOUSEHOLDS, MODERNITY, URBANIZATION, RACE, AND GENDER

It has been said that “none of the various names attached to the American Civil War adequately convey the scale of disruption unleashed by the conflict” (Brundage 2000:81). The event momentarily destroyed the illusion of American unity even as it forged a greater sense of national identity. In many ways, time took on an apocalyptic cast for both white and black southerners. Most important, I think it can be seen as the beginning of the South’s full articulation with modernity (as theorized by Giddens 1990; Harvey 1990:10–38; Jameson 1991:53–66; Soja 1989:10–42), as the war “propagated an economic and social agenda that functioned to catapult the United States into an emerging capitalist economy” (Flores 2002:32). Although many historical narratives do stress the continuity of the antebellum and postbellum South, closer examinations reveal that these narratives are historically grounded in a reactionary way—as a “strategy of containment” meant to naturalize the discourses on social hierarchy (Jameson 1981:10).

Some scholars have referred to the “tradition-bound South locked in a death struggle with the forces of modernization” (Cobb 1999:185). This view, I believe, plays into these strategies of containment by depicting an “unchanged” postbellum South embattled with a new social milieu (characterized by an urbanized, industrialized, rational society in which minorities would be treated “undeservingly” as equals) forced upon it from an outside “other” (most likely the northern states). Postbellum attitudes toward urbanization and modernization were much more ambivalent than this view allows, and, more important, there were major differences in social order within the antebellum/postbellum continuum, whose sharp relief has been smoothed over by discourses stressing the continuities between the old and the new South. These changes, however, were structurally superficial, as they indicated not a decline in white patriarchal

control but its transformation into another framework. Moreover, the war itself is a convenient, but somewhat misleading, marker for these shifts. Significant changes had been occurring within the social structures of the South *prior* to the Civil War, rendering the war itself an “attempt to slow down the pace of change and manage the changes that had already taken place, rather than an effort to prevent change from occurring at all. To the horror of those who led the South out of the Union, the outbreak of the war in 1861 accelerated the pace of change, unleashing a flood of unanticipated consequences, not the least of which was emancipation” (Bardaglio 1995:xv).

Attempts at industrialization in the South, southern urbanization (see Cobb 1984 and Davidson, this volume), and a general reorganization of social relations in the South following the physical and psychological destruction that accompanied the war *did* require a new set of social codes in order to stabilize the changing constructions of race, gender, and class. Along racial lines these codes were overtly provided by the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, the systematic disfranchisement of black voters throughout the South between 1895 and 1909 (Du Bois 1940:55), and the enactment of Jim Crow laws wherein “whites tried to order the world to prevent African Americans from rising” (Gilmore 1996:15).

Meanwhile, on another legal front, statutory approaches to family and household in the South underwent a shift from outright white patriarchal dominance to a more subtle subordination of women and minorities within the modern paternal state. In the antebellum South, the legal canon shored up white patriarchal dominance in a subtle way—by its reluctance to intervene in household matters involving women and slaves (Bardaglio 1995:34). The doctrine of coverture and various “slave as property” rulings declared these subjects to be “household matters” and clearly within the purview of the husband/master/father—a point that lends some credence to archaeological approaches that treat entire plantations as functioning households for certain analytical purposes (e.g., Barile and Anderson, this volume). Following Reconstruction, a new, decidedly modern set of legal doctrines slowly pierced the veil of the antebellum household. These doctrines saw both women and children (regardless of race) as individuals and placed the paternal state in the position to arbitrate justice on their behalf (Bardaglio 1995:85). This “rational” law, of course, was no less racist or sexist, as critical race theorists attest (e.g., Gotanda 1995; Haney Lopez 1996; Harris 1995).

Further complicating our understanding of period households is the process of southern urbanization. Simultaneous with the end of Reconstruction (1877–1910), the South moved to town and did so across class and race lines (Hale 1998:123). Urbanization is often articulated with modernity in a way that emphasizes the commercial character of cities and a rearrangement of landscape

spaces, stressing naturalized, hierarchical social relations (Lefebvre 1971; Soja 1989), and the American South is no exception.

It is easy to see how it becomes increasingly difficult to untangle the various strands of structural change in an era where virtually every aspect of the household is changing—and for African Americans in the postbellum South, this is certainly the case: emancipation, the move to town, a shift to a wage economy (often with female breadwinners), and the experience of modern segregation all happened in quick succession. Here, the formation of the so-called black middle-class is crucial. African Americans led a “deliberately conspicuous life” where in “towns and cities class showed the most” (Gilmore 1996:12, 15). The formation of a black middle-class itself can be seen as an act of both accommodation and resistance to the larger, class-based society (see discussion of the rise of black lawyers in Gilmore 1996:21 or black undertakers in Dallas in Davidson 1999:100–130). Moreover, it seems to have opened up a variety of political avenues for black women who began reform campaigns that paralleled their white counterparts (Spencer-Wood 1994:188).

More radically, the conceptualization of whiteness itself (that which blackness gets defined against) has been linked to this transition to modernity (e.g., Flores 2002; Ignatiev 1995; Jacobson 1998; Roediger 1991). Having lived through this postbellum transition, W. E. B. Du Bois (1920:17) made the bold statement that “the discovery of personal whiteness among the world’s peoples is a very modern thing—a nineteenth and twentieth century matter, indeed.”

It is within this shifting, unevenly experienced modernity that generative changes began occurring within southern households—both black and white. As Spencer-Wood (1994:181) has suggested, we need to be vigilant against universalizing stereotypes of gender construction in the archaeological record. Likewise, I purport that there was a great deal of variability within the postbellum attitude. I offer the following sections as a baseline demonstrating the decidedly southern variations of modern gender constructions and their racial linkages, something archaeologists should keep in mind when excavating late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century southern households.

FEMINISM, RACISM, DOMESTICITY, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION: WHITE WOMEN AND THE MODERN SOUTH

Historical archaeologists working in the mid- to late nineteenth century have explored the relationships among feminism, various reform movements, and domesticity—especially as it relates to white middle-class women in the northern portion of the country (e.g., Scott 1994; Spencer-Wood 1991b, 1994, 1996, 1999a). These studies have begun to reflect in an important way how minority and lower-class women articulated and interacted with these ideological move-

ments (Spencer-Wood 1994). However, the degree to which racialization, feminism, and regional identity are interconnected has not been fully explored in archaeological literature. One does not need go too far to discover the way nineteenth-century feminists used racialized metaphors to express their case. For example, in the 1850s, Elizabeth Cady Stanton would state unflinchingly, "A woman has no name . . . just as she changes masters; like the Southern slave, she takes the name of her owner" (quoted in Sánchez-Eppler 1993:19). Her quote is only one of many that draw on established abolitionist indignation to make a case for women's rights—and, in the process, attempt to place northern men in the uncomfortable position of southern slave-holder. We find, however, a quite different strategy being employed by those advancing women's roles in the South. Interestingly, I believe this strategy is deeply connected to the different ways in which southern households and southern history are constructed.

While in the North middle-class identity was structured in opposition to the decadent, slave-dependent antebellum plantation household (which was placed in discursive opposition to the rational, modern "domestic sphere"), the southern white middle class during Reconstruction sought to draw as many linkages to antebellum plantation life as possible (Hale 1998:88–93). It should come as no surprise that "part of the white south froze looking back over its shoulder at a mythical antebellum romance" (Gilmore 1996:13), but it is also clear that "myths and cultural memories more generally, are not stratospheric tales but deeply grounded narratives through which communities express their heartfelt convictions" (Flores 2002:xv), and these "heartfelt convictions" had a lot to do with racial hierarchy and the home.

Conflation of the new, white, middle-class southern home and old plantation household helped "ground the white southern middle-class' new racial order" (Hale 1998:87), even as it embraced a modern construction of domesticity (Bardaglio 1995; Spencer-Wood 1999a). In fact, the "white middle-class home was a more domestic, female-centered space than the antebellum plantation," which allowed for little separation between public (economic) and private (domestic) spheres (Hale 1998:94). It seems clear that antebellum southerners did not envision families or households as exclusively feminine terrain (Fox-Genovese 1988:195) but held on to a patriarchal model of household that was characteristic of the southern version of Victorian gender ideologies (Bardaglio 1995:82–84).

Following Reconstruction, even as codified segregation set in, the white southern household continued to be a locus of racial mixing due to the number of African Americans employed as domestics and laundresses (Davidson, this volume; Hale 1998:96). Thus, the "white home served as a major site for the preservation of racial identity" through the presence of black house workers (Hale 1998:88). This fact not only made the household the primary space where

white children learned about race but also gave rise to the racialized womanhood that was the “cult” of the black mammy (Hale 1998:98–114; Roberts 1994) while simultaneously freeing middle-class and elite white women to take a greater role in the public sphere. Through this trope the black women served as a real and symbolic labor connection to the antebellum South, rendering it seemingly impossible to imagine a white southern home without “surrounding it with images of blackness” (Hale 1998:115). Interestingly, at the very moment that southern women embraced the construction of a separate domestic sphere, they expanded their role into the so-called public sphere via reform and historical movements. Some, like the temperance movement, they held in common with nonwhite and nonsouthern women (Gilmore 1996:45–59; Spencer-Wood 1991b, 1994), and others were purely white and southern.

By now it should be passé to make the “radical” claim that postbellum nostalgia for the antebellum South and the era of the Civil War is, in fact, based more on contemporary social relations than any real want to understand and contextualize the past (see Levinson 1998; Loewen 1999). Far less analyzed within this debate about cultural memory is the way in which women, particularly middle-class and elite white women, utilized regional historic preservation to transform their roles in society and move “beyond the pale of southern ladyhood” (Gilmore 1996:47).

White southern women working in the public sphere to preserve the traditional South were a contradictory force in the face of notions of a gendered white feminine purity and passivity (for example, as depicted in Thomas Dixon’s infamous 1905 novel, *The Clansmen*). Nonetheless, we see over and over again southern women taking an active, if not primary, role in the development and growth of the post-Reconstruction nostalgia for the Old South. They were that “noble band of women to whose untiring efforts we are chiefly indebted for our Confederate monument[s]” (Marshall quoted in Bishir 2000). Figures such as Oliva Raney, Belle Kearney, Mildred Rutherford, Susan Pringle Frost, Nell McColl Pringle, Clara Driscoll, and countless collective women’s clubs served as the primary shapers of public memory invoking tropes of the Lost Cause and the Chivalric South while transforming the symbolic landscape of the postbellum South through the erection of countless Confederate monuments (Bishir 2000; Flores 2002:61–92; Hale 1998:107–111; Loewen 1999; Yuhl 2000) and, more subtly, through the restoration of the historic properties under their control.

It is within the realm of historic preservation, interestingly, that once again the domestic household becomes entangled with race, gender, cultural memory, and modernity. After all it was the *homes* of historic importance that were most often the rallying point for early historic preservation societies. Prime examples are the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association, the Ladies’ Hermitage Asso-

ciation, and Charleston's Society for the Preservation of Old Dwellings (Battle, this volume; Shackel 2001b:10; Yuhl 2000), but there are many others. These pioneering organizations influenced not only what types of spaces and sites were preserved but also the decoration and representation of these historic homes, filling them with material culture and interpretations infused with their decidedly feminine understanding of history (e.g., Yuhl 2000).

The postbellum, post-Reconstruction historic preservation phenomenon not only aided white women in claiming a larger part of the public sphere and adding a decidedly domestic cast to historical interpretation; it also (unfortunately) helped install a portion of the framework of modern racism through the celebration of the antebellum South as idyllic. Slaves were depicted as subservient, even nonhuman, beings who benefited from their association with the great men whose houses they served.

In a more overtly political vein, southern white women took a variety of public political stances during the period. For example, Mildred Rutherford, the first historian general of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and a staunch antisuffragist, often denounced both the "New Negro" and the "New Woman" and called the organization of the Ku Klux Klan "a necessity" (Hale 1998:107; Sebesta 2002). More common was the tendency of many other white southern feminists, such as prominent Mississippi suffragist Belle Kearney, to shift her general stance for women's rights to frame the debate in racial terms, arguing that granting white women the right to vote would, in effect, cancel out African-American suffrage: "the South is slow to grasp the great fact that the enfranchisement of women would settle the race question in politics . . . surely will the South be compelled to look to its Anglo-Saxon women as the medium through which to retain the supremacy of the white race over the African" (Kearney 1903).

Thus, whatever the ideological stance of the individual, it becomes impossible to separate southern women's quest for empowerment and equality from racial discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This gender/race rubric is in turn decidedly *domestic* in character, as white feminist discourse commonly centered on the dominant Victorian ideology of "separate spheres" wherein women's role was *in the household*. White southern feminists did transform this ideology to embrace power over all things "outside" the economic sphere, including such things as fine arts and historic preservation. Like their northern counterparts, white southern women had to reposition their enlightenment-based arguments for equality to arguments that seemed more in accordance with andocentric dominate ideology (Spencer-Wood 1996:415)—for instance, the proposition that women *did* belong to separate spheres but that those spheres were equal. In other parts of the United States, these strategies led to a decidedly class-based discourse, but in the South they led directly to a

deployment of race and the South's obsession with the dangers of free African Americans.

THE TERRAIN OF BLACK FEMINISM IN RECONSTRUCTION AND IN THE MODERN SOUTH

Social theorist bell hooks (1990) has postulated the black American household (or "homeplace" in her terminology) as an important site of resistance, a site within which cultural criticism and politics are taught and practiced. The way that these resistive strategies attempt to confront or circumvent white structurally racist strategies of containment is documented in both historical and archaeological works (e.g., Gilmore 1996; Mullins 1999a, 1999c, 2001).

I have postulated that the end of the American Civil War represents a convenient, if perhaps misleading, moment that marks the American South's full articulation with modernity and its full-blown capitalist engine. This point is doubly true of the recently emancipated population of southern African Americans. Although the enslaved were familiar with monetary exchange even when in bondage (Hudson 1994), nothing could quite prepare them for their new status as "free" wage labor and consumer in an unapologetically racist marketplace.

For many who entered the blossoming farm tenancy system in the rural areas of the South, much remained familiar, although transformed; little money exchanged hands as tenancy was part and parcel of a credit system designed to keep tenants in debt to their landlords (Flynn 1983; Orser 1988; Whyne 1996). But for the many others who fled, the increasingly urban southern cities represented a land of promise where African Americans may not have been able to amass great fortunes but could become "financially successful in a modest fashion" (Drake and Cayton 1945:49).

Among the mass of African Americans in the postbellum period, the household is truly a shifting and fluid entity. Households in both urban and rural areas could be stable or quite erratic (see Davidson, this volume; Wilkie 2000a: 73-79). Moreover, many African-American women found themselves the sole breadwinners, a fact attested to by the growing number of archaeological investigations focusing on households headed by black women (see, e.g., Patten 1997; Wilkie 2000a). Of course, these women entering the cash economy meant consumption and inevitably the growth of class differentiation, especially in the urban areas of the African-American South.

Following Reconstruction, a growing number of African Americans were beginning to articulate the "mass prophesy that material affluence harbored inevitable social empowerment" (Mullins 1999a:1), a theory canonized in the

national-level discourse of the period, for example in the writings of Booker T. Washington (1907), and documented in a variety of localized contexts, such as Durham (Du Bois 1995:253), Annapolis (Mullins 1999a:1), Chicago (Drake and Cayton 1945:51), Dallas (Brandon 2000), New Bern, North Carolina (Gilmore 1996), and the Arkansas lowland delta (Gordon 1995). As the black middle classes began to form across the nation (a process that happened unevenly across time and space), attempts to equate participation in the capitalist economy with social equality went hand in hand with the attempt to define oneself through that consumption. This consumption/identity process was, of course, occurring across race, class, and gender lines as the country's growing "culture industry" began to gear up following the Civil War (Horkheimer and Adorno 1944:154-155). For instance, the importance given the common household knick-knack as symbolic capital (and proof of one's humanity) among free African Americans is evident in Mullins's analytic work (1999a:155-184; 2001), as well as being alluded to in literary treatments (e.g., Agee and Evans 1939:162-165; Ellison 1947:272-273; Steinbeck 1939:139-140).

Of course, in the post-Reconstruction period consumerism is a double-edged sword, as the racist underpinnings of consumer space and the racialization of products made almost every transaction a confrontation with one's racial identity. Mullins (1999a:3-4), like bell hooks (1990:3-5), proposes a critical awareness in African-Americans' consumption, but it is an awareness that does not preclude their desire to consume (cf. Horkheimer and Adorno 1944:167). They did, however, "probe the relationship between consumer space's racist underpinnings and the economic, labor and political implications" of their consumption (Mullins 1999a:3).

This is the same participation in consumption that may have been a factor in anxiety-driven white racism. Period diatribes on the subject of African-American consumption tend simultaneously to trivialize it and fear it, concentrating often on these small, mundane objects mentioned earlier (Mullins 1999a:162-170; 2001). Not only has Mullins pointed out that "relatively mundane objects inspired apprehension because they posed the specter of a society in which material culture would not clearly mark subjectivity" (1999a:156), he likewise figures consumption as one of the terrains where social struggle can take place with profound implications for citizenship and racial subjectivity. The opening of this terrain elicited dramatic responses from threatened whites anxious about their own position: many racial "riots" seem directed at African-American property holders (Gilmore 1996:81-103) or at those who were perceived to threaten white access to jobs and, thus, to consumption (Foley 1997; Roediger 1991; Whyne 1996). Moreover, a plethora of African-American theorists of the period from the 1890s to the 1940s agreed that economically suc-

cessful blacks, and the fear they evoked in white America, was *one* of the factors leading to the institution of Jim Crow-era segregation (Du Bois 1940; 1995:174-192; Drake and Cayton 1945:51; and many others).

Among the new black middle-class women, the household would take an important, if at times covert, position. The agency of African-American women in southern history is obscured owing to power relations embedded in the production of the historical record. When they do appear, the narrative usually depicts them as stalwart, self-sacrificing, community-based activists whose work inevitably links forward into the civil rights movement (Gilmore 1996:93). But for many southern black women, "politics began at home, blending the public and the private" (Gilmore 1996:101), and the home was "the one site where one could freely confront the issue of humanization, where one could resist" (hooks 1990:42). Here we see the complementary opposite of the role of the household among white children: the African-American home could be the only open venue in which young black children could learn both the rules of a racist society and establish a critical stance toward it (hooks 1990:47; see also Du Bois 1940:8-24). Black women "first forged their ideas of gender and race equity within their families and homes," then their "public sphere" encounters through education, consumerism, and volunteerism tested and refined those ideas (Gilmore 1996:32).

Further complicating the issue, however, is the erasure of the African-American household in the postbellum South. It takes place both geographically and ideologically, first by spatially segregating households into white and black categories and then by effectively denying a private sphere to black women who must be available at all times to serve the white community as domestics and laundresses.

Conversely, while white southern Victorian attitudes toward womanhood devalued outspokenness among women, some have postulated that southern African Americans held different ideals that expected women to be active in the public sphere (Gilmore 1996:43). It is true that black women had overtly "empowered themselves by organizing into separate parallel institutions" to white reform organizations (Spencer-Wood 1994:188), but this parallel structure was the direct result of the failure of black auxiliary arms associated with white women's groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union. These black auxiliaries failed across the South because, as mentioned, the politics of white and black southern women often diverged when it came to addressing the race issue directly (Gilmore 1996:45-50).

Finally, as consumerism, volunteerism, and education worked to transform the black middle-class household in a positive, emancipatory way, it also brought about social division. Middle-class African-American families often adopted not only Victorian bric-a-brac but also the prescriptive "Christian principles"

bolstered by white reform movements. Thus, as reform “joined black women’s religious and class values to their activism even as it provided a safe forum for agitation” (Gilmore 1996:49), it also carried extensive class baggage with its empowering message. Moreover, as certain African-American households embraced bourgeois individualism, cooperative ideology (i.e., ideas about “the race”) weakened in one sense but grew in another.

While some working-class blacks would resent the growing material and cultural differences between them and their middle-class peers, white ideology privileged race above all else and attempted to blind itself to the substantial differences between black laundresses and black doctors. Thus middle-class African Americans became increasingly conscious of lower-class actions and demeanors. This awareness created a striking difference between black and white reform movements in the South: black women had to worry about issues such as alcohol not only in a domestic setting but also for the entire race (Gilmore 1996:49)

RACE, GENDER, MODERNITY, AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF HOUSEHOLDS

This exploration of some of the ways in which gender and race are entangled with households and modernity from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century serves to call attention to the complexity and interrelatedness of any categorical analysis (i.e., race, class, gender, etc.). I have only scratched the surface of the complexity, but I have attempted to focus on aspects which we archaeologists have not treated extensively in our investigations.

To be sure, historical archaeology has improved approaches to both gender (e.g., Gilchrist 1999; Spencer-Wood 1994, 1996, 1999a) and race (e.g., papers in Franklin and Fesler 1999; Orser 2001; Singleton 1999b; Wilkie 2000a) greatly over the past decade or so. What we are failing to do, however, is examine the intersection of two or more of these phenomena (cf. Franklin 2001a). I believe that household-level archaeology at sites in the antebellum/postbellum continuum may provide us with an opportunity to explore the intersections of race and gender.

First, it is crucial to recognize that the household is not only a locus for gendered power struggles but is also where children learn about race and resistance to racism. It can shed light on the interpretive complexities of artifacts such as the black painted porcelain doll recovered from Old Washington (Stewart-Abernathy, this volume) or the children’s toys recovered from the freedman’s cabin during my own work at the mid-nineteenth-century sawmill community known as Van Winkle’s Mill (Brandon and Davidson 2002; Brandon et al. 2000a).

These children’s toys recovered from archaeological contexts return us to the

doll with which I opened this chapter. Very few pieces of material culture encapsulate so well a rubric of ideologies as does the “topsy-turvy” doll, but all material culture reflects identity in multifaceted, and often contradictory, ways. Children’s toys are especially evocative as they are tied into the household, “the realm within which identities are initially constructed and reinforced” (Wilkie 2000a:134). Thus, households are the crucible for gender and race ideologies as well as many other identities. As material culture is the basic framework from which archaeologists interpret the past, I will begin here to outline methodological ways in which we might address the complicated entanglements outlined here through household archaeology.

Archaeologists should turn to building an understanding of *local* representations of race and gender across the antebellum/postbellum continuum. There are many recent examples of critical historical work that have fruitfully examined racial and class identities from a local perspective, especially when compared to and contrasted against the overarching national-level (or global) discourse on racial formations or class consciousness (e.g., Foley 1995; Foley 1997; Gilmore 1996; Gordon 1998; Gyory 1998; Hall 2000; Hartigan 1999; Limón 1998; Mitchell 1996).

These works have either laid bare articulations not visible on the national level—such as the examination of the non-overt, yet concretely political, role of middle-class African-American women during and after Reconstruction in North Carolina (Gilmore 1996)—or challenged the national-level understandings of the underpinnings of race and class, such as the refutation of working-class racism as the prime mover for the adoption of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Gyory 1988; *contra* Roediger 1994; Saxton 1971; and many others).

In addition, an increasing number of researchers have pointed to the local terrain as the one on which “provisional,” “fluid,” and “situational” identities such as race are best discerned from their more reified abstractions commonly used when discussing the larger “collective” experience (Franklin 2001b:89; Gordon and Anderson 1999:91–118, 293–294; Hartigan 1999:13–16). This move to the local analytical register also serves to underscore the important role of *place* in the construction of identity.

Discussion of place in historical archaeology inevitably leads to a discussion of the now well-explored subject of landscapes. It should be no great revelation that cultural landscapes—series of places through which people’s lives are threaded—help people “give account of their own identity” (Knapp and Ashmore 1999:10) and are “arena[s] in which and through which memory, identity, social order and transformation are constructed, played out, re-invented and changed” (Thomas 2001:173). But most landscape analyses, including my own at Van Winkle’s Mill (Brandon and Davidson 2002; Brandon et al. 2000b), have stressed a relatively coarse scale that privileges racial analysis at the expense of

gender. It has been pointed out that “women and children often disappear from the past” in large-scale analyses where “cultures are often defined according to male-controlled social, political and economic structures” (Spencer-Wood 1999a:163). Households and women are, in fact, often analytically subsumed under larger social formations; we have done so with class and race at Van Winkle’s Mill.

To get at the intersection of race and gender, we are going to have to change the scale, but perhaps not the character, of our analysis. That is to say, most landscape analysis has focused on the larger-scale phenomena—the relationships of buildings to one another, for instance. As nineteenth-century gender constructions do not appear, in most cases, to have been expressed on this level (that is, spatial distribution of buildings does not often cleave along gender lines), we need to change the scale of our analysis to attempt to read the gender-related texts expressed in the use of space (Moore 1996:80–97). The next scale of analysis, the household level, has the potential to reveal much about the lives of the women *and men*—we hope that it will enable us to get at daily practices and how they followed and changed the structures of the community(ies). Taken together with the more traditional landscape analyses that categorically examine race (e.g., Barile, this volume), we may be able to get beyond simply addressing the “fecundity” of enslaved and later freed African-American populations (cf. Delle 2000). Emphasizing the “lived experience” aspect of space while placing the landscape analysis in dialogue with the local race/gender context will result in a much more nuanced understanding of our sites as *places*—although a place that may be contested or fragmented (Adams et al. 2001:xxi).

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